

Inspection of Outwood Grange Academy

Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Andrew Downing. This school is part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Lee Wilson, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Earnshaw.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Very many pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are positive about their education and achieve well. Their performance in national assessments echoes the good quality of education they receive.

The vast majority of pupils in this very large school behave well. They learn the 'academy conduct and expectations' and understand the importance of settling down to their studies. Pupils behave well as they move around the large, well-maintained school site. At times, corridors can become busy. Supportive staff ensure that very many pupils move in an orderly manner. A small proportion of pupils take longer to embrace the school's ethos. At times, their conduct is not reflective of leaders' high expectations.

Pupils and staff establish positive relationships. Pupils know who to turn to if they have concerns. Most pupils report that staff resolve any issues, including bullying.

The school provides pupils with excellent provision to support their personal development. Pupils develop their leadership, sporting, creative and academic skills through the school's exceptional enrichment, leadership and life programmes.

Students do well in the supportive, improving sixth form. They are determined learners with high aspirations for the next stages of their education or employment.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Throughout each key stage, the school's curriculum has academic rigour. In line with the school's 'entitlement', pupils study a wide range of subjects. This prepares pupils well for the next stages of their education or employment.

Including in the sixth form, the school has an established approach to building up pupils' knowledge over time. This informs subjects' well-thought-out 'learning journeys'. In many subjects, pupils attain highly and achieve well, including in the end of key stage 4 assessments. Leaders are taking effective steps to increase the number of pupils who study the full range of subjects in the English Baccalaureate.

Staff benefit from the trust's extensive programme of training to lead and teach the curriculum in their subjects. Teachers deliver the curriculum in line with the school's five pillars of learning. They routinely help pupils to consolidate previous learning through short, sharp recap and recall sessions. Teachers present new learning with clarity. They show pupils what is expected of them and break down new learning into manageable pieces. Teachers give pupils time for purposeful practice of new concepts. Typically, teachers make very effective use of assessment and are quick to pick up and correct misconceptions pupils may have. These are strong features in subjects sampled as part of this inspection. The impact of staffing changes has affected how consistently well the curriculum is delivered in a small number of

subjects. Where this is the case, some pupils' attitudes and learning are not so secure.

The school has a very effective system for supporting struggling readers. Staff identify pupils' needs precisely. A well-established phonics programme and plenty of reading practice help pupils become more fluent, confident readers. A school-wide focus on developing pupils' subject-specific vocabulary is relatively new. Where it is better established, pupils make accurate use of academic vocabulary.

Leaders have a detailed oversight of the needs of pupils with SEND. They use this information to create each pupil's individual profile. Teachers and support staff use these profiles to shape teaching to the needs of pupils. Many pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils attend well. Many go about their learning with good-humoured determination. They adapt admirably to the school's routines and high expectations of their behaviour. A small proportion of pupils' attitudes are sometimes not so positive. At times, they do not behave as well as they should in lessons and around the school site. Leaders continue to review and adapt the systems in place to support these pupils.

The school's passion to support pupils' personal development is evident in the excellent provision across all key stages. High numbers of pupils attend the wide range of high-quality enrichment activities. The school's 'Life' programme equips pupils with the knowledge they need to understand risk and make safe choices. Pupils learn, and value, important messages from additional sessions provided by uniformed services and external agencies. There is an impressive careers programme. Pupils, including those in the sixth form, get the support they need to make well-informed decisions about their futures. Nearly all pupils move into education or employment when they leave school.

Determined, cohesive leadership has navigated the school through a period of change. The school invests a great deal in its many avenues for engaging with parents. However, some parents express frustration about several aspects of the school's work, including how it responds to concerns that they raise.

The school has effective systems in place for staff to air their views. Staff are supported to manage their workload. For example, departmental staff share and compare their approach to teaching and assessment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small proportion of pupils take longer to embrace the school's ethos and high expectations. At times, these pupils do not behave as well as they should. The school should continue to monitor and adapt the systems in place to support these pupils to make positive behaviour choices.
- Some parents express unhappiness with aspects of the school's work, including how the school responds to concerns that they may have. The school should review and make appropriate amendments to its system for communicating with parents and in responding to concerns that they may have.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	135961
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10266122
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,995
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	229
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Earnshaw
CEO of the trust	Lee Wilson
Principal	Andrew Downing
Website	www.grange.outwood.com
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 February 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- The current principal has been in post since April 2022.
- The school makes use of four registered alternative provision providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held several meetings with the principal and other senior staff.
- Inspectors also met with several groups of teaching and support staff.
- Inspectors met with members of the academy council and also with two members of the trust board, including the chair of the trust.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: English, geography, languages, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons alongside school leaders, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with leaders and looked at samples of pupils' work in a small number of other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils about their learning and about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour across the duration of the inspection.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of pre-appointment checks, looked at safeguarding documentation, spoke with staff, pupils, governors and trustees and with an alternative provider. Inspectors considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed the parental responses received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered the responses received through Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

John Lucas, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Katie Spurr	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Hubbard	Ofsted Inspector
Thomas Wraith	His Majesty's Inspector
Tim Johnson	Ofsted Inspector

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