

# Fulwood Academy

Black Bull Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 9YR

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- During their time in the school, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
- In the last three years, pupils' outcomes have been weak. In 2018, from an already below-average position, there was a significant deterioration in the progress rate of pupils. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are exceptionally poor.
- Following the last full inspection, the quality of leadership declined sharply. Senior leaders, including governors and trustees, have allowed the quality of education to fall to an unacceptable standard.
- Leaders have not created a culture in which pupils feel safe or are safe. Pupils, parents and carers report many incidents of bullying that are not tackled effectively by staff. Alongside this, there are high levels of very poor behaviour throughout the school.
- Pupils' learning is routinely disrupted by extremely poor behaviour.
- Pupils do not benefit from consistently good teaching. This has a detrimental effect on the progress that they make. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- Most teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They do not sequence learning effectively or provide pupils with the right level of challenge.
- Senior and middle leaders have not ensured that the curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively across a range of subjects. There are no specific plans in place to remedy this.
- Leaders are not taking effective action to improve the attendance of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
- Far too many disadvantaged pupils are given fixed-term exclusions.
- The proposed new leadership structure does not reflect the needs of the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- Many senior leaders have a strong commitment to the school and want to do their best for its pupils.
- Pupils benefit from strong teaching in modern foreign languages.
- New governors, including the chair of the governing body, have strengthened this area of leadership.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Ensure that senior leaders, including governors and trustees, provide effective leadership and urgently improve the quality of education at the school, by:
  - creating a culture in which pupils feel safe and are safe
  - having high expectations of staff and pupils
  - having an effective leadership structure that has clear and appropriate roles and responsibilities that reflect the needs of the school
  - prioritising strong leadership in the crucial areas of teaching and learning and behaviour
  - making their own decisions based on sound educational rationale rather than acting on piecemeal advice from different external sources
  - making sure that subject leaders have the necessary skills and expertise to lead their respective areas effectively
  - acting on the recommendations outlined in the recent review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding so that disadvantaged pupils make at least the same progress as other pupils nationally
  - designing a curriculum that enables all pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills and make the best possible progress.
- Urgently improve the quality of teaching and learning by making sure that all teachers:
  - have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve
  - insist that pupils complete work and take pride in its presentation
  - use effective classroom management skills to create a positive environment for learning
  - provide the right level of challenge for their pupils, particularly the most able
  - sequence learning in a way that enables pupils to make links between what they already know and things they are learning afresh, so that they can build on their previous learning
  - use questioning effectively to probe and develop pupils' understanding.
- Rapidly improve outcomes by ensuring that pupils in all year groups, particularly those who are disadvantaged and the most able, make good progress in all subjects, including English, mathematics and science.

- Improve pupils' personal development and welfare by ensuring that:
  - pupils are confident that staff will deal effectively with incidents of bullying
  - the culture in the school is based on mutually respectful relationships.
- Take immediate action to improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring that:
  - disruption to learning in lessons is eliminated
  - pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning
  - pupils conduct themselves in a calm and mature manner around the school
  - pupils arrive punctually at their lessons
  - pupils show respect for their teachers and other adults and do what is asked of them
  - teachers have the required skills to manage behaviour effectively in their classrooms
  - senior leaders make the high standards of behaviour that are expected of them explicitly clear to pupils
  - the attendance of pupils increases, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils
  - the number of fixed-term exclusions for disadvantaged pupils decreases.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Following the last full inspection in October 2016, senior leaders failed to tackle the areas that required improvement. Indeed, a lack of strong senior leadership means that the school has declined considerably to the point where it is no longer providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. Leaders have not acted to prevent a deterioration in pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils do not learn effectively and make very poor progress.
- Leaders describe the Ofsted monitoring inspection in April 2018 as a 'turning point' for the school. Governance was strengthened, most importantly by the appointment of a new chair of the governing body. In July 2018 some senior leaders left the school, including the headteacher. The school was led by an acting principal from September 2018 to February 2019. His genuine commitment to the task and desire to do his best for the pupils raised the morale of the school community. However, the weaknesses in all areas of the school by this time required far more than these qualities to bring about the much-needed improvements.
- Many senior leaders have a strong commitment to the school and want to do their best for its pupils. However, in recent years, a lack of strong strategic direction has resulted in significant weaknesses in leadership across the school. This situation has been exacerbated by the involvement of too many external people giving piecemeal advice and recommending actions for which leaders themselves have not understood or accepted the rationale. Rather than bringing about improvements, on occasions these decisions have been detrimental. For example, early entry to the English literature examination has prevented some pupils from gaining the GCSE grades of which they are capable in this subject. Also, an increase in the amount of times that data on pupils' progress is collected has resulted in too much time spent testing pupils rather than teaching them.
- Although the new principal has only just taken up his post, since his appointment in October 2018 he has been working alongside governors to restructure the leadership of the school. The draft details of this were shared with inspectors. The current proposals are not fit for purpose. While addressing the budget deficit that the school currently faces, the proposed leadership structure does not reflect the urgent educational needs of the school. Radical and rapid improvements are required to the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' behaviour. The proposed structure does not prioritise these areas sufficiently.
- Senior and middle leaders have not thought clearly about what they want their pupils to learn and how to implement that effectively. Consequently, the curriculum from Years 7 to 11 does not enable pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in an effective way. This, coupled with poor teaching, is why pupils do not make good progress during their time in the school.
- A new curriculum is being developed. However, the principal described this as at an 'embryonic stage'. The sponsor's vision for the future curriculum is to focus on computing and digital technology. He has pledged a substantial amount of capital investment in the school to support this. At the time of the inspection, leaders' thinking

on how this curriculum intent would be implemented remains vague. It is concerning that half way through the current academic year, leaders are so uncertain about what the curriculum for all pupils will look like from September 2019.

- One of the reasons for the delay in curriculum planning is that the leadership of this sits with a newly appointed vice principal, who does not take up his post until after Easter. Another reason is that the range of subjects on offer will be linked to a proposed staffing restructure. The implications of this delay for the current Year 9 pupils are particularly concerning. There will be very little time available to ensure that they receive appropriate information, advice and guidance about their GCSE option choices.
- Senior leaders do not have high enough expectations of the staff. This creates a culture in which teachers have low expectations of their pupils. For example, nearly all of the staff who responded to the online questionnaire think that pupils are challenged to make at least good progress. This is clearly not the case and shows that teachers do not have an accurate understanding of what their pupils can achieve.
- Until very recently, the leadership of the pupil premium funding was ineffective. An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding was carried out in November 2018. The two staff who now lead this area have begun to act on some of the recommendations in the review. There is a more focused approach to looking at the reasons why disadvantaged pupils are underachieving and to providing appropriate support. As this is at a very early stage, there is no impact on improving outcomes for these pupils. Leaders are realistic that this will not happen until the quality of teaching in the school radically improves.
- Apart from in modern foreign languages, the quality of subject leadership across the school is weak. Subject leaders do not have the necessary skills and expertise to lead their respective areas effectively. They are not taking effective action to secure improvements in behaviour, teaching and outcomes in their subjects.
- Leaders are not doing enough to tackle poor teaching. Feedback given to teachers is vague and does not give them clear guidance on how to improve their practice. There are not enough strong practitioners in the school to model what good teaching looks like to others. Leaders know that teachers are particularly weak at planning learning that is appropriate for pupils' different abilities but have done little to address this.
- Leaders are not doing enough to tackle pupils' poor behaviour. They are not taking sufficient action to support teachers with behaviour management, particularly those new to teaching or the school. The culture is one in which many pupils are routinely disrespectful to staff. The ethos in the school is not one that is conducive to learning.
- Most of the parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, are not happy about the quality of education that their children are receiving. Most of the free-text responses were negative. The main concerns related to poor behaviour, bullying and poor-quality teaching. Some parents said that they feel let down while others stated that they are considering moving their children to another school. The overall feeling of most parents is summed up in one comment: 'I want my child to achieve and I'm worried he won't.'
- It is strongly recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

## Governance of the school

- In recent years, trustees have not ensured that the school benefited from strong governance. Following the monitoring inspection in April 2018, trustees recognised this and appointed a new chair of the governing body who has wide educational experience. The governing body has been further strengthened by new members who also have a range of relevant skills and expertise.
- Under the leadership of the new chair, governance of the school has improved. Minutes of governors' meetings show that they challenge senior and middle leaders, particularly about the impact of their actions. Governors have acted swiftly and decisively in relation to changes to the leadership of the school. However, it is too early to know the impact of these changes.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not created a culture in which pupils feel safe or are safe. During the inspection many pupils expressed concerns about the amount of bullying that occurs in the school. These concerns were echoed by some parents and staff. Pupils do not feel that staff deal with the many incidents of bullying effectively. The very poor behaviour in the school also contributes to pupils not feeling or being safe.
- In 2017/18, there were a very high number of bullying incidents logged. Of great concern is that only half way through this academic year the numbers are already higher than at the end of last year. In the Parent View survey, 42% of the 51 respondents did not feel that the school deals effectively with bullying. It is very worrying that in the same survey 40% said that their child did not feel safe at the school.
- The safeguarding team comprises a group of dedicated staff who are proactive in seeking the appropriate help for any pupils at risk. They take swift steps to follow up safeguarding concerns and refer them to outside agencies as appropriate.
- All protocols, systems and practices are fit for purpose. Staff keep detailed records of safeguarding concerns. Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training so that they are well placed to spot any signs of pupils being at risk. Systems to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with pupils in the school are secure.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Pupils who attend this school do not benefit from routinely good teaching. This means that they are not able to learn effectively. As a result, they make very poor progress across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
- Most teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Teachers do not plan learning that provides the right level of challenge for pupils. Many pupils are taught in mixed-ability classes, but teachers do not ensure that the work provided enables pupils to move on with their learning. Consequently, this prevents pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and the most able, from making good

progress.

- Most teachers do not manage pupils' poor behaviour in an effective way. Behaviour is so bad in some classrooms that little or no learning can take place. There are too many occasions when teachers accept or ignore pupils' unacceptable behaviour. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that most of their lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. These chaotic and disorderly classrooms are having a hugely detrimental effect on the quality of education that pupils are receiving.
- Conversations with pupils during the inspection paint a very concerning picture about what is typically going on in classrooms across the school. Pupils are frustrated that poor behaviour is not being dealt with. They are also concerned about the high number of supply teachers. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel let down.
- The situation is most concerning in English, where there is very little staffing stability. This is having a significant negative impact on the leadership and the quality of teaching in this subject. Pupils told inspectors about the high number of temporary teachers that they have. This contributes to lack of continuity in their learning. The lack of permanent staff means that pupils' behaviour is particularly poor in this subject.
- Programmes of study do not help pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. Most teachers do not sequence learning in a way that helps pupils to deepen their conceptual understanding. They do not use assessment information well to inform future learning.
- Most teachers do not use questioning well enough to encourage pupils to think and explain their answers. Too often, questioning remains at a basic level and is not used to probe and develop pupils' understanding. In addition, it is not used well to tease out any misconceptions before moving on to new learning.
- Not enough attention is given to developing pupils' literacy skills. Basic errors are not addressed and, as a result, pupils go on making the same mistakes. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are too low. They are too willing to accept work that is of a poor standard, untidily presented and frequently incomplete.
- There is a small amount of good practice in the school. A very small proportion of pupils are lucky enough to be taught by teachers who routinely use their expertise in their subjects to ensure that pupils learn well. This happens typically in modern foreign languages. In this subject, pupils are challenged appropriately, and learning is sequenced well so that they can develop their understanding securely. Pupils respond positively to this high-quality teaching and demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Bullying is a significant concern in the school. Many pupils shared their worries about this with inspectors. These concerns are also shared by some parents and staff. Pupils have little confidence that staff know how to deal with bullying effectively. One pupil explained to an inspector how because bullying is not dealt with at an early stage, it

escalates and often leads to fights.

- Far too many pupils show a lack of respect for staff and each other. The culture in school is not based on mutually respectful relationships. Leaders have not ensured that the school environment is one in which pupils feel safe and valued. This has a detrimental impact on their well-being as well as their ability to learn.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is taught through the school's social-science curriculum. There is no evidence to indicate that the quality of teaching and learning in this subject is effective. Indeed, the behaviour and attitudes shown by many pupils indicate that this programme is having little impact on pupils' personal development.
- Leaders ensure that the personal development and welfare of pupils who attend off-site alternative provision is a high priority. There is effective communication between school staff and the providers. Thorough procedures are in place to check on these pupils' attendance and progress.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- The unacceptable behaviour of a high proportion of pupils is having a highly detrimental effect on all areas of school life. Leaders' inability to tackle this has had a severe impact on pupils' safety, well-being and ability to learn and achieve well.
- Poor behaviour is prevalent in most classrooms and in some it is so bad that it prevents learning taking place altogether. During the inspection, pupils were vocal in their frustration about this. It is not surprising and very sad that none of the pupils who spoke with inspectors would recommend their school to others.
- The behaviour of many pupils outside the classroom is also unacceptable. There is much unruly behaviour both outside and inside, including between lessons. Pupils report that various objects are regularly thrown as missiles. Indeed, one inspector was caught in the crossfire of a water bottle being thrown by pupils. There is a high staff presence during these times, but this has little impact on regulating pupils' behaviour. Inspectors witnessed many examples of pupils blatantly ignoring staff's requests to modify their behaviour.
- Many pupils are late for their lessons. They have no sense of urgency about arriving at their classrooms on time. Staff in the corridors do much to encourage tardy pupils into their lessons. However, pupils know that there are no sanctions for this lateness, so this staff presence has little impact. There is simply an acceptance that this happens.
- Leaders' actions to improve pupils' attendance have had no impact. Indeed, there has been a deterioration in pupils' attendance from last year to this year. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is particularly poor. It has deteriorated significantly from its already low figure this time last year. The current figure of 89.1% is well below that of other pupils nationally and in the school. The persistent absence figures for all groups of pupils are also worse than they were this time last year. The current rate of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils is over twice the national average. This means that a very high proportion of these pupils do not attend school regularly.
- When disadvantaged pupils do attend school, they are far more likely than their peers



to be excluded. The overall current fixed-term exclusion rate is very high. Of even more concern is that three quarters of the pupils who have had a fixed-term exclusion this year are disadvantaged.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Inadequate

- In the last three years, outcomes for Year 11 pupils leaving the school have been weak. The data for 2018 shows that from an already below-average position, there was a significant deterioration in the progress rate of pupils. By the end of Year 11, pupils underachieved considerably across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are exceptionally poor. The lack of progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school is stark in comparison with other pupils across the country with the same starting points. Even more worrying is that the differences between these two groups are not diminishing.
- The progress of the most able pupils is also very weak. Because they are not challenged enough throughout their time in the school they make poor progress and do not attain the high grades of which they are capable.
- There is no evidence to indicate that current pupils are faring any better than their peers in recent years. The curriculum, quality of teaching and leadership across the school are not strong enough to enable pupils to make good progress in a range of subjects.
- The strategic leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is not strong. There is no clear strategic overview of the provision for pupils with SEND. There is a lack of training and support for teaching assistants. In addition, the curriculum is not meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable during their time in the school.
- The proportion of Year 11 pupils who progress to further education, training or employment has increased. In 2018 this figure was above the national average. However, poor outcomes for pupils limit their choices of post-16 and post-18 study. Leaders do not track the levels and areas of study that pupils progress to, so they are uncertain whether their choices of courses are appropriate for their ability.

## School details

Unique reference number	135936
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10057938

This inspection of the school 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 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	785
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Dean
Principal	Philip Grant
Telephone number	01772 719060
Website	<a href="http://www.fulwoodacademy.co.uk">http://www.fulwoodacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:p.grant@fulwoodacademy.co.uk">p.grant@fulwoodacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	October 2016

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized sponsored academy. The academy sponsor is the Charles Dunstone Charitable Trust.
- The trust has delegated full governance responsibilities to the governing body.
- A new principal was appointed in October 2018. He took up his post on 25 February 2019, the day before the inspection.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those with an education, health and care plan, is below average
- Eleven pupils attend off-site education at Myerscough College and Preston College.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across a range of subjects, including joint observations with leaders. They looked at pupils’ work during their observations. They also carried out a work scrutiny with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with three groups of pupils. They also talked with others informally during breaks and lunchtimes. Discussions were held with staff, including senior and middle leaders and class teachers. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors took account of the 51 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey and the 25 free-text responses.
- Inspectors took account of the 52 responses to the online staff questionnaire and the 47 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plan and information about the school’s performance.

## Inspection team

Anne Seneviratne, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Dawn Farrent	Ofsted Inspector
Tuesday Humby	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Parkinson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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