

Inspection of Outwood Academy Shafton

Engine Lane, Shafton, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 8RE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The principal of this school is Alison McQueen. 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 overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Earnshaw.

What is it like to attend this school?

Outwood Academy Shafton is a positive place to be. The school is building a culture of belonging and high aspiration. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They are keen to learn and keen to achieve. Pupils are safe here.

The school sets high expectations for the academic success of all pupils. Although last year's published results did not fully reflect these expectations, pupils' work and their ability to recall learning show that they are now achieving better.

Pupils conduct themselves well around school. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils enthusiastically participate in learning. They are developing their independent learning and oracy skills. Social times are calm and orderly. Pupils maturely access activities such as table tennis and table football during break and lunchtimes.

The school recognises pupils for their positive achievements. On 'proud Thursday', pupils receive recognition for their academic achievements. The 'tree of kindness' rewards encourage pupils to be positive members of the school community. This helps to promote the culture of belonging.

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

The school has developed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. The key knowledge that pupils should learn is clearly identified. Since the previous inspection, the school has focused on the consistent delivery of the curriculum, using an agreed method across the school. In many lessons, this method of curriculum delivery is consistently applied. As a result, pupils have a strong understanding of the curriculum in these areas. At times, teachers do not consistently choose the most appropriate activities to deliver the curriculum. In these areas, pupils do not achieve as well as they might.

Reading is a priority at the school. The school accurately identifies any pupils who are struggling to read. Effective support for these pupils ensures that they make good progress with their reading. Pupils develop their enjoyment of reading through weekly form-time reading activities.

The school quickly identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school trains staff to support pupils with SEND in lessons. This support allows most pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum. Pupils with SEND are well supported at the school.

The school has robust systems and processes in place to improve attendance. Attendance is everyone's business. The school offers support and challenge to pupils and parents and carers where appropriate. As a result, the number of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen significantly. However, attendance is still too low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Improving attendance must remain a priority for the school.

Behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils and staff understand the behaviour policy. This is applied consistently across the school. As a result, low-level disruption is rare. When it does occur, it is swiftly dealt with. The school uses suspensions appropriately.

The school's personal development offer is a strength. Pupils learn about British values. They understand tolerance and respect. Pupils say everyone is welcome here. Pupils access a wide range of extra-curricular activities daily. This helps them to develop their talents and interests. Pupil leaders, such as the charity ambassadors, well-being ambassadors and the school Prime Minister and their cabinet, positively contribute to the school and local community. Pupils access a well-considered careers offer. This helps to prepare them for their next steps in education or training.

Those responsible for governance have a strong oversight of the school. School leaders put effective strategies in place to reduce staff's workload. Staff feel well supported by the school. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the activities that staff give to pupils do not build knowledge or check understanding as effectively as they could. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they might. The school should ensure that teachers consistently select effective activities to deliver the curriculum and to check learning.
- Despite a clear overall attendance strategy, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This has a particular impact on pupils who are disadvantaged and who are absent from school more often than others. These pupils miss out on important learning. The school should continue to do all it can to improve attendance, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable pupils.

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	139211
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10346479
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,382
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Earnshaw
CEO of the trust	Lee Wilson
Principal	Alison McQueen
Website	www.shafton.outwood.com
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 September 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses three registered and four unregistered providers of alternative provision.
- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with the CEO of the trust, the vice chair of the trust and three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors met with the principal, other leaders and staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at social times, at transitions and in lessons. They also spoke with pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff through discussions and looking at information collected in the online surveys, including from Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Bell	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Senior	Ofsted Inspector
Tristan Keates	Ofsted Inspector
Aejaz Laher	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025