

Outwood Academy Normanby

Address: Normanby Road, South Bank, Middlesbrough, TS6 9AG

Unique reference number (URN): 147544

Inspection report: 2 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders assess pupils' needs accurately. For example, they have put in place effective practical steps to check whether pupils have language needs. Leaders identify the support that pupils require if they have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work effectively to plan and review strategies to meet these pupils' needs.

Leaders monitor pupils' progress and evaluate the impact of school strategies. For instance, leaders analyse the impact of additional funding on engagement of disadvantaged pupils with wider experiences. Staff work successfully with external partners to plan and implement support for pupils known (or previously known) to social care.

Typically, leaders reduce barriers to pupils' learning and/or wellbeing. Generally, teachers make reasonable adjustments and adaptations that enable pupils to learn the curriculum well. This is the result of effective and responsive training for staff on how to meet pupils' needs. For disadvantaged pupils, leaders generally take effective steps to enable them to participate and learn more. The resourced provision which opened in September 2025, effectively supports pupils to be included in the wider life of the school.

Leaders engage well with external agencies to shape pupils' support. This strengthens how the school meets pupils' needs. Leaders use alternative provision appropriately and ensure that it has a positive impact on pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's programme for personal development helps pupils learn about important topics like relationships, safety, and life beyond school. Pupils are given opportunities to explore issues that matter to them, such as mental health, bullying, and staying safe, and many can talk about these with confidence. They build knowledge about fundamental British values and the characteristics protected by law.

Staff make sure pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's clear expectations for respect and kindness help pupils to appreciate diversity and difference, although, at times, a minority of pupils continue to use derogatory language. The school recognises this and supports pupils with an appropriate range of interventions and pastoral support.

Through the personal development programme, pupils learn to recognise risk and to keep themselves safe, both online and offline. They learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. Pupils know how to report concerns, and the majority are confident that the

school takes these seriously. Recent additions to the school's pastoral structures have strengthened the way the school identifies and responds to any concerns raised.

The careers education programme is effectively delivered. Pupils of all ages have a clear understanding of how their education prepares them for future work or further education. This helps to prepare them for their next steps. Pupils enjoy the annual careers fair, visits to universities such as York and Teesside, as well as curriculum trips that bring their learning to life.

Leaders offer pupils a range of extra opportunities. Pupils encounter different experiences through thoughtful trips and visits, as well as community-focused activities. Pupils appreciate the chance to influence life in the local area and give back through 'Outwood out there' activities. Within school, sports clubs are popular and well attended by pupils, including disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. The school makes sure that clubs and opportunities are appealing and accessible so that all pupils benefit from the wide offer.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Examination results remain lower than they should be, although attainment has improved in recent years. This has had an early positive impact on disadvantaged pupils, because teaching has improved. However, this improvement has not led to secure progress in all areas. The work in books suggests outcomes are starting to rise, but this is not consistent across subjects. For example, pupils engage successfully in extended work in some subjects, showing more depth in their understanding. This is less evident in other subjects.

Pupils often talk confidently about their current learning. However, they are less secure in recalling what they have previously learned. Gaps in pupils' learning continue to hold them back. Periods of absence have added to these gaps, alongside the inconsistent checks from staff. As a result, some pupils are not as ready for the next stage of their education or training as they could be.

Support to strengthen pupils' essential skills, for example in reading, is having a clear impact. Pupils receive the help they need to be ready to engage with the curriculum.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching is not consistently effective. Leaders have an accurate understanding of where there is weaker practice and have taken appropriate action. The curriculum is designed to be inclusive and meet the needs of different groups of pupils. It also reflects both local and national issues. Teachers benefit from a professional learning programme that supports their practice. Staff model clearly and carefully structure tasks in lessons. Teachers are aware of the key knowledge they want pupils to learn. Too often, though, staff do not check pupils' understanding before moving on. This means gaps in pupils' knowledge are not recognised quickly enough. In some subjects, learning does not help pupils to develop increasingly detailed knowledge over time.

Teachers generally make effective use of the information and guidance they have about how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means they usually make appropriate adaptations for pupils with SEND. In addition, there is a coherent approach to ensuring that all pupils develop secure foundations in reading, vocabulary and mathematics. For example, pupils who most need additional help with reading in Year 7 receive this from the first week they are in school.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Leaders have taken action to bring about improvement in a number of crucial areas. With support from the trust, leaders have taken firm and decisive action in the best interests of pupils. They have ensured pupils get a wider range of enriching experiences and secured improvements in behaviour. However, attendance remains too low and pupils' achievement needs to further improve.

All those with leadership and governance responsibilities are fully committed to the improvement of the school. Trustees understand their statutory duties and have a secure oversight of key areas of the school's work. The trust and governors are proactive in their support of senior leaders to drive further improvement.

Leaders have taken the right action towards improving the quality of curriculum and teaching. They have a refined understanding of what is working well. Leaders have strengthened the professional learning programme for staff. For example, staff benefit from training around attachment and trauma, giving them a greater awareness and consistency in their support for pupils. Staff appreciate the thoughtful actions of leaders to support their wellbeing and workload. Many appreciate leaders' support with behaviour and the improvements they have seen.

Leaders at all levels are keen to further develop their constructive relationships with parents and carers, as well as the community more widely. Leaders engage well with external partners to support their work and meet pupils' needs. They recognise there is more to do to engage with parents, particularly in communication around specific incidents, so pupils are supported to achieve and feel a greater sense of belonging.

Urgent improvement

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement 

Attendance is too low. Leaders' strategic approach has seen small improvements for those who are severely absent, but there is much more to do. Persistent absence rates, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are too high. These show little, if any, sign of improvement. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to ensure that if pupils are not in school, they have regular contact with them. Leaders have a clear understanding of patterns of attendance and the context for individual pupils. They are aware of the barriers that pupils face. Leaders and staff have increased attendance for some pupils. Leaders have made recent changes to how they approach attendance,

including additional resources to support the effort for more pupils to be in school more regularly.

Leaders have made considerable improvements to the behaviour of pupils since the last inspection. For example, the number of suspensions, although still high, is reducing. Leaders set high expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons. Clear rules and routines are known by staff and pupils, although they are not always followed. Pupils appreciate the improvements to behaviour when they are learning. Many pupils show a positive attitude during their lessons.

Some pupils treat their peers disrespectfully. This means that some pupils experience bullying and unkind behaviour. Pupils recognise that this behaviour is unacceptable and report incidents to adults. Staff do not tolerate bullying and leaders act swiftly to address concerns when they are raised. However, the communication of actions taken is sometimes inconsistent. Consequently, some pupils and parents are unaware of the decisive action the school has taken.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are safe in this welcoming school. They have an adult who they can talk to if needed. Staff and pupils build positive relationships over time.

Overall, pupils' attendance is too low and has not improved recently. They miss too much time in school. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, they do not achieve as well as they could or benefit from the many improvements that leaders have made.

While pupils' behaviour is better than it was, there is more to do to strengthen the positive culture around school. Leaders have implemented and refined their approach to managing behaviour. They continue to raise the bar in terms of expectations. Everyone understands the consequences if they make a poor choice. Pupils' successes are celebrated. However, pupils do not show respect for each other at times. They can experience bullying, derogatory comments and unkind behaviour around the school. Pupils know this behaviour is unacceptable and report incidents. While leaders and staff act quickly, the resolution of incidents are sometimes not communicated effectively enough. A few pupils express frustration about this. However, they also know things have improved.

Many pupils focus well in lessons. They engage with their learning positively and are supported to do so effectively by teachers. Pupils with SEND get the help they need to engage with learning. Leaders monitor pupils who may be more vulnerable, act quickly and review this support regularly. Pupils' attainment is improving, including for disadvantaged pupils. However, in some subjects or lessons, pupils do not build on their prior knowledge successfully. Inconsistencies in teaching hinder some pupils from deepening their understanding.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of trips and enrichment activities. This makes school an interesting place to be. The school's wider offer expands pupils' view of the world and helps prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils can learn about, see and try out a range of

new, different and exciting experiences. These range from sporting activities to trips to local universities or visiting other countries.

Next steps

- Leaders should improve pupils' attendance, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, by working more effectively with parents and local agencies so that pupils who are persistently absent attend more often.
 - Leaders should improve the consistency of behaviour expectations and communicate these clearly so that pupils show mutual respect and staff communicate actions and support effectively to pupils and parents.
 - Leaders should improve the consistency and precision of assessment by ensuring that teachers use information effectively to adapt learning so that pupils build securely on what they already know.
 - Leaders should refine their approaches to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding so that more pupils achieve well in public examinations at the end of key stage 4.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Outwood Grange Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Lee Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Earnshaw.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, leaders from the school and from the trust, members of teaching and non-teaching staff and several groups of pupils during the inspection. An inspector spoke with a member of the board of trustees. An extensive number of lessons were visited across a range of subjects. Pupils' classwork was also considered.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with speech, language and communication needs.

The school makes use of 6 alternative provisions, including 3 that are unregistered.

Principal: Mark Robinson

Lead inspector:

Richard Wakefield, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Matthew West, Ofsted Inspector

Joanne Maw, Ofsted Inspector

Robert Spurr, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

765

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

750

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

53.20%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.75%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

24.05%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty, SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	29.5%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	30.9%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	25.4%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	35.4	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	34.7	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	31.0	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.34	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.54	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	26.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	22.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	23.9%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	31.0	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	29.5	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	27.8	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.56	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.83	-0.57	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	26.7%	53.1%	-26.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	22.8%	53.1%	-30.3 pp
2022/23 (final)	23.9%	52.4%	-28.5 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	31.0	50.4	-19.5
2023/24 (final)	29.5	50.0	-20.6
2022/23 (final)	27.8	50.3	-22.5

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.56	0.16	-1.72
2022/23 (final)	-1.83	0.17	-2.00

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	81%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	83%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	79%	94%	Below

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	12.2%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	13.4%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	13.1%	9.0%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	36.2%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	40.0%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	37.0%	26.5%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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