

Outwood Academy Carlton

Royston Lane, Carlton, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 3EW

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Well supported by governors and the trust, leaders have systematically improved the school. Leaders at all levels are resolute in their belief that pupils are entitled to the highest quality of education and this is reflected in their actions. Capacity for improvement in the future is strong.
- Staff morale is high. A well-considered programme of professional development ensures that staff continuously improve their skills and knowledge.
- Teachers generally have high aspirations for their pupils. Classrooms are typically characterised by a purposeful atmosphere where most pupils work hard.
- Most pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Occasionally, the work set by teachers is not well matched to pupils' needs. Where this is the case, pupils' progress is more variable.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who attend the resourced provision for communication and interaction, is effective.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. It provides opportunities for pupils of all abilities to be successful and to move on to aspirational next steps.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is good. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain through a curriculum which teaches them how to keep safe and which instils the importance of respect for others.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel safe at school.
- Some pupils' behaviour requires further improvement. Over time, the rate of fixed-term exclusions has been very high. Leaders have acted to bring about a notable reduction in the use of exclusions, but the proportion of pupils excluded from school or removed from the classroom for poor behaviour remains too high.
- Despite the determined and focused actions of leaders, rates of absence and persistent absence for some pupils remain too high.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance and reduce the persistent absence of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.
- Reduce the rate of fixed-term exclusions and the proportion of pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for poor behaviour by:
 - ensuring that pupils new to the school understand and quickly adhere to expectations, preventing disruption to learning.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that all teachers set work that enables pupils of different abilities to make strong progress
 - ensuring that all teachers follow the school's behaviour policy consistently.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the school opened, the trust has quickly and securely improved the quality of education on offer to pupils. The school is oversubscribed in Year 7 and the number of pupils on roll is growing. Pupils achieve well because teaching is typically good and support for pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders and governors have demonstrated the capacity to build on this transformation.
- The morale of staff is high. Newly qualified and recently qualified teachers are enthusiastic about the support they receive to develop their skills at this early stage of their careers. Middle leaders are motivated and feel empowered to take decisions to further improve how well pupils achieve.
- Leaders have successfully instilled a culture where teachers and support staff expect to be challenged and supported continuously to improve. Training needs are well matched to individuals' requirements. Particularly skilled teachers are effectively deployed to support staff who need further help and guidance.
- Additional pupil premium funding and Year 7 catch-up funding are used to good effect by leaders. Leaders have a clear understanding of the barriers to success faced by some disadvantaged pupils and those who need additional help with their literacy and numeracy. The strategies put in place are effective in enabling these pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders have established a broad and balanced curriculum which supports pupils of different abilities to succeed. Recently, leaders have changed how they offer the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects (sciences, history, geography and modern foreign languages), so that more pupils can access A-level courses and aspire to go to university. This ambition, combined with effective careers guidance, has led to a higher proportion of pupils progressing to appropriately challenging next steps when they leave school.
- Through 'Life' lessons, tutorial sessions and assemblies, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, they are taught about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the opportunities available to them to take up leadership roles, such as through the 'ambassadors scheme'. 'The LGBT Club' is viewed positively by pupils in helping to promote tolerant attitudes.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) awareness is effectively nurtured and developed. 'Lightbulb' moments are used by teachers to draw pupils' attention to SMSC issues raised by the lesson's content. Pupils engage in these learning opportunities with maturity and interest.
- Pupils benefit from the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities available to them. Although attendance at these is optional, a substantial proportion of pupils participate every week. Activities include a blend of additional subject sessions, such as online mathematics, together with enrichment activities such as cookery, music and sport. Leaders use the enrichment curriculum to raise pupils' aspiration. For example, the 'Scholars' Programme' encourages pupils in Years 8 and 9 to aim for university.

- Leadership of the resourced provision for pupils with SEND is very effective. Support for pupils with SEND is individualised so that they receive the help they require.
- Despite leaders' actions to reduce fixed-term exclusions and improve attendance for a group of especially challenging pupils, leaders have yet to see the step change in behaviour that they have been hoping for. They are not complacent, however, and recognise that there is still work to do so that behaviour is good throughout the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders provide detailed and honest reports about the school's performance. Governors use this information effectively and are robust in challenging leaders where there are still improvements to be made.
- The trust board provides clear strategic direction for the governors on the academy council. The joint academy council arrangement with a neighbouring trust school provides governors with useful points of comparison and contrast. This helps governors to ask pertinent questions of leaders. For example, governors are searching in their challenges around pupils' progress, attendance, behaviour, exclusions and bullying.
- Governors share the drive and determination of school leaders. They recognise the challenges facing the school, but do not use external factors as a reason to limit their ambition.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders' checks on the suitability of adults to work in the school are thorough. Leaders ensure that staff are up-to-date in their training so that they know the danger signs to look out for to keep children safe. There is a strong culture of vigilance throughout the school. Checks on absence, for example, are conducted diligently.
- Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are quick to identify the signs that suggest that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders act promptly to make referrals to appropriate external agencies and follow up referrals with tenacity when required.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. The majority of pupils who spoke with inspectors reported that bullying is rare, but that when it occurs it is taken seriously by leaders and addressed quickly. A few parents are not as confident that bullying is always dealt with effectively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Across a wide range of subjects and year groups, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning is, in most cases, effective in sequencing tasks which enable pupils to make good progress. Most pupils are engaged in their learning and eager to know and understand more. A few pupils occasionally disrupt the learning of others.
- Often, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set tasks appropriately to stretch and challenge them. Pupils told inspectors that they feel

challenged most of the time and inspection evidence confirms that this is generally the case. Sometimes, however, the work set does not demand enough of pupils and this limits the progress they make.

- Teachers use questions skilfully to test pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils often ask questions of their own to check their understanding of new learning. It is common to see pupils working collaboratively on tasks, across a variety of subjects and in both key stages. The atmosphere in classrooms is, most of the time, purposeful and cooperative.
- It is clear from the evidence of work in pupils' books that strong progress is made by pupils from different starting points, including the most able pupils and those working below the standard expected for their age. Schemes of work are used appropriately to ensure that pupils learn essential curriculum knowledge before moving on to the next stage. Teachers make effective use of the school's systems for checking pupils' progress to provide pupils with helpful guidance so that they can improve.
- While homework is generally set in line with the school policy, some pupils reported to inspectors that they do not receive much homework. Leaders plan to review their approach to the setting and use of homework.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make good progress because of the range of strategies used to support them. Leaders have ensured that systems for monitoring how well all pupils are doing are effective in catching pupils before they slip too far behind.
- Leaders have put in place a strategy for the improvement of pupils' literacy. Reading has a high profile in school, through targeted intervention to support the weakest readers as well as a school-wide reading policy. As a result, pupils' vocabularies are beginning to grow. The development of a common approach to strengthening pupils' basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar is effective in enabling pupils to write with increasing accuracy.
- Pupils with SEND who attend the resourced provision are educated within mainstream lessons most of the time. Assessments are used to identify appropriate support strategies and targets for these pupils. Teachers make effective use of such information to plan appropriate tasks so that pupils with SEND make good progress.

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 are well supported to become successful learners. Consequently, most take pride in their work and keep their books tidy and well presented. In most lessons, they listen attentively and respectfully to the contributions made by their peers. Often, pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and to help each other in class.
- There is a wealth of support available to pupils to help them to become well-rounded young people. Careers guidance is a priority and is threaded throughout year groups. As a result, pupils are ready for their next steps beyond school.

- Visitors are invited into school to talk to pupils about a range of issues which are developed further in 'Life' lessons. Pupils are confident in their understanding of: how to stay safe online; the different forms of bullying and what to do should it happen; disability awareness; racism; and other cultures, faiths and traditions.
- Pupils with SEND who attend the resourced provision are well supported in their personal development and welfare. The help they receive is often bespoke, adapted to meet pupils' individual needs.
- The school's partnerships with providers of alternative education are effective in ensuring that pupils' personal development and welfare needs are met. Leaders maintain regular contact with the providers, monitoring pupils' attendance, behaviour and wider development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The behaviour of most pupils, most of the time, is sensible and respectful. However, at times, a minority of pupils do not meet the school's expected standards of behaviour and disrupt the learning of others. On occasions, a small proportion of teachers do not follow the school's behaviour policy. Consequently, off-task behaviour sometimes goes unchallenged. A few pupils told inspectors that they are frustrated that not all teachers apply the policy consistently. Some parents believe that behaviour in lessons and around school is sometimes disruptive.
- Leaders have taken action to reduce the number of pupils excluded for a fixed-term. As a result, there has been a year-on-year reduction, since the school opened, in the proportion of pupils excluded for a fixed period. The number of days lost to exclusion is reducing. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are excluded has also begun to reduce. However, because the rate of exclusion previously has been extremely high, fixed-term exclusions continue to be well above the national average.
- Compared with the same time last year, following changes to the behaviour policy, there is a reduction in the number of instances of pupils being removed from lessons to spend time in the consequences room. As a result, less learning time is lost.
- Despite the actions of leaders, too many pupils are absent too often. The rate of persistent absence is well above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are absent at a rate which is above the national average. There are signs of improving attendance, particularly for Years 7 and 8, because leaders' actions have had more impact here.
- Leaders know that they face a major challenge to reduce fixed-term exclusion further and improve attendance. They recognise that they have not seen the improvement anticipated. In part this is because external factors are slowing the impact of their work. For example, a substantial number of pupils with significant, complex behavioural needs have transferred into the school. Some of these pupils have been permanently excluded from other schools or have moved schools as a measure to prevent a permanent exclusion. These pupils account for a significant proportion of fixed-term exclusions and removals to the consequences room as leaders work with them to establish the school's expected standards of behaviour. To leaders' credit, the

rate of permanent exclusion is below the national average as they strive to keep these pupils, including those who exhibit challenging behaviour, in mainstream education.

- Similarly, the growth in the number of pupils as a result of 'in-year transfers' has had an effect on overall attendance. Many of the pupils arriving mid-year have complex needs which affect their attendance. Often, these are pupils who also exhibit very challenging behaviour, leading to exclusion, which in turn is lowering the rate of attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' outcomes have improved over time. Typically, pupils join the school with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics which is well below the national average. However, in 2017 and 2018, the proportion of pupils who attained a strong pass in both English and mathematics was above the national average.
- Pupils' progress in a range of subjects, by the time they leave the school, is above the national average, particularly in English and mathematics. Progress in a wide range of other subjects is at least in line with the national average and in some cases is above the national figure.
- The progress of lower- and middle-prior-attaining pupils by the end of Year 11 was above the national average in both 2017 and 2018. For the most able pupils, progress was in line with the national average.
- At the end of Year 11 in 2018, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was variable. In English and mathematics, progress was strong. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in some other subjects, such as science and the humanities, was inconsistent.
- Evidence of work seen in pupils' books indicates that current pupils are making good progress from their starting points across a range of subjects and year groups. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. There is strengthening progress in subjects where leaders have taken effective action to improve outcomes, such as technology and modern foreign languages.
- Leaders have been effective in improving the proportion of pupils who progress to appropriate further education or training at the end of Year 11. The number of pupils who progress to A-level courses is increasing. The proportion of pupils overall who progress to a sustained education or training destination is above the national average.
- Pupils with SEND who attend the resourced provision make good progress as a result of effective teaching, support and leadership.

School details

Unique reference number	139210
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10059021

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	982
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the local academy council	David Webber
Principal	Paul Haynes
Telephone number	01226 728494
Website	www.carlton.outwood.com
Email address	p.haynes@carlton.outwood.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT) in February 2016. Responsibility for governance of the school rests with the board of trustees. There is a local academy council which operates jointly with a neighbouring OGAT school. The academy council has some delegated authority.
- The school hosts a resourced provision for 25 pupils with communication and interaction difficulties, principally autism.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with SEND who are in receipt of support is below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The remaining pupils are from a wide range of ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support from the pupil premium funding is above the national average.

- The school makes use of several providers of alternative education: Action to Change, Barnsley College, Focus Training and Academy 21.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a wide range of lessons, sometimes accompanied by senior leaders. During these visits, inspectors talked to pupils and looked in their books.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across several subjects, with different year groups and ability groups represented.
- Meetings were held with the principal and the associate executive principal. An inspector met with the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer of the trust. A meeting was held with members of the board of trustees and the joint academy council.
- Inspectors met senior leaders with responsibility for: attendance; behaviour; SEND, including the resourced provision; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; careers education, information advice and guidance; literacy; the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding; the curriculum; and safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, drawn from different year groups and including pupils who attend the resourced provision. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils around the site at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, on corridors, in social spaces such as the dining room and at the end of the day when pupils were leaving the school site.
- Inspectors visited the school's internal bases for supporting more vulnerable pupils, as well as those who have not adhered to the school's behaviour policy. These included the resourced provision, The Bridge, the Progress Learning Centre (PLC) and the 'consequences room'.
- An inspector listened to some pupils in Years 7 and 8 read.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone to one of the providers of alternative education used by the school.
- A wide range of documentation was examined. This includes leaders' self-evaluation and development plans, minutes of the trust board and academy council meetings, attendance, behaviour and exclusion information and pupils' progress information. Leaders' processes for vetting adults' suitability to work in school were checked, along with safeguarding files.
- An inspector spoke by telephone with a parent of a pupil attending the school. Inspectors considered one letter and one email received from parents. In addition, consideration was given to the 36 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, together with 30 free-text responses. The 21 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Steve Shaw, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Barbara O'Brien	Ofsted Inspector
Janice Gorch	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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