

Inspection of Outwood Alternative Provision Eston

Burns Road, Eston, Middlesbrough TS6 9AW

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities that enrich their experience of school. Those that include learning beyond the classroom are a strength of the school. Pupils develop their self-esteem and wider skills during activities such as camping, kayaking and other outdoor pursuits. Such opportunities are used effectively by the school to re-engage pupils with education. It recognises pupils' efforts and achievements regularly, including through the 'Outwood honours' system.

Pupils typically join the school at non-standard times in the school year. Often, pupils have experienced disruptions to their education, including as a result of exclusion. Staff work to establish positive relationships and win the trust of pupils quickly. This enables pupils to begin to feel confident in school. Pupils speak positively of the effective support that they receive from staff. They are confident to raise any concerns that they have with staff, trusting that the school will act to address these.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct and achievement. With support, most pupils realise these. The school works to help pupils to become more independent over time. This supports pupils to be increasingly well prepared for life beyond this school.

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

Most pupils join the school from others in the trust. Leaders ensure that at whenever pupils begin, the school gathers information about their previous experiences in education. This includes information about any special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school uses this information to inform the curriculum that pupils study and the additional support that they receive.

Most pupils achieve well, making secure progress through the curriculum during their time at this school. The school maintains an ambitious curriculum for pupils. It ensures that it is appropriately adapted to meet their needs. The majority of pupils secure nationally recognised qualifications. These include GCSEs in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Alongside this, pupils benefit from a well-considered careers education programme. Together, these prepare pupils well for success in their next steps.

Staff have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. The trust provides additional support to those staff who teach outside their subject specialism. This enables staff to explain new topics clearly. The school trains teachers in its agreed approach to teaching the curriculum. Typically, staff implement this approach effectively. They use questions to extend pupils' responses and understanding. This helps pupils, including those with SEND, to become more secure in their knowledge of the curriculum. Occasionally, checks on what pupils know are not used as well as they could be. Sometimes, when this happens, subsequent teaching is not precisely

matched to pupils' prior knowledge. This can hamper how quickly pupils learn the intended curriculum.

Reading has high importance in the school. Pupils read regularly as part of the school's curriculum. They engage with these sessions positively. The school has established a phonics programme for those pupils in the earliest stages of learning to read. This is effective, enabling pupils to sound out unfamiliar words and become more competent readers. Where appropriate, the school works with external agencies, including speech and language therapists. This means pupils get the help that they need. However, the school's wider approach to improving pupils' reading is underdeveloped. It does not consistently identify pupils' specific barriers to reading. This means that the support for these readers is not always well matched to their individual needs. Consequently, some pupils do not consolidate earlier improvements in their reading. This slows the progress that make towards reading at an age-appropriate level.

Pupils' behaviour is generally positive. Pupils expressed to inspectors that the school's approach was helping them to manage their behaviour more effectively than they had in their previous schools. Positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute strongly to this improvement. When pupils struggle to meet the school's expectations, skilled staff support them effectively. Although suspensions remain higher than leaders want, these are used appropriately. Pupils are well supported on their return to school.

Improving pupils' attendance is of the upmost importance. A large majority of pupils improve their attendance, often significantly when they first join the school. For most, these gains are sustained or improve further. However, this is not consistently true. For a minority of pupils, the school does not identify accurately ongoing barriers that prevent more regular attendance. Consequently, it is less able to support these pupils to increase their attendance over longer periods of time. As a result, these pupils miss important learning and other experiences.

The school provides pupils with a high-quality 'personal development and growth' curriculum. This includes the personal, social and health education and relationships and sex education curriculums. It is ambitious for what pupils should know, meeting the requirements of relevant statutory guidance. Pupils enjoy these lessons. They can talk confidently about several of the topics covered, such as maintaining their physical and mental health.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They are well supported in their roles, including with high-quality training.

The proprietor ensures that the school site is maintained appropriately. Any minor issues that were identified during the inspection were resolved quickly. The proprietor is experienced in running successful schools. It maintains secure oversight of the school's performance. The proprietor meets its duties, including fulfilling the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality act 2010. It ensures that the independent school standards are met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school's approach to developing pupils' reading fluency and closing gaps to age related expectations is underdeveloped. Some pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of in reading once they can decode words accurately. The proprietor should ensure that the school accurately identifies pupils' barriers to reading fluently and at an age-expected level. It should ensure that staff have the required expertise to address these swiftly and effectively.
- Rates of attendance are not high enough. For a minority of pupils, the school has not accurately identified the support that pupils need to attend more regularly. These pupils miss important learning and wider opportunities provided by the school to strengthen their development. The proprietor should ensure that the school has an effective strategy to identify and remove barriers to regular attendance so that initial improvements are consistently built on over time.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	148341
DfE registration number	807/6003
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10391801
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Outwood Grange Academies Trust
Chair	David Earnshaw
Headteacher	Rachel Conway
Annual fees (day pupils)	£130 per day
Telephone number	01642056440
Website	www.eston.outwood.com
Email address	enquiries@eston.outwood.com
Date of previous inspection	15 to 17 November 2022

Information about this school

- The school is located at: Burns Road, Eston, Middlesbrough, TS6 9AW.
- The school is part of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust. This is a national multi-academy trust that runs other maintained schools.
- All pupils at the school have SEND. For most, the primary area of need is social, emotional and mental health.
- Many pupils attend the school following permanent exclusion from another setting.
- Most pupils who attend the school are dual registered with another school in the trust. Both Redcar and Cleveland and Middlesbrough local authorities also commission places at the school. Pupils for whom the local authorities commission places are single registered.
- The school does not currently use any other alternative provision.
- Although the school is registered to accept pupils from 11 years old, all current pupils are in Years 8 to 11 and are 12 years old or above.
- 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

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The lead inspector met with members of the proprietor board and other leaders from the trust.

- During the inspection, inspectors met with the head of centre. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, physical education and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also reviewed samples of pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation regarding the support pupils with SEND receive. They looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including key policies as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times.
- To check the school's compliance against the independent school standards, inspectors completed a tour of each of the school premises as well as reviewed a sample of risk assessment and maintenance documentation.
- The lead inspector spoke to representatives of Middlesbrough local authority.
- The views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Thomas Wraith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Carr

His Majesty's Inspector

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