

# Outwood Academy Adwick

Windmill Balk Lane, Woodlands, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN6 7SF

## Inspection dates

26–27 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Outstanding</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable. Staff expectations are not consistently high across the school. This is having an adverse effect on pupils' learning and outcomes.
- Rates of absence and persistent absence are too high and improving too slowly.
- Although reducing, there is still too much low-level disruption in the school. It is having an adverse effect on some pupils' learning and outcomes.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed principal leads the school with vision, vigour and a real sense of urgency. Working with the trust, he has put in place careful and rigorous systems that are helping to assure improvement across the school.
- Local governors know the school and its vital place in the community well. They are increasingly challenging leaders to improve.
- Middle leaders are a strength of the school. Working with governors and senior leaders, they assess the effectiveness of teaching with increasing precision. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is becoming more consistent.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff receive appropriate training that ensures that they have the knowledge and skills to keep pupils safe.
- The 16 to 19 provision is good because it is focused carefully on students' needs. It raises their aspirations and guides them on to their next steps.
- The school's support for pupils and their families is strong. Expert and committed staff ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need.
- The school's curriculum is flexible, pupil-centred and varied. It is rooted in what pupils need to succeed.
- The school is well supported by the Outwood Grange Academies Trust. It is providing significant, carefully targeted and effective support to the school at every level.
- The vast majority of pupils enjoy school. They appreciate the time and effort that staff spend to help and support them. They feel safe.

## Full report

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

- Eradicate variations in the quality of teaching so that pupils make better progress by ensuring that:
  - all staff have the highest expectations of what pupils can, and should, achieve, including in the presentation and neatness of their work
  - all staff use the detailed information the school gathers on pupils to focus their teaching so that all pupils consistently make the progress that they should
  - the consistently good practice that is evident in much of the teaching at the school is systematically shared across all years.
- Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence.
- Further improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring that:
  - the school's well-thought-out behaviour strategies are fully embedded
  - pupils who, from time to time, find the school's high expectations of behaviour challenging continue to be carefully supported and encouraged to see the benefits of thoughtful behaviour.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The recently appointed principal, the local governing council and the trust are aware that the standard of education at the school has declined since its previous inspection. They are accurate and realistic in their assessment of what went awry and what now needs to be done. The trust recognises that it did not move promptly and effectively enough to address the decline in the school's effectiveness. It is very clear about what needs to be done and is working effectively with the principal and the local governing council to assure rapid improvement.
- Since his appointment in November 2018, the principal, working closely with the executive principal and the trust, has been forthright in his efforts to improve the school after two years of decline. He has put in place more rigorous systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and its effect on pupils' learning. These systems are already having a significantly positive effect on pupils' outcomes, particularly in key stage 4. The decline has now been halted.
- The principal has moved swiftly to develop a more focused, rigorous and accountable senior leadership team. This team, working with the local governing council and the trust, is now acting effectively to address the unacceptably high rates of pupil absence, particularly of disadvantaged pupils, at the school. The team has also acted effectively to address and reduce incidents of poor behaviour through a thoughtful and rigorously applied code of conduct.
- The principal and his team have also moved effectively to develop a team of skilled teaching and support staff to address the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. There are weekly training sessions for all staff to further improve their skills. Senior and middle leaders visit classrooms regularly to check on teaching quality. Although evidence from the inspection shows that much of the teaching at the school is effective because of leaders' actions, there is still too much that is not as it should be. Leaders and the trust are aware of this. They are determined that every pupil must experience high-quality teaching.
- Examination results at the end of key stage 4 in 2018 were very disappointing. Leaders and the trust are determined that 2019 outcomes will be significantly better for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders have moved swiftly to provide additional, carefully targeted support and learning opportunities for key stage 4 and, in particular, Year 11 pupils. The school's own internal monitoring, moderated and supported by the trust, shows that these actions are having a very positive impact on Year 11 pupils' progress. Evidence from this inspection supports this view.
- Middle leaders are an enthusiastic strength of the school. Because of the recent actions of senior leaders and the trust, they are now better trained and better placed to fulfil their roles in monitoring and developing the skills and knowledge of their teams. They have more direct involvement in improving the quality of teaching and support for pupils. Middle leaders also have close links with trust-wide subject and other leaders, as well as with local governors. These links are helping ensure the accuracy of middle leaders' judgements and further developing their skills and confidence.

- The school's curriculum is carefully structured around the needs and aspirations of pupils. In key stage 3, it is now taking pupils' experience in key stage 2 more fully into account. The curriculum allows a wide element of choice for pupils. It is broad and enables pupils to have experiences across a range of academic and other disciplines that both support their learning and enrich their experiences.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through the curriculum. The curriculum is supported by a range of other timetabled activities, mostly at the end of the school day, that give pupils additional opportunities to explore and develop new skills and existing enthusiasms. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their enjoyment of the additional opportunities the school offers. They are well prepared for their next steps in learning and for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders ensure that the additional funding to help pupils in Year 7 who need additional support in English and mathematics is deployed effectively. Links with partner primary schools are strong. The information gathered by the school about key stage 2 pupils' learning needs is used well to focus support where it is needed. The school's detailed records of these pupils' progress through Year 7 show that almost all make significant progress because of the school's actions.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is generally well deployed. Leaders have put in place effective systems to support these pupils' progress and remove barriers to their learning. The positive effect of this is most notable in Year 11, where one-to-one support, for example, is having a significant impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress and sense of success. In earlier years, the impact of the school's actions is not yet as clear. However, the focused support, challenge and care provided by the school through The Bridge and the personal learning centre are, according to pupils interviewed by inspectors, having a very positive effect on these pupils' attitudes to school and learning.
- The recently appointed leader with responsibility for the support of pupils with SEND is having a positive impact on the effectiveness of this aspect of the school's work. She is well supported by the principal and SEND colleagues at trust level. She has ensured that staff, including those new to the school, are aware of their responsibilities concerning pupils with SEND. She has provided training and ongoing support. She has also developed the roles of teaching assistants. Despite these actions, pupils with SEND are still not making the progress that they should.

## **Governance of the school**

- The trust and the academy council have addressed the issues that led to the decline in standards at the school. The academy council, supported by the trust, has been augmented by additional members with particular skills to address important aspects of the school's work, such as reducing variability in the quality of teaching.
- Governors are committed to ensuring that the school lies at the heart of the community and that it provides a high-quality education for every pupil. Council members are constantly seeking to improve so that they can better challenge leaders. They are provided with detailed information about the school's progress by the principal and his team. However, they do not rely on this information alone. They visit the school regularly and assess the effects of leaders' actions.

- Academy council members, led by the chair and vice-chair, are realistic about what still needs to be done to improve the school. For example, they are very aware of the unacceptable levels of absence. Records of their meetings show that they challenge leaders rigorously to address this and other urgent matters.
- The trust now supports the academy council effectively. Governors are well trained and are clear about their responsibilities. The trust provides extensive and carefully targeted support, for example through the deployment of additional staff in the weaker areas of the curriculum. Local governors work closely with the trust to monitor the effectiveness of these actions.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The policies and procedures for checking the suitability of visitors and staff recruitment are fit for purpose and secure. Leaders check staff's suitability to work with children appropriately.
- Leaders maintain a culture in the school where staff show a clear understanding of their responsibilities and of the processes that keep pupils safe. As a result, staff promptly identify, and appropriately support, potentially vulnerable pupils. They also tenaciously engage with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need.
- Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to stay safe, for example in class time, through assemblies and from regular visits from outside speakers. Pupils told the inspectors that they regularly learn about how to stay safe online.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they have staff they can go to if they have any concerns. They are confident that adults would listen to their concerns and take prompt and appropriate action. Pupils are appreciative of the way adults at the school take care of them.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because, although the majority of teaching is effective, there is too much that is not good enough. There is too much variability in staff expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. As a result, too many pupils are not making the sustained progress that they should.
- Where there is effective teaching at the school, pupils make good progress. This is because they are clear about what they have to do next to improve. Staff set out their high expectations clearly and pupils respond enthusiastically. Where the teaching is less effective, pupils make slower progress because they are not sufficiently clear about what they are doing. They do not go into enough depth to make strong, sustained progress in their learning.
- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching and expectations between subjects at the school. In English, for example, where expectations are mostly high, pupils make demonstrably surer progress. They rise to the challenge of high expectations with enthusiasm and engagement. In other, currently less consistently

effective subjects, where leadership is not so certain, progress is not so sure. Inspectors saw examples of pupils off-task and not clear about what they needed to do to make progress. They also saw less attention to detail, for example with pupils using pens rather than pencils to draw diagrams in science.

- Expectations of what pupils can, and should, be achieving are not high enough in some classes. In writing in subjects other than English, for example, misconceptions and errors of spelling and poorer presentation and handwriting are not being consistently challenged by staff. This is particularly the case with boys. Pupils, especially the most able and in the lower years of the school, are not being given enough opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English to develop their skills, knowledge and stamina as writers.
- Staff, generally, follow the school's assessment and feedback policy. However, too often, in the sizeable sample of pupils' writing books seen by inspectors, pupils were not completing the tasks that teachers set for them to improve their learning.
- Staff, generally, set homework in line with the school's policy. Much of the work to extend and develop pupils' learning takes place during support and enrichment sessions at the end of the day. These are generally effective. However, inspectors noted that the homework diaries that most pupils have to record their extension and homework contained little detail of the work to be done.
- Overall, teaching assistants are well deployed across the school. They are involved in planning and assessment with their teacher colleagues. However, where the purpose of learning is less certain, the positive impact of teaching assistants' work is also less certain.
- Pupils work well in collaboration with each other. They demonstrate strong social skills and regular opportunities are taken by staff to develop teamwork. Where pupils are fired by their learning, they are generous spirited and enthusiastic and relish challenge.
- Overall, although there is variability and opportunities are lost, staff's use of questioning is effective in helping pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding. In a Year 7 geography lesson, for example, the teacher used questioning and physical examples to help pupils remember the four types of erosion. Pupils were fully engaged and caught up by the teacher's high expectations and enthusiasm. The room buzzed with learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they know that there is always an adult at the school they could talk to if they felt worried or concerned. As a result of the carefully planned actions of the school, pupils are very clear about what bullying is and the various forms it can take. Pupils said that bullying is rare and that, when it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and well by staff.
- Pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of how to stay safe, including when on the roads and when online. Pupils were very positive about the opportunities the school gives them to explore and discuss risk.

- Pupils are typically polite and helpful. They are positive about school. They are willing to share ideas and work collaboratively. The vast majority contribute positively to aspects of the school because they know that their views are valued.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride. Overall, they take very good care of the school and of each other. There is very little litter on the site.
- The school's care for pupils and their families is very effective. Staff are tenacious in their dealings with outside agencies in their search for appropriate support for pupils and families who, for one reason or another, need care.
- The school is very alert to ensuring that pupils' mental health and well-being are carefully attended to. Counselling and other support services are readily available. The school also ensures that pupils recognise and can enjoy healthy lifestyles, making appropriate and safe life choices.
- The service the school offers pupils about careers, next steps and other independent advice and guidance is very effective. Pupils said that they recognise and appreciate the work staff do in supporting them.
- The school works closely and effectively with partners to ensure that pupils in alternative provision attend regularly, are safe and make progress. Staff at the school are in very regular contact with providers of alternative provision.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Although, overall, behaviour around the school and in class is improving, there are still too many examples of low-level disruption, particularly among younger pupils. Pupils told inspectors that they had noticed an improvement in behaviour across the school but that they still heard examples of foul language. They did say, however, that if staff heard any foul language, it was dealt with promptly.
- Behaviour in lessons is variable. Inspectors saw examples of low-level disruption, particularly when the pace of learning slowed. When staff expectations are high and pupils are engaged, behaviour is good, with pupils working collaboratively and well together.
- Levels of fixed-term exclusion are stubbornly high, despite the school's actions. Leaders have put in place targeted support for pupils whose behaviour is particularly challenging. A group of pupils who had been, in the recent past, regularly at risk of exclusion spoke with an inspector with genuine acknowledgement and appreciation of the work the school had done for and with them to improve their behaviour and attitudes to school and learning. It is still too early to judge the effect of the school's actions to support this aspect of behaviour.
- Levels of absence and persistent absence, despite the targeted efforts of leaders and staff, are still too high. Leaders, working with the trust, have put in place clear and rigorous systems of support and reward to reduce absence.
- The school's engagements with the parents and carers of pupils who find regular attendance difficult are rigorous and have the best interests of pupils' learning and well-being at their heart. These efforts are not always acknowledged and reciprocated by

parents. Despite this, there are clear signs of attendance improving. However, it is too early to say that these are being sustained.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because pupils do not make consistently good and better progress across the school. This is because teaching is not yet consistently good and staff expectations of what pupils can, and should, be achieving are not always high enough.
- Historically, outcomes at the end of key stage 4 have been disappointing. Outcomes for the current Year 11 at the end of this academic year are likely to be much improved. This is because of the actions of leaders and staff to reduce variability in the quality of teaching and to raise expectations. This view is supported by evidence from this inspection. Inspectors saw Year 11 pupils responding very positively to challenge from their teachers in the majority of their subjects.
- Outcomes lower down the school are not as strong because teaching is too variable. Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are not high enough. This is too often the case with boys, who are not doing as well as they should.
- A scrutiny of a wide range of pupils' books in a range of subjects from across the school showed that there is too much variability in pupils' progress and teachers' expectations. This was particularly the case for boys and for pupils with SEND and who are disadvantaged. However, it was also clear that, in the sample, there is evidence of strong progress for these same groups where teachers' expectations were high.
- The progress of pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged is improving because of the actions of leaders. However, it still lags behind that of their peers. These pupils' progress is too variable. It depends on the subject they are studying and who is teaching them.
- Pupils who enter the school in Year 7 who need support to improve their English and mathematics skills make generally good progress.
- The school is building more effectively on the work done by partner primary schools in key stage 2 by introducing a more demanding curriculum in Years 7 and 8. It is too early to judge the impact of this. However, reading is encouraged in Years 7 and 8 through a structured approach. Pupils say they enjoy this and gain pleasure from their reading.
- Pupils who, from time to time, find the high expectations of behaviour challenging are, generally, well supported by the school. The principal's high expectations for pupils' behaviour are matched by a carefully thought-out set of humane support structures designed to help pupils change their attitudes and see the importance and reward of good behaviour. These structures and the moral thinking behind them are beginning to have a positive effect on these pupils' awareness and well-being.
- The school knows the destinations of all the pupils who leave the school.



## 16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The sixth form provides a good service. It is well led and, increasingly, both academic and vocational programmes of study are carefully suited to the needs of students. They are making, generally, good progress from their starting points. In addition, the curriculum links with Outwood Academy Danum at sixth-form level have helped ensure that students have a wider choice of appropriate courses to choose from.
- Historically, there has been some variability in the quality and impact of teaching. This has led to variability, over time, in students' outcomes. However, current and more consistent monitoring by leaders and the trust and more targeted training for staff, combined with students following subjects and courses better suited to their aptitudes and aspirations, have led to better progress and higher levels of student satisfaction. The wider support from links with Danum is also having a very positive effect on the quality of the provision. However, leaders are aware that there is still some variability in the quality of teaching on both academic and vocational courses.
- Teachers, generally, display high levels of subject knowledge and, overall, through effective teaching, they engage and motivate students in their learning. During the inspection, in an A-level mathematics lesson for example, students, including those who were most-able, engaged in very high-level, academically stretching, discussion. The inspector described the learning that followed as 'palpable' in the way students were enthusiastically engaged. Overall, pupils work with focus and determination in lessons. Many are building strong, self-regulatory practice. They feel that there is a strong cooperative work ethic in the sixth-form body of students.
- Students in the sixth form are very positive about the quality of care and support that they receive from staff at the school. They say that they are safe and have ready access to staff if they have any concerns or worries. Relationships among students and between students and members of staff are open and respectful. As a result, levels of engagement in lessons are marked by exemplary behaviour and engagement. There is a very positive learning atmosphere.
- Students have access to high-quality careers and other independent advice and guidance. They take up offers of support and advice enthusiastically. As a result, they are well informed through one-to-one conversations with staff and other advisers, careers fairs, work experience and visits to universities and other providers as they make decisions about next steps, whether into employment, further training or higher education. As a result, over time, the number of students not in employment, education or training is very low. The proportion of students following A-level courses making applications to university has increased from 50% to 70%.
- Retention rates in academic and vocational courses are variable. In many cases, the cohort sizes are small, and it is not possible to evaluate this aspect fully. Overall, however, levels of student satisfaction are now consistently high, and this is having a positive effect on retention rates.
- Sixth-form students are aware of their responsibilities and the role they can play in the world and in the school as a whole. Many are involved in charity work and take on roles, for example working as mentors to younger pupils.
- Historically, the number of students taking GCSE qualifications in English and

mathematics to improve their grades has been small and variable from year to year. This is particularly the case in mathematics. In English, historically, the proportion improving their grade has been below the national average.

- Students' attendance has improved but requires further improvement.
- The judgement for the 16 to 19 study programmes differs from the overall judgement because leaders in this aspect of the school, working with the trust and Outwood Academy Danum, have been able to more quickly ensure that the sixth-form provision suits the particular needs and aspirations of post-16 Adwick students.

## School details

Unique reference number	135963
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10057878

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,070
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	86
Appropriate authority	Outwood Grange Academies Trust
Chair of the academy council	John Mounsey
Principal	Andrew Scruby
Telephone number	01302 722 237
Website	<a href="http://www.adwick.outwood.com/">www.adwick.outwood.com/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@adwick.outwood.com">enquiries@adwick.outwood.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	2–3 February 2016

## Information about this school

- Outwood Academy Adwick is slightly larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The remaining pupils originate from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND who are receiving support is broadly average. The proportion with education, health and care plans is broadly average.

- The school uses several alternative providers to educate a small number of its pupils. These include St Wilfred's Academy and Doncaster College.
- The school joined the Outwood Grange Academies Trust in 2009. The board of trustees is responsible for the school. There is a local academy council that has some delegated powers. Further information can be found on the trust's website.
- The school is a flagship partner in the local Higher Education Progression Partnership. This is a government-funded initiative to help ensure that more disadvantaged sixth-form students have access to higher education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 37 lessons across the school. In a number of these visits, they were accompanied by either the principal, the executive principal or another member of the leadership team.
- The inspectors met with the principal and the executive principal, other senior leaders, middle leaders and members of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors. Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including that related to safeguarding, achievement, the monitoring of teaching, attendance and behaviour.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and conduct at breaks, between lessons and at lunchtimes. They attended two assemblies.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide sample of pupils' work from most year groups, including the sixth form, and in a range of subjects.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their learning, safety and well-being. The lead inspector visited the school library.

## Inspection team

Mark Evans, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Debbie Redshaw	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Pridding	Ofsted Inspector
Gabrielle Reddington	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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