

Outwood Academy Adwick

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

Inspection dates

2–3 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Outwood Academy Adwick provides an outstanding quality of education. Standards are high and continue to rise for all pupils, including the disadvantaged.
- The quality of teaching is superb. Much is inspirational. Teachers are dedicated, caring and meticulous in ensuring that the needs of pupils are met.
- Pupils respond with outstanding behaviour. They are well mannered, mature and eager to do their very best in lessons.
- Pupils' awareness of how to stay safe is outstanding. They say bullying is rare, and dealt with effectively by staff if it does occur.
- The quality of the 16 to 19 study programmes is outstanding. Apart from the high standards achieved by learners, there is a plethora of activities available which help them to develop excellent personal, social and employability skills.
- Leadership and management are exceptional. The school's 'students first' motto is upheld by every member of staff. This strong ethos puts the interest of the pupil at the heart of every facet of school life.
- All of the leaders, including the chief executive, devote much of their time to direct involvement with pupils, being highly committed to their academic and personal success.
- Morale is high, with almost all staff being justifiably proud to be working in the school.
- Members of the governing body, through their impressive dedication and local knowledge, offer a very high level of support and challenge to the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further still in the sixth form by increasing the proportion of learners reaching top grades at A level.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The school owes most of its success to the structures, systems and support provided by the Outwood Grange Academies Trust under the inspirational leadership of its chief executive. Senior leaders are deployed very effectively to the most pressing needs of the organisation. Financial arrangements, human resource management and administrative functions are expertly handled by a core central team. Ultimately this means that pupils at this school receive the best possible education.
- The Principal leads by example, she knows the pupils well and is highly visible around the school. She expertly handles the day-to-day running of the school and provides high-quality strategic leadership to her senior team.
- Middle leaders have excellent skills to coach and mentor teachers to achieve their best. The school has been very successful in developing previously less effective teachers who are now, under this extremely supportive umbrella, performing exceptionally well.
- School development plans are sharp and focused. Building on the school's strengths, the high level of scrutiny enables leaders to keep a close eye on initiatives to ensure that they continue to be effective.
- The curriculum is first rate. Subject directors, working directly for the trust, offer cutting-edge, up-to-date materials, advice, support and mentoring for teachers in the school. The high level of consistency across the trust enables subject directors to ensure that assessments are accurate and give consistent advice and support to all teachers. The curriculum provided for those who enter the school with low literacy levels is excellent, with a rich menu of appropriate interventions available to boost pupils' spelling and reading skills. A wide range of trips and visits, including an annual residential trip for the whole of Year 8, is used extremely well to considerably enhance learning.
- British values are promoted strongly across the curriculum. Detailed planning of the curriculum ensures that there are many opportunities to address issues related to extremism, democracy and the rule of law.
- The extra funding that is provided to the school to close the gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is expertly managed and the difference it is making is measured meticulously.
- Performance management arrangements are well managed and clearly linked to teachers' skills in the classroom. The bar is set appropriately high and no teachers progress up the pay ladder if there are any doubts that their teaching meets the exacting standards set by the trust.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have many complementary skills, such as in safeguarding, local education, local government and finance, to support the school well. For example, a governor arranged for a local female councillor to talk to girls about entering the world of politics.
 - In particular, governors have a very detailed understanding of the community in which the school is situated.
 - The governing body receives excellent and regular information on pupils' achievement. This enables its members to challenge school leaders incisively about the progress of different groups of pupils.
 - Governors are a frequent presence in the school and generously give their time to talking to pupils, mentoring them and going above and beyond what is usually expected.
 - Governors have exceptionally good understanding of the financial management of the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet all current government requirements. Appropriate checks are made when recruiting staff, who are then provided with high-quality training to help them identify potential safeguarding concerns. There are strong links with outside agencies which support vulnerable pupils. The site is safe and secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teachers skilfully use assessment information to identify pupils' gaps in learning and address them without delay. They mark pupils' work well and in line with the school policy, giving them very clear next steps to follow which then most pupils respond to and improve their work as a result.
- Teaching assistants support pupils well and know just how much support to give without making the pupils over-reliant on them. Assistants are adept at enabling pupils to solve their problems independently and appropriately and allowing them to learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers go out of their way to bring learning alive for pupils, such as in one lesson where pupils were

composing music in a West African style, dramatically using djembe drums, working out their own rhythms collaboratively.

- The high-quality resources for learning are used to good effect in driving up achievement. For example, 'the dirty thirty' posters in many corridors outline the 30 most commonly misspelled words in various subjects. Pupils quickly learn to fully understand how to reason mathematically, making appropriate use of counters, bricks and blocks in their mathematics lessons.
- Teachers, through their excellent subject knowledge, help pupils to make connections between subjects. For example, in one lesson, pupils were seen improving their French through learning about local geography.
- Teachers' own passion for their subject in turn enthuses pupils. This means that pupils remain focused, on-task and enthralled in whatever they are learning. Consequently, their attitudes to learning and behaviour in class is excellent.
- Fundamental British values are promoted right through the curriculum across all subjects and in assemblies.
- Teachers question pupils skilfully, ensuring that they receive full, well-considered answers. This deepens pupils' understanding, which then helps them when answering questions in exam situations.
- Teachers' assessments are accurate as a result of very close collaborative working with other academies within the trust. Subject directors expertly oversee the quality of teaching and the curriculum across all the trust academies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school and appreciative of the caring adults who go out of their way to ensure that pupils' welfare is given top priority. As one pupil put it: 'They really, truly care about us.'
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are strong. This is because promoting them is part of the fabric and ethos of the school. Positive values are instilled in pupils from the moment they step over the school threshold. Praise is lavished upon learners when they achieve, not only academically, but also for upholding one of the 10 'pledges' for taking an active part in community and school life. Consequently, pupils thrive and become responsible young people and ready for life in a democratic modern Britain by the time they leave.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel completely safe and secure. They say that on the rare occasions when they encounter bullying, it is dealt with firmly by caring staff. Their awareness of how to stay safe when using the internet is strong. Homophobic name-calling is rare, as are any incidents of racism.
- Attendance is rising quickly towards national averages for all groups of pupils. Staff go to extraordinary lengths to deal with persistent absence when it occurs, including making immediate home visits. This is also closely monitored by the governors.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In lessons, pupils concentrate hard, work to the best of their ability and contribute willingly to discussions and debates. This is because they have a real will to do well and are fully on board with the school's ethos that a good education is likely to open doors for them when they leave school. In particular, what makes behaviour outstanding is that pupils police their own behaviour. Few, if any, reminders are needed by adults on how to behave. Pupils simply know the rules and are more than happy to abide by them, knowing that they are there for everybody's benefit.
- Inspectors saw some assemblies in which pupils were impeccably behaved.
- Around the school at lunchtime and breaktime, pupils talk respectfully to each other and to staff. No bad language was heard by inspectors and pupils wear their uniform with pride. The site is neat, tidy and litter-free.
- The behaviour of pupils educated off the school site is monitored closely through regular communication with the training provider. They attend regularly and behave well.
- The school has many excellent pastoral strategies, for example, its permanently based police officer, spending much of his time working intensely with pupils who might be at risk of offending, leads to excellent improvements in their behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils **are outstanding**

- On entry to the school, pupils have abilities that are below those typical for their age. They make very fast progress in each year, leaving in Year 11 with standards that are above average. This outstanding progress continues to be sustained in each year they are at the school.
- Rates of progress for pupils currently in the school are soaring. The school's very thorough systems for tracking pupil progress indicate that the current Year 11 pupils are in line to continue to achieve exceptionally well.
- In mathematics, pupils quickly become fluent in the essential skills of calculating. They come to know their times tables very quickly if they did not know them when they started in Year 7. Rather than focusing only on memorising general rules about mathematics, they gain a thorough and deep understanding of how numbers relate to each other. Moreover, the many opportunities they have to put mathematics into real situations bring the subject alive and help them to enjoy the subject immensely and do well in examinations.
- In English, there is a real focus on getting the basics right. For the many pupils that arrive in Year 7 with weak reading and writing skills, this emphasis on spelling, punctuation, grammar, speaking and listening is of immense value. For others, it means they become confident writers and fluent readers. Many pupils from across the school read for pleasure in the well-stocked library.
- In other subjects, pupils are currently making rapid progress, notably in film studies and computing.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is outstanding. No stone is left unturned to ensure that they receive the closest attention to their academic needs. The superb system of tracking progress against challenging targets acts as an early warning system if any pupils begin to fall behind in any subject. Consequently, they make similar progress to others in the school and their attainment is rapidly approaching that of others nationally.
- In 2015, the most able made slightly less progress than other ability groups in English. Current indications, supported by observation of the most able in lessons and scrutiny of their English work, and the school's progress information, show that they are making rapid progress and the majority are expected to meet or exceed their challenging targets.
- Inspectors also looked carefully at the progress of pupils who had been excluded on a fixed term. They found these pupils also made rapid progress and that the school's strict behaviour policy that includes excluding for a day had no detrimental impact on their learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress. Plans designed to support their learning are updated frequently. The school operates a range of options, depending on what is most suitable for the individual pupil, that successfully help to boost their basic mathematics and English skills.

16 to 19 study programmes **are outstanding**

- Life in the sixth form at the school goes beyond providing academic excellence. It is an experience which truly prepares them for life as a young adult, whether that be at university, in further training or in the world of work. Overseas visits, a range of opportunities to engage in voluntary work, public speaking, and supporting younger pupils with their work are not additions to the curriculum but very much part of the diet of the sixth-form learner. Consequently, they become self-assured, confident people when they leave.
- Outcomes for learners are high and rising. In vocational subjects, learners have made excellent progress for some years. In the academic subjects, progress has been good, but is rapidly improving. Although there are relatively few grade A* to B grades at A level than normally found, progress for all groups of learners is accelerating quickly.
- Excellent support is provided for those learners who arrive in the sixth form without at least a grade C in English and mathematics. Consequently, many achieve considerable success in their studies by the time they have completed the sixth form.
- Learners' progress is tracked following on from the same systems used in Years 7 to 11. This enables highly effective assessment in identifying learners who are at risk of underachieving so that prompt action can be taken.
- The quality of independent advice and guidance is excellent. Well-planned work experience is provided to learners that is closely based on relevance to their courses, the most able attending seminars at Cambridge University. Careers fairs are regularly held. As a result of this high-quality advice, all learners

are successful in finding a place at university, further training or work when they leave. In 2015, 89% of sixth-form learners went to university.

School details

Unique reference number	135963
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10002161

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,084
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	155
Appropriate authority	Outwood Grange Academies Trust
Chair	John Mounsey
Principal	Carolyn Blundell; Chief Executive: Sir Michael Wilkins; Chief Executive Designate: Martyn Oliver
Telephone number	01302 722237
Website	www.adwick.outwood.com
Email address	enquiries@adwick.outwood.com
Date of previous inspection	26 November 2013

Information about this school

- Outwood Academy Adwick is a slightly larger than average secondary school serving the urban area to the North West of Doncaster.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to support disadvantaged pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.)
- The school population is largely of White British background, with fewer pupils than average speaking English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The school is part of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust.
- The school uses an external provider, 'TOPS', for off-site education provision for a minority of pupils in Key Stage 4.
- Many senior staff from the school provide support to other schools on a daily basis. There is a training centre on the site which is a venue for teacher training events and conferences. The chief executive and chief executive designate are both national leaders of education.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching throughout the school; a number of observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors looked through pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, staff, governors and parents. The lead inspector met regularly with the chief executive of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust.
- The inspection team scrutinised various documents, including development plans, child protection case files, and records relating to attendance and behaviour. Inspectors also scrutinised how funds for disadvantaged pupils were being used.
- Inspectors took account of the 69 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and received several letters from parents. Additionally, they scrutinised 72 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and spoke to many staff about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Judith Gooding	Ofsted Inspector
Sean McClafferty	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector

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