

# WMG Academy for Young Engineers

Mitchell Avenue, Coventry, West Midlands CV4 8DY

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have created a culture where the school's motto, 'business like and business led', is evident in all areas of the school.
- Governors are well informed and have a wide range of skills and experiences. They support and hold leaders to account effectively in order to drive school improvement.
- Safeguarding is effective. Very secure systems and a lively curriculum are in place to ensure that pupils feel, and are, safe.
- Teaching is effective. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are passionate about the real-world application of their subjects. Work-based learning is at the heart of the curriculum and consistently enlivens lessons.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in Year 10. Their abilities on entry to the school and progress during key stage 4 are tracked meticulously.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' personal development. Pupils are articulate and thoughtful about their work and behave well in lessons and on the school site.
- Leaders have designed a comprehensive enrichment programme. This means that all pupils enjoy a full, broad and balanced curriculum.
- Study programmes in the sixth form are well matched to students' needs. Students are making good progress from their starting points.
- The tracking of pupils' behaviour and attendance is not as focused as it needs to be.
- In a small number of cases, teaching does not match the high standards of the best in the academy. Where this is the case, pupils' behaviour is not as good as in other lessons.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the new system for tracking behaviour so that leaders have a clear overview of behaviour patterns by:
  - fully embedding the school's newly introduced behaviour tracking system
  - ensuring that all teachers apply the new system consistently
  - communicating school rules and the system for monitoring behaviour more clearly with pupils and parents, especially when a rule changes
  - matching the strong focus on individual pupils' behaviour with analysis of groups' behaviour.
- Use the information that leaders collect about the attendance of individual pupils more analytically by:
  - ensuring that information about attendance gives leaders a clear overview of any absence patterns
  - matching the strong focus on individual pupils' attendance with analysis of groups' attendance.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that all teaching matches the quality of the best by:
  - supporting the small number of teachers who do not consistently match tasks to the starting points of pupils.
- Continue to improve pupils' progress at key stage 4 by:
  - embedding the changes that leaders have made to the curriculum
  - further strengthening the clarity and quality of advice and guidance for pupils who are interested in joining the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have created a school culture where pupils and staff treat each other respectfully, pupils' personal development has a high priority and pupils' work readiness is developed effectively. Pupils are confident and articulate. They work well independently and in groups. Many are excited by their studies because they understand the relationship between their lessons and their future careers. Pupils are well prepared for their next stages in education and for life in modern Britain.
- Although girls make up only about a fifth of the pupils in the school, they are confident and feel a part of the school community. This is because pupils treat one another respectfully and both pupils and staff make sure that there is no discrimination. Leaders specifically support girls to make sure that they can fulfil their aspirations to become young engineers.
- All pupils join the school in Year 10 having completed key stage 3 in a large number of other schools. Leaders understand the need to fully assess pupils' level of skills and knowledge when they arrive, and they do this in the first week of September each year. These baseline tests are well designed and include externally validated tests across a range of subjects. This means that leaders swiftly gain an accurate view of pupils' abilities when they arrive at the school.
- Leaders have recently changed the curriculum for both key stage 4 and key stage 5. Pupils can now choose from pathways which reflect their prior attainment. As a result, pupils in all year groups are making good progress towards their targets because their subjects are matched to their needs and aspirations.
- Leaders have designed a comprehensive enrichment curriculum in which all pupils, including those in the sixth form, participate regularly. There are over 20 clubs and societies offering pupils experiences of public speaking, entrepreneurship, sports, music and film. All pupils participate in these activities because they are a part of the timetable. Leaders do not, however, track the extent to which pupils participate in a wide variety of activities.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning is effective. They have established a process of subject reviews and have taken positive action following the ones that have been completed so far. They have a clear overview of teachers' strengths and professional development needs, and ensure that training meets teachers' needs closely.
- Subject leaders appreciate weekly training sessions because, increasingly, these sessions allow them time to work across departments, share good practice and have training from external consultants. Subject leaders' skills are developing rapidly. They use data confidently to identify when pupils' progress needs support, and they intervene in their subjects with positive impact.

- Leaders make sure that the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. The academic intervention officer develops disadvantaged pupils' skills through individual support. Leaders have established a set of strategies for improving disadvantaged pupils' progress during lessons, and subjects have their own action plans to supplement this. Teachers use these strategies increasingly consistently. Leaders' work to support these pupils to be more aspirational is extremely well documented and tracked.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by leaders and funding is put to good use. Leaders carefully assess pupils' needs, then write and share clear action plans for support. This is supplemented by leaders' visits to lessons to assess the support teachers are providing and plan any training necessary. Teachers are well trained to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and these pupils are making good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders track pupils' behaviour on an individual basis and leaders have a good knowledge of individual pupils because they have developed a new behaviour monitoring system. However, this information is not consistently analysed in terms of groups of pupils or subjects and so leaders cannot quickly identify patterns in behaviour. Also, some teachers do not consistently use the sanctions in the new policy. Similarly, leaders track attendance for individuals carefully and intervene effectively when needed. However, they do not consistently analyse it by group to establish when interventions are having a positive impact.

## **Governance**

- Governance is a strength of the school.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and knowledge, which help them to support the school's work effectively. They are clear about their vision that the school should be distinctive in its business-like approach, and ensure that this approach is applied to all aspects of the school.
- Governors have good knowledge and oversight of safeguarding. They have commissioned an external review to ensure that all of the safeguarding systems are effective.
- Where leaders require it, governors make sure that high-quality support is in place. This includes coaching for leaders, external verification of departments and support for staff well-being. Consequently, staff feel well supported and confident in the early stages of the school's development.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Systems to protect pupils are very well designed. Staff are rigorously vetted and record-keeping is robust and detailed. Leaders deal with referrals meticulously and keep comprehensive, detailed records that outline their swift, effective actions.
- Pupils know whom to go to if they have a problem. They told inspectors that they feel safe and that the school is a place where they feel confident and secure.

- The curriculum effectively supports pupils' safety because it is comprehensive, taught well and pupils find it engaging. Pupils who spoke to inspectors had an impressive knowledge of a range of issues that might face them, and are confident that they can keep themselves safe.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers are passionate about their subjects and have a deep knowledge of both their subjects and the workplace. This means that, in lessons, pupils gain an understanding of academic knowledge and why it matters in the real world. Consequently, the majority of pupils are enthusiastic about engineering and value the opportunity that the school gives to them.
- In lessons, teachers regularly use questioning to deepen pupils' understanding, check on their learning and challenge them to improve their responses. Pupils are responsive to questions, engaged in their tasks and enjoy their lessons.
- Pupils generally enter the school with weak literacy skills. Through a range of well-designed interventions including one-to-one support, pupils quickly develop their literacy skills.
- Leaders have introduced a school-wide approach to teaching, which ensures that the needs of all pupils are met, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Teachers ensure that lesson content is logically presented, that knowledge is checked and practical application explored. This engages pupils well.
- Teachers have a strong focus on discussion and collaboration in lessons, especially in the sixth form. This helps pupils to develop strong team-working skills and articulacy. Teachers' regular focus on presentations and sharing knowledge ensures that, over time, pupils develop the ability to discuss their work and build their confidence and knowledge.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum focused on real-world commissions from engineering companies. This engages pupils effectively and means that during their time in the school they meet many different professionals. Pupils' motivation is high because of these live projects.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers know and respond well to their students' individual needs. Students benefit from opportunities to undertake independent learning activities, enabling them to make secure progress in lessons and complete assignments to a high standard.
- The vast majority of students develop competent research skills and work well together to produce high-quality outcomes on employer-set projects to commercial standards. For example, in a Year 12 engineering lesson, students were confidently developing their knowledge of the factors influencing the design and manufacture of a shoe rack. Others spoke with pride and enthusiasm about the skills they had gained from designing an alternator bracket for a diesel engine, designing the moulding for the headlights of a car, or developing their understanding of sustainability and recyclability in manufacturing.

- In a small number of instances, teachers do not settle their class quickly or provide work that is well matched to pupils' starting points. In this small minority of cases, pupils' progress is not as strong as it could be. Other inspection evidence shows that this can happen at other times, too. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to improve the consistency of good teaching in the school, to support early career teachers and to assist unqualified teachers to gain teaching qualifications.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The business-like culture aims to create confident pupils. The curriculum and teaching deliberately support the development of confidence. Pupils regularly present to their peers, teachers and adults, and have many opportunities to speak to large audiences. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were articulate and confident to speak in detail about their work and experiences of school.
- Leaders identify that some of the main barriers to the success of disadvantaged pupils are interpersonal and communication skills. Disadvantaged pupils' confidence in these areas is formally assessed when they enter the school, deliberately developed and then evaluated at the end of Year 11. These evaluations show a marked improvement in disadvantaged pupils' confidence, communication, presentation and teamwork.
- Pupils are respectful to one another, adults and visitors. They wear their uniform with pride and are grateful for the unique opportunity that the school offers them.
- The curriculum includes extensive and effective personal, social and health education. Pupils spoke in detail with inspectors about their lessons on a variety of topics –for example, sexting, child sexual exploitation, mental health and alcohol abuse.
- Pupils told inspectors that instances of bullying are extremely rare. The school's records confirm this. Pupils are confident that if bullying happens, they know whom to talk to and that teachers will deal with it well.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The vast majority of pupils who responded to the school's pupils' satisfaction survey said that behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that disruption in lessons is rare and that pupils generally behave in a mature way.
- The school expects pupils to behave like young professional engineers. Pupils told inspectors that they feel they are treated respectfully and that this encourages them to behave in line with the school's expectations.
- The vast majority of parents and staff agree that pupils are well behaved in school.

- Attendance is above the national average overall. Some individual pupils' persistent absence, however, is too high. Leaders have individual plans in place for these pupils. They track their attendance carefully and effective interventions are put into place. As a result, the attendance of these pupils is improving. However, leaders do not yet track the attendance of groups as sharply as they should.
- There are a small number of pupils who do not meet the school's behaviour expectations consistently. Staff deal effectively with any behaviour issues that arise, and individual plans are in place to help these pupils to maintain good behaviour.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils join the school in Year 10. It would therefore be misleading to evaluate pupils' progress against national averages because these measures are based on progress from Year 7.
- Teachers rigorously and accurately assess all pupils on entry to the school. In 2016, Year 11 pupils joined the school with attainment typically lower than expected, taking into account their previous key stage 2 levels. These pupils had particularly low levels of literacy.
- In 2016, the majority of Year 11 pupils joined the school because their placements in other schools had failed, or they were underachieving. This is not the case for the current Year 10 or 11, most of whom joined the school to take advantage of its specialised engineering provision. In response to pupils starting in Year 10, most of the internal assessments carried out by the school are externally verified or confirmed accurate through the support of independent consultants.
- Published information shows that pupils taking their GCSEs in 2016 made progress well below that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. However, pupils' progress from when they joined the school in Year 10 to the end of Year 11 was strong, including for those with high prior attainment. For example, in English, pupils made over two grades' progress from their Year 10 starting points. In mathematics, they made progress in line with other pupils nationally. Around a quarter of pupils took a GCSE in languages and made similarly strong progress.
- While the progress of disadvantaged pupils was well below the national average in 2016, the school's assessment information shows that they made rapid progress from their starting points. Current disadvantaged pupils are making better progress still, and diminishing the difference between their attainment and that of pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Where pupils fall behind, teachers ensure that carefully designed and effective interventions help them to catch up. Leaders' analysis of these interventions and the school's own assessment information shows that pupils make swift progress and quickly catch up as a result.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The school's data shows that, from their starting points, pupils in Years 10 and 11 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress in line with other pupils nationally.

- In 2016, outcomes for students in the sixth form who followed academic courses were below national averages. However, just over half of the year group who followed vocational courses in engineering made good progress and achieved just above national averages.
- Current students in the sixth form have benefited from good information, advice and guidance when choosing their courses. As a result, the schools' own data shows that current students in Years 12 and 13 are making good progress towards achieving their targets, both in academic and vocational courses. In physics, chemistry and business studies, pupils are making particularly strong progress.
- Some pupils enter the sixth form without GCSEs in English or mathematics. All pupils retake these courses and, in 2016, made better progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points.

### **16 to 19 study programmes**

**Good**

- Students currently in the sixth form following academic courses are making stronger progress towards their targets than was previously the case. This is because leaders have markedly improved information and guidance for pupils before they join the sixth form. Consequently, students are now on courses that closely match their prior attainment and aspirations. As a result, retention has risen sharply and is now very high.
- Students in the sixth form enjoy coming to the school and their attendance is in line with the national average. They closely adhere to the school's dress code, take pride in their appearance, and are well mannered and polite to others.
- Leaders give careful attention to giving impartial careers advice and guidance, both before pupils begin in the sixth form and during their studies. Advice about prospective employment and progression pathways with key local employers and universities is strong and greatly valued by students.
- All students who left the school in 2016 went on to higher education, advanced or higher-level apprenticeships or employment. Students took up apprenticeships with a wide variety of employers including the school's sponsors.
- Students in the sixth form say they feel safe and have a good awareness of how to keep safe. They say that bullying and derogatory language are rare and are confident that, if it happened, they could speak to any teacher about it and they would deal with it effectively. Students say that staff look after them well and they value this support.
- A relatively small but increasing number of students do work experience placements that are related to their aspirations. However, all students have regular contact with employers through live industry-related projects set by employers, visiting speakers and visits to companies. Over the course of their studies, students come into contact with around 20 employers from a wide range of industries. This strengthens their knowledge of, and preparedness for, life in the workplace.
- Non-qualification activities and enrichment are given a high priority and all sixth-form students take part. Leaders arrange opportunities for students to support a range of charities and students enjoy the fulfilment of events such as a charity shoebox appeal, coffee mornings and fund-raising for good causes.

## School details

Unique reference number	140961
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10025164

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	University technical college
Age range of pupils	14–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	363
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	185
Appropriate authority	The trust board
Chair	Mike Wright
Executive Principal	Kate Tague
Telephone number	02476 464 661
Website	<a href="http://Coventry.wmgacademy.org.uk">Coventry.wmgacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:Principal@wmgacademy.org.uk">Principal@wmgacademy.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened in 2014. Current pupils are more highly focused on engineering than the first group of pupils who left the school in 2016.
- University technical colleges (UTCs) are schools for 14–19-year-olds whose curriculum focuses on science, technology, engineering and mathematical subjects. The WMG Academy focuses on engineering. All aspects of the school’s learning, pastoral, academic and technical, are designed to be applicable to the workplace and reflect the needs of the local economy.

- The school shares a site with Westwood Academy, which is a secondary school.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The Baker Dearing Trust, whose focus is on promoting and supporting UTCs, supports the school. It is also supported by Redborne Upper School for pupils' progress data and tracking systems.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held meetings with the executive principal and her senior team, governors and faculty leaders. There were 25 responses to the online staff questionnaire and these were taken into account.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents about governance, enrichment activities, safeguarding, and the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors fully evaluated all of the school’s pupil tracking and progress information. They observed parts of lessons, looked at pupils’ work, observed assemblies, pastoral time and pupils’ behaviour at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors also met formally with pupils from each year group, a panel of sponsors, partners and employers who are involved with the school.
- Account was taken of the 66 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, together with text comments from parents.

## Inspection team

Dan Owen, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Elaine Haskins	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Field	Ofsted Inspector
Victor Reid	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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