

De Lacy Academy

Middle Lane, Knottingley, West Yorkshire WF11 0BZ

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong and purposeful leadership by the executive principal has brought about significant improvements since the last inspection.
- The academy trust's new leadership and recently increased support have accelerated the pace of improvement.
- Firm performance management and coherent professional development have improved the quality of teaching and learning.
- Effective whole-school approaches underpin the good teaching. As a result, pupils learn consistently well across year groups and subjects. In a few cases, teachers are still learning to apply recently introduced methods.
- The trust has been instrumental in setting high standards of behaviour.
- Behaviour is good in classrooms and around the school. Pupils work hard, concentrate well, enjoy learning and get on with minimum disruption. A few pupils have not fully accepted the higher expectations and their non-compliance has led to more fixed-term exclusions.
- Good personal development widens pupils' experience, develops their self-confidence and supports their academic achievement, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Strong accountability, accurate assessment, sharp analysis and prompt action are driving improvements in pupils' progress.
- Pupils' overall progress in the 2016 GCSE results was above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils achieved particularly well.
- Progress was strong in performing arts, sports and information technology.
- Pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science, humanities and modern foreign languages was in line with national figures.
- The most able did less well in science and disadvantaged pupils did less well in English.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are working effectively to improve pupils' literacy at key stage 3. However, the library and its resources are limited.
- Attendance remains below average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the coaching of staff to bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Ensure that the increased challenge for the most able results in stronger progress, especially in science.
- Further develop reading and writing at key stage 3 and ensure that disadvantaged pupils make increased progress in English at key stage 4.
- Increase attendance and reduce the incidence of behaviour that leads to exclusion.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive principal's purposeful leadership has brought about significant improvement in teaching, learning and outcomes since the last inspection. The positive culture he has established promotes pupils' personal development well, including for disadvantaged pupils. Parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire were highly positive about the school.
- With the support of the trust, the executive principal and senior leaders have improved the quality of behaviour and the environment for learning in classrooms.
- The executive principal has taken firm action to manage staff performance and has tackled weaker aspects of teaching or leadership effectively. Systematic checks on teaching and pupils' work, when necessary, result in staff support plans with deadlines for improvement.
- Leaders have established a coherent and effective whole-school approach to teaching and learning. Teachers are committed to these methods and praise the quality of professional development. Many staff have volunteered to take part in a leadership programme led by trust leaders, reflecting the shared ambition of staff and the trust.
- Recently introduced collaborative methods have extended teachers' skills, including a new approach to promoting higher achievement in lessons, especially by the most able. Leaders have identified the need for more bespoke coaching to improve specific aspects of teaching.
- Rigorous systems of assessment, a sharp focus on the progress of each pupil, especially in Year 11, and prompt action to support pupils' academic progress and their welfare have accelerated pupils' progress.
- Strong accountability ensures that staff, at all levels, quickly tackle any aspects of underachievement, especially at key stage 4.
- Subject leaders implement and manage school systems for teaching and assessment rigorously and effectively.
- The English leader and special educational needs coordinator work together effectively, and use the catch-up funding well, to increase pupils' phonic knowledge and their reading comprehension. Low-ability pupils make good progress in numeracy.
- Leaders' whole-school strategies and the deployment of pupil premium funding have been highly effective in promoting disadvantaged pupils' academic achievement and personal development, overall. However, in the 2016 GCSE results, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was not as strong in English.
- Leaders manage the curriculum thoughtfully and flexibly. They have increased time for history and geography at key stage 3 to promote literacy and increase pupils' skills in extended writing. More time for English, mathematics and science is a response to the higher demands of GCSE. The school has added a modern language. Some pupils complete courses in Year 10, which gives them time in Year 11 to improve their grades in English, mathematics and other subjects. Leaders have coordinated with local trust primary schools to weed out repetition from Year 6 to Year 7. The personal, social and

health education programme provides pupils with clear information and guidance that prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

- Many pupils participate in enrichment activities. These extend pupils' experience and confidence, and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, especially for disadvantaged pupils. Coloured badges worn by many pupils promote and reward their involvement well.
- Many pupils in Year 11 attend extra support sessions after school, on Saturdays and in holidays. Their own, and their teachers', strong commitment contributes to their good progress.
- Leaders managed the closure of the sixth form well. The trust and executive principal decided that the small sixth form was no longer necessary or financially viable. Rising attainment at GCSE had enabled more pupils to move securely to other local providers. The trust reports that staff prepared Year 12 students well for the change and they have settled well with their new 16-19 providers.

Governance of the school

- Delta Academies Trust has provided a comprehensive framework of support and challenge that has accelerated improvement. Since last summer, increased support and new trust systems have strengthened the quality of leadership and management, teaching, assessment and behaviour. Rigorous trust procedures hold staff at all levels closely to account for the progress of individual pupils, especially those in Year 11. Trust subject directors provide good support for subject leaders. Trust-wide assessment provides accurate analysis of pupils' progress and reliable benchmarks for school and subject performance.
- The education advisory board has a clear understanding of its role and responsibilities. Its handbook inducts and guides its members effectively. Members welcome the increased support and accountability provided by the trust. They receive informative reports from middle and senior leaders and have first-hand knowledge of school issues. Members understand the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. They regularly check the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures with senior staff. The education advisory board has a clear understanding of pupil premium and catch-up expenditure and its impact.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff take timely and effective action when following up any issues. Strong links with outside agencies, primary schools and parents support the actions they take to safeguard pupils. Communication between pupils and adults is good. Staff understand what action to take if they have a concern about safeguarding. Staff training is up to date. Risk assessments are thorough and appropriate control measures are in place.
- Leaders check the programme for teaching pupils about safeguarding to ensure that key issues are covered.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' good subject knowledge helps pupils to learn well.
- Teachers consistently use the school framework for lessons, which results in an interesting and enjoyable sequence of classroom activities in most lessons.
- Teachers set high expectations, communicate clear objectives and regularly signpost what they expect pupils to do and achieve in the next lesson. Well-established routines and the strong sense of purpose in lessons contribute well to pupils' commitment to the task and the continuity of learning.
- The design of pupils' workbooks encourages orderly presentation and helps them to reflect on their learning. Pupils actively review what they have learned and frequently improve aspects of their work. This aids their progress. Pupils value the constructive feedback from teachers and other pupils.
- Teachers' accurate focus on the requirements of key stage 4 examinations enables pupils to work precisely on what they need to improve. Teachers use information from the analysis of pupils' answers in formal assessments to adapt teaching to meet identified needs. This contributes well to pupils' progress.
- Teachers generally use the school's 'consequences' procedure effectively and nip emerging misbehaviour in the bud. This contributes to the good environment for learning in classrooms and enables pupils to concentrate well and get on with their work. On a few occasions, with a few pupils, teachers are less successful in ensuring consistently good behaviour.
- Teachers' good relationships with pupils engage them well and promote their learning.
- Teachers question pupils effectively to prompt thinking. On occasion, teachers miss opportunities to deepen understanding. In science, on occasion, the most able pupils lack sufficient challenge and do not develop a detailed understanding of high-level concepts.
- Teachers and well-trained teaching assistants support weaker readers well. Well-planned extra reading lessons enable the weakest readers to improve their phonic skills and comprehension. One-to-one support accurately targets weaker aspects of pupils' phonic knowledge. A reading mentoring programme for some average and most-able readers extends their vocabulary, comprehension and commitment to reading. Regular reading lessons promote reading well at key stage 3. However, the library is in a classroom and has a limited range of books.
- Subject teachers promote pupils' literacy well. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils constructed sentences well and learned to use accurate terminology. The school has identified the need to develop pupils' extended writing at key stage 3.
- Teachers often use homework well to enable pupils to apply and consolidate their knowledge and understanding.
- In some cases, teachers' confidence and skill in applying new techniques are developing. On occasion, teachers' focus on completing the task misses opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge, skill or understanding.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The rewards system promotes pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils rise to the challenge of increasing their range of experience. Many are proud to wear the coloured badges to show what roles and responsibilities they have taken up.
- Well-targeted mentoring has led to good progress by low-attaining and disadvantaged pupils, in particular.
- Staff work effectively to meet the complex needs of vulnerable pupils, using a wide variety of support within the school and from outside agencies.
- Well-planned careers guidance from Years 7 to 11 increases pupils' knowledge and aspiration. For example, in the week prior to the inspection, a group of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils visited Cambridge University. Independent careers advice from an external provider adds value to what the school is doing. Staff plan further developments at key stage 3, with stronger links with business and more training for teachers. Staff have strengthened advice and guidance for more vulnerable pupils who might otherwise have stayed in the sixth form. The take-up of apprenticeships has increased.
- Adults convey clear messages about the negative effect of bullying. Pupils talk confidently about bullying and can explain different types, including homophobic and cyber bullying. Openly gay pupils are accepted by other pupils.
- Pupils, parents and staff say that pupils are safe. Pupils have a good understanding of being safe online. They know how to respond to visitors in school according to the colour of their lanyard.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to explore different cultures, faiths and communities. Enrichment activities provide pupils with good opportunities to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- The very few, mainly part-time, pupils at alternative providers benefit from a wide menu of learning and enterprise activities and qualifications. Most gain useful accreditation and vocational experience. Staff receive regular reports on their progress and make regular visits to check the quality of provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in classrooms and around school.
- In lessons, pupils typically work hard, concentrate on the task and collaborate well. They listen to each other with respect and enjoy learning from each other as well as the teacher.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. They show pride in their uniform and their school.
- Conduct is orderly on the way to lessons and assembly and pupils arrive punctually. The atmosphere is calm at break and lunchtime. Staggered breaks and lunches

minimise opportunities for incidents.

- Pupils welcome the 'consequences' system and say it has significantly reduced low-level disruption in lessons. A few pupils have not come to terms with the higher expectations and their non-compliant behaviour has led to a higher level of exclusions. The number of repeat exclusions is beginning to reduce as pupils accept the new rules, but the rate of exclusions is high at present. Staff are skilled in de-escalating behaviour incidents when they occur.
- Staff coordinate their work well to improve attendance and deploy an appropriate range of strategies with pupils and their families. Nevertheless, attendance was below the national average and persistent absence was higher than average last school year.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress from their starting points at key stage 2 to their GCSEs in 2016 was significantly above average overall. Disadvantaged pupils made better progress than other pupils nationally.
- The progress pupils made in English, mathematics, science, humanities and modern foreign languages was broadly in line with all pupils nationally.
- Pupils of all abilities, including disadvantaged pupils, made particularly strong progress in performing arts, sports studies and information technology. Attainment was well above the national average in these subjects.
- Disadvantaged and low-ability pupils made good progress in mathematics and science.
- Disadvantaged pupils also did well in humanities. They did less well in English.
- The progress of the most able in English and mathematics was in line with the national average, but was significantly below average in science. Evidence is emerging of improving progress by the most able in science in the current Year 11.
- There were too few Year 11 most able disadvantaged pupils to evaluate their progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the extra support that staff tailor well to meet their diverse range of needs.
- The school predicts that the current Year 11 is on track for at least half the pupils to reach the new GCSE grade 5 in English and mathematics in 2017. Leaders base this on tests taken in secondary schools across the Delta Academies Trust. Current Year 11 pupils are making strong progress from below-average starting points and outcomes are continuing to improve.
- The number who left school and were not in education, training and employment is low. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of education, apprenticeship and training.

School details

Unique reference number	138006
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10023813

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	551
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chief Executive Officer	Paul Tarn
Principal	Gareth Mason (Executive Principal) Christopher McCall (Associate Principal)
Telephone number	01977 622850
Website	www.delacyacademy.org.uk
Email address	info@delacyacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school is in the Delta Academies Trust. In summer 2016, the School Partnership Trust Academies changed its name to Delta Academies Trust, under a new chief executive officer and board of directors.
- The executive principal provides formal support to other schools in the Delta Academies Trust.
- The associate principal took up post in January 2017.
- In summer 2016, the small sixth form closed.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

- Most pupils are White British. A small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The school uses the following alternative providers for a very small number of pupils: The UCAN Centre, Skills Exchange and Action to Change.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for progress at the end of key stage 4.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all years and subject areas. Observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work, observed pupils reading and talked to them about their learning and their experiences at school.
- Discussions were held with the executive principal, senior and middle leaders, teachers, the chief executive officer of the trust, the regional director, the trust sixth form director, the chair and vice-chair of the education advisory board and groups of pupils. An inspector visited an alternative provider.
- Inspectors checked the school website and evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress, and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding records.
- The inspection took account of 89 responses from parents, including a few written comments, 26 responses from staff and five responses from pupils to the Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Lesley Powell	Ofsted Inspector

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