

# Outwood Academy Shafton

Engine Lane, Shafton, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 8RE

## Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have established a culture of high aspirations. They are relentless in their determination to see pupils succeed.
- Standards of behaviour are high due to the rigorous implementation of the school's code of conduct. Consequently, leaders have established a learning environment where pupils can get on with their work.
- Teaching is increasingly strong and effective across the school. Leaders and teachers at all levels are held to account for the quality of teaching. Everyone shares the same high expectations of what pupils should achieve.
- Effective professional development supports improvements in teaching. A comprehensive programme of training and continuous improvement has resulted in teaching which enables pupils to achieve.
- Leaders ensure that subject areas are well supported and challenged by a team of senior subject specialists. As a result, teaching is tightly focused on the things pupils need to do in order to improve.
- Most pupils, from their starting points and across a wide range of subjects, make good progress overall.
- Through the school's 'Life' lessons, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and about other cultures, and are well prepared for the next steps in their education or training and for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have introduced a powerful system for assessing pupils' progress. This means that no one slips through the net. Leaders quickly put support in place for those pupils who require it.
- While most teaching is appropriately matched to the needs of pupils, there are some occasions when pupils are not challenged appropriately.
- Some pupils do not take enough pride in their work, so presentation is untidy. In key stage 3, weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and grammar limit the progress of some pupils.
- Leaders have robustly addressed the poor attendance of some pupils. As a result, there are signs of improvement. Despite the efforts of leaders, however, rates of pupil absence are above the national average.
- Rates of fixed-term exclusions are above the national averages. However, they are reducing as a result of the actions taken by leaders to reinforce high expectations. Pupils are very clear about the standards of behaviour expected of them.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that pupils attend school more regularly by:
  - systematically monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions so that targeted interventions can be put in place
  - taking further steps with parents, carers and pupils to make attendance at school a greater priority.
- Further reduce fixed-term exclusions by:
  - developing a wider range of preventative approaches
  - regularly checking and weighing up the success of the strategies being used to reduce exclusion.
- Reduce the variability in teaching at key stage 3 so that pupils' progress is strengthened further by:
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning
  - ensuring that teachers pitch work with an appropriate level of challenge, considering pupils' abilities
  - building on work already done to improve pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and presentation, especially at key stage 3.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since joining Outwood Grange Academies Trust, leaders have transformed the school. They have established an aspirational, 'no excuses' culture. Staff morale is high and pupils are positive about their learning experiences. Consequently, outcomes are strengthening.
- A relentless pursuit of improvement in the quality of teaching has engaged and motivated staff. Leaders ensure that teachers receive good-quality professional development, much of which is bespoke to their individual needs. As a result, teachers are now developing their skills and consistently promote effective learning.
- A rigorous and accurate system for measuring pupils' progress is in place, which enables leaders to track how well pupils are doing. They leave no stone unturned in order to help pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- The principal and academy trust leaders have inspired and nurtured a wider team of talented and committed subject leaders. They share the aspirational ambition of senior leaders and are driving improvements as a result.
- Leaders have implemented a curriculum which is broad and balanced. Pupils are guided on to appropriately aspirational courses in key stage 4. Leaders support pupils at risk of not achieving grade 4 or above in English or mathematics with additional time and tuition. By doing so, pupils have every opportunity of progressing to good-quality education or training post 16.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is well supported. There is an extensive extra-curricular enrichment programme which gives pupils access to creative activities such as sport, drama, singing and journalism. Pupils' understanding of the world beyond the school and other cultures and faiths is developed through assemblies, tutorial time and the 'Life' curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils are able to meet, and hear from, members of the local community. At the recent elections for the school council, for example, the constituency returning officer and mayor participated. Consequently, pupils are increasingly confident and well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders make increasingly effective use of the additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and /or disabilities. Wide-ranging and specialist support is in place for these pupils. Actions are targeted at an individual level so that pupils' particular needs are met. Education, health and care plans are comprehensive and well managed. As a result of these actions, many pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress.
- The school makes effective use of the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils. Outcomes for these pupils have not been strong in the past, but they are now improving.
- The effect of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium is more variable, but leaders have evaluated its impact and plans are now more focused. As a result, there has been an improvement in reading for pupils who joined the school with below average reading scores.

## Governance of the school

- The trust's governance structure supports and challenges school leaders. The academy council members have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this knowledge to question leaders.
- The academy council members share the high aspirations of school leaders. They stringently hold leaders to account through robustly worded questions about pupils' progress. They are not afraid to describe poor performance for what it is when they see it. This ensures that leaders are focused at all times on the progress pupils are making.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff are vigilant and able to identify signs of abuse. Leaders provide regular training and updates for staff in order that they fulfil their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe.
- Statutory requirements for the recruitment of staff are in place, so that those adults who work in the school are safe to work with children.
- The designated safeguarding leaders maintain thorough records about pupils who are, or may be, at risk. They are tenacious in following up any concerns with partner agencies. This means that vulnerable pupils are supported and that their particular needs are met by those entrusted with their care.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching across a wide range of subjects is good. Leaders have focused relentlessly on improving the consistency of teaching. In particular, there has been an unswerving drive to establish the 'non-negotiables' of teachers' planning. As a result, most pupils across the school are making consistently good progress.
- Pupils are growing in their confidence to respond to challenge. They are eager to grapple with more complex, challenging concepts, for example in Year 11 English, mathematics and history. In key stage 3, pupils' level of engagement in learning is more variable. In some subjects, such as Year 7 computer science, pupils are actively involved in questioning their own understanding of their skills. In other subjects, pupils are compliant but not given as much opportunity to discuss what they are learning.
- Teachers make effective use of questioning in most lessons. The use of computer-generated 'randomised' names means that all pupils have to be ready to answer a question. This supports their engagement and progress in the lesson because it encourages them to pay attention. Teachers ask questions which are effective in checking pupils' understanding of knowledge and skills before moving on to the next stage.
- The level of challenge is frequently high, including for the most able. In their written work, pupils are increasingly required to reflect on, and review, their own learning. Opportunities for extended writing are now challenging pupils to become more resilient

as learners and to deepen their own understanding. Leaders accept that there is more variability in the level of challenge in key stage 3.

- The school has started to support pupils with the development of their literacy skills through a variety of approaches. While there is evidence that this is having an impact for some pupils, leaders know that, in key stage 3, there is still work to be done to improve spelling, punctuation and grammar. Presentation in key stage 3, especially that of boys, is often poor.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils speak politely with visitors and work well with the adults in the school.
- As a result of the increasingly aspirational culture, pupils are growing in confidence as learners and young people. There is a wide range of enrichment opportunities to help them develop their wider skills. For example, pupils spoke highly of the 'Pledges' programme, which includes the opportunity to represent the school at an external event, to give a formal presentation and to fundraise for charity.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. They are encouraged to help others through the 'random acts of kindness' programme, the school council and the chance to participate in one of numerous trips and visits.
- Most pupils say that they feel safe in school. They talk positively about the work of the safer schools police officer. Through 'Life' lessons and assemblies, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils have a number of opportunities to explore other religions and cultures. However, some pupils told inspectors that they would like to have more opportunities to learn about other faiths.
- The school has secured additional funding to help more of the most able pupils to progress to a high-quality university. This has enabled leaders to support pupils with a broad choice of aspirational extra-curricular opportunities such as talks from universities. As a result, pupils speak with confidence and growing aspiration about their next steps.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative educational provision. Through regular contact, leaders effectively support the progress, well-being and behaviour of these pupils. This is because the regular communication between school and providers ensures that the pupils' particular needs are addressed through any necessary adaptations to their programmes.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare. If it does happen, they are confident that an adult will deal with any issues quickly. The school's own records show that instances of bullying are low and reducing.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their conduct at breaktimes and lunchtimes is orderly and calm.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Since joining Outwood Grange Academies Trust, pupils and staff report that behaviour has improved markedly. One pupil said that 'We can now learn in our lessons'. A teacher said that, previously, 'We felt vulnerable, we couldn't teach,' but that, now, behaviour has been transformed.
- Pupils respond quickly to teachers' requests. This is because teachers consistently implement the school's behaviour policy. As a result, pupils fully understand the standards of behaviour expected of them. Consequently, pupils settle to work quickly. There is a positive climate for learning which enables pupils to make good progress.
- Despite leaders adopting a 'no excuses' attitude to levels of absence, absence remains above the national average. Persistent absence is high. However, leaders are not complacent. As a result, there is strengthening evidence that pupils' attendance over time is beginning to improve.
- Fixed-term exclusions in 2017 were high compared to the national average. As a consequence of more effective behaviour systems, fixed-term exclusions have reduced significantly. The proportion of pupils repeatedly excluded is also falling. The school's own behaviour records show that low-level disruption is rare and that instances are reducing.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils are making good progress across the curriculum. Standards have risen since the school opened as an academy.
- Pupils join Year 7 with starting points significantly below the national average. Since 2014, attainment has improved substantially. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 4 are now broadly in line with the national averages.
- Outcomes in science have improved rapidly over the last three years. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who gained A\* to C grades was above the national average.
- As a result of stronger leadership and teaching, the progress of pupils from their different starting points in English and mathematics is improving quickly. In 2017, progress in English and mathematics was below the national average. However, the school's own assessment information, together with work seen by inspectors in pupils' books and increasingly strong teaching, show that pupils are now making good progress in key stage 4. Leaders acknowledge that while pupils are making better progress in Years 7 and 8, it is not yet as consistently strong as in key stage 4.
- In the last two years, disadvantaged pupils have made significantly less progress than other pupils nationally. Leaders have taken decisive action. Leaders and governors ensure that the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils has a positive effect. There is a greater clarity about the needs of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils are making much stronger progress now.
- In key stage 3, the difference in progress between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils has diminished across all subject areas. In some subjects, such

as mathematics, computer science and physical education, disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress than other pupils. At key stage 4, differences are also diminishing. While differences remain between disadvantaged pupils in the school and others nationally, leaders acknowledge that there is further work to do and have appropriate plans in place to address this.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have not made good progress in the past. As a result of more effective use of additional funding and strengthened teaching, these pupils now make stronger progress.
- In 2017, the most able pupils achieved well below the national average. They now make much improved progress and achieve better standards. The proportion of pupils achieving the top grades of A\*/7 or above has increased substantially. While the most able pupils in key stage 3 are making secure progress, it is not yet as rapid as in key stage 4.
- Leaders place high importance on the development of pupils' reading. Plans for the use of funding to support pupils with their reading are now more focused than they were previously. Work is already under way in the English curriculum to boost pupils' reading ability and additional interventions for targeted pupils are in place. There are signs that pupils' reading ages are improving as a result. However, leaders acknowledge that there is more work to be done.
- The very few pupils attending alternative educational providers make good progress. Pupils also attend well.
- As a result of the greater aspiration of leaders, pupils are increasingly well prepared for their next steps. In the last two years, all pupils have progressed to appropriate further education or training. An increasing number of pupils are moving on to post-16 study.

## School details

Unique reference number	139211
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10042138

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	1,023
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Dave Webber
Principal	Mrs Sabiha Laher (associate executive principal) Mrs Cara Ackroyd (principal)
Telephone number	01226 717730
Website	<a href="http://www.shafton.outwood.com/">www.shafton.outwood.com/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@shafton.outwood.com">enquiries@shafton.outwood.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Outwood Academy Shafton converted to become an academy school on 1 March 2015. When its predecessor school, Shafton Advanced Learning Centre, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.
- The school is part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT). The principal sponsor of OGAT is Outwood Grange Education. The school is governed by the OGAT board of trustees. The board has established an academy council at the school, to which it delegates responsibility for overseeing the school on behalf of the trust board. The school's management is overseen by the chief executive officer of OGAT, with delegated responsibility to the regional CEO, the associate executive principal and then the principal of the academy.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national



average. The proportion of pupils who receive support for their SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.

- The school population is 96% White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Barnsley College and at Action 2 Change.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across year groups and subject areas. This included visiting lessons with senior leaders and unaccompanied visits.
- Examples of pupils' books were looked at in detail. This included pupils of different abilities and year groups.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils, both in meetings and informally around the site, including breaktime and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with the principal and senior leaders, those responsible for governance of the school, the trust CEO and regional CEO, middle leaders, non-teaching staff and teachers at various career points. Telephone meetings were held with the leaders of the off-site alternative provision used by the school.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils, staff or parents (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and other quality assurance records, minutes of academy council meetings and information relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Steve Shaw, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michele Costello	Her Majesty's Inspector
Natasha Greenough	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Gabanski	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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