

Inspection of Tong Leadership Academy

Westgate Hill Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD4 6NR

Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being at Tong Leadership Academy, but some pupils do not always attend school regularly. The school is a calm and orderly place to learn. Staff and pupils get on very well together. School leaders and the actions they take have a positive influence on pupils' development. Most pupils have positive attitudes in lessons. If poor behaviour does happen, teachers deal with it and explain to pupils how to change their behaviour. Pupils told us that behaviour in the school has improved a lot over the last three years. There are lots of after-school activities and many pupils take part in them. For example, leaders are very enthusiastic about the recent introduction of a new combined cadet force.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They make sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have an equal chance to study everything on offer, in every lesson. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are well supported in their lessons.

Pupils told us they feel safe and well cared for in school. Every pupil we spoke to told us that bullying is rare. They said that if it does happen, staff sort it out so that it stops.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The quality of education requires improvement. Disadvantaged pupils' achievement is improving, although some do not achieve as they should. Teachers plan learning so that pupils have chances to revisit learned knowledge, but pupils are not remembering as much important knowledge as they need to. Pupils are better at remembering knowledge from recent lessons. They are not good at remembering knowledge from lessons which are less recent.

In most subjects the order in which topics and important concepts are taught is helpful to pupils for future learning. In some subjects, such as history for example, this is not always the case. In all subjects, teachers check pupils' understanding throughout each lesson. This makes sure that pupils do not fall behind in their learning. They also use regular testing to identify how well pupils have remembered and understood key concepts. In some examples, though, pupils are not well prepared for tests. They do not have the opportunity to think about the possible content. Because of this, tests identify gaps in long-term memory. Gaps in understanding are less easy to see. For example, in mathematics, pupils in Year 9 had a test on Year 7 work. They did not expect this, and few pupils achieved well.

Key stage 3 pupils do not always feel as challenged as they would like to be. Pupils told us that, at times, they repeat work they have already covered in their primary schools and they found the work too easy. Pupils in key stage 3 spend two years learning a curriculum. In Year 9 they begin work leading to GCSEs. This means that pupils in key stage 3 experience a broad range of subjects, but do not always explore the subject content in sufficient depth.

Pupils have positive attitudes in lessons. Most pupils behave well. They produce good-quality work. Teachers and leaders know that pupils need more encouragement to talk with confidence about their learning. The school provides pupils with lots of opportunities to develop their confidence. Pupils enjoy these opportunities and appreciate them. Pupils think for themselves and respect the opinions of others. Pupils told us that, most of the time, they all get on together. Pupils say that this is a big improvement on how it used to be in the school.

Pupils with SEND receive high-quality support in classrooms if they need it. Leaders have reorganised the SEND provision. They make sure that all pupils, including those with SEND, have the same opportunities.

Sixth-form students are important role models for the rest of the school. They help and support younger pupils by being prefects. Students told inspectors they enjoy being in the sixth form. They also said they get good-quality careers advice. But they would like more enrichment opportunities as they feel this part of sixth-form life is limited. Most students stay for their entire courses and do well in their subjects.

School and trust leaders have made lots of important improvements to the school. Pupils, staff and parents recognise this. The school has been transformed over the past two years. Pupils stressed this to inspectors. The current principal has made sure that any changes have been necessary and that they are sustainable. Leaders at all levels have developed their practice and the school is in a strong position to make the further improvements it needs to make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to identify if pupils may be at risk of harm. There is a strong culture of safeguarding which means pupils feel safe and looked after while they are in school. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils. Leaders have put in place effective systems for teachers and staff. This allows them to make quick referrals to the safeguarding team if they have urgent concerns.

The school works with external agencies and with the local authority to protect vulnerable pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders should continue to work hard to reduce levels of pupil absence and, encourage those pupils who are regularly absent to improve their attendance.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils experience a key stage 3 curriculum which is broad. However, due to the limitation of time over two years in some subjects,

the curriculum lacks the depth of the national curriculum. Leaders should ensure that this aspect of the key stage 3 curriculum is enriched so that it at least matches the ambition of the national curriculum.

- Leaders should develop knowledge of the key stage 2 curriculum which pupils experience in primary schools to ensure that any unnecessary repetition is removed from key stage 3 programmes of study.
- Leaders should ensure that all assessment methods employed to identify gaps in understanding and memory are effective and make the best use of curriculum and teacher time.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	142761
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10110533
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	925
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	69
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair/Chair of trust/Chair of governing body	Fiona Meddings
Principal	Daniel Styles
Website	www.tongleadershipacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Tong High School converted to become Tong Leadership Academy on 1 December 2016. When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to have serious weaknesses overall.
- Since conversion to an academy, the school has undergone a significant number of leadership changes, including the appointment of a new principal in September 2018.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision. The school makes use of Bradford College, Pipeline Productions and a local authority commissioned placement.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Discussions were held with the principal, trust leaders, senior leaders and curriculum leaders for English, mathematics, science and history.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer, the director of education and the director of quality assurance of the STAR academies trust.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body.
- The subjects which were considered as part of the inspection through the deep dive methodology were English, mathematics, science and history. As part of the deep dive methodology, inspectors visited lessons, talked to the curriculum leader for each subject, held discussions with the teachers and pupils from the lessons visited and scrutinised pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding in the school, inspectors scrutinised the school's single central register relating to the safe recruitment of those adults who work with pupils, along with records relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also held discussions with staff and pupils as well as with the designated safeguarding leader for the school.

Inspection team

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