

Inspection of Oldbury Academy

Pound Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 8NE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school receive a good education. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school site creates a calm atmosphere. On the few occasions when pupils do misbehave, staff deal with this quickly. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils know what they should do if it happens to them or their friends. Staff are always available to help with any problems that pupils have. Pupils value this support and this means they feel safe at school.

The school is an orderly environment. This helps pupils to concentrate on their work. Teachers share high expectations of behaviour. They expect pupils to focus on their work. Adults model the positive behaviour they want pupils to follow. Pupils understand the school's values and what is expected of them. They respond positively to these expectations.

Leaders and teachers aim to give each pupil the chance to succeed in their life. They plan opportunities to build pupils' character. A range of extra-curricular activities and trips are offered, including, for example, Calm Club and Urban Street Dance. Pupils who leave this school are prepared for future study or training for employment.

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

Teachers carefully plan what pupils should learn in lessons, although this is more advanced in some subjects than in others. Leaders are aware of those areas that still need to improve. Teachers make sure that topics are ordered appropriately. They check that pupils have remembered work completed in earlier lessons, for example, by starting lessons with a 'do now' activity, in which pupils take time to recall what they have learned before. Pupils' work is frequently checked and there are high expectations of written work. Pupils value this. They keep their books and files neat and tidy. These provide a useful record of completed work. Teachers expect pupils to respond to their feedback. This helps pupils to reflect on their mistakes and make the necessary improvements.

Pupils study an ambitious curriculum. They learn a wide range of different subjects in depth. In key stage 3, pupils follow the national curriculum. Teachers guide them in key stage 4 to make subject choices. Pupils can follow both academic and vocational pathways. This prepares them well for their next steps after they leave school. However, reading does not feature strongly in the curriculum and not enough pupils see the value of reading.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. They also follow an ambitious curriculum. Teachers understand individuals' needs and plan carefully to help them to learn. In some lessons, teaching assistants provide extra support for pupils. This helps these pupils to follow the same curriculum as their peers.

The school is well led. The headteacher is committed to making sure pupils receive the best education possible. Able senior and middle leaders support him with this aim. All leaders in the school share the same ambition. They are committed to improving the school even more in the future. They work together to achieve this. For example, leaders ensure that teachers know how to teach their subjects well by organising regular training.

School leaders and teachers responded effectively to the challenge of remote learning. There were regular live lessons, using digital technology. Pupils who could not initially access learning in this way were helped to do so. Staff distributed nearly 500 laptops during periods of partial school closure during the pandemic. Pupils were supported to ensure they did not fall behind.

Governors at the school are very experienced. They ask searching questions to check the school is as good as it can be. The school has recently joined a multi-academy trust. Leaders from the trust have already had a positive impact. They have provided helpful support for leaders and governors. They understand the strengths of the school and areas that still need further improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and teachers understand how to safeguard pupils. There is a team of safeguarding leaders, who work together well. Pupils are aware of relevant issues. They understand that staff can help them with problems. Staff all know the steps they should take if something happens. They liaise with external agencies where necessary.

Staff receive regular training. They know about different issues. Pupils learn about how to stay safe and healthy during form time and in lessons.

Governors check leaders' work regularly. They receive training in relevant areas. They understand their role in ensuring that safeguarding is a high priority.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not as well planned as it is in others. This means that pupils cannot easily recall things they have learned before. School leaders should continue to ensure that improvements are made in those subjects.
- Too many pupils do not see the value of reading. Leaders should seek ways to promote reading for pleasure, as well as developing reading across the curriculum.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the school and you are 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	137701
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10201032
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1388
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Joanne Williams
Headteacher	Philip Shackleton
Website	www.oldburyacademy.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	29 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined Stour Vale Academy Trust in September 2021.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at five providers. All of these providers are registered with the Department for Education.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with members of the senior leadership team, the chair of the local governing body and executives from Stour Vale Academy Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and computing. In these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered their planning and made visits to lessons. They spoke with all subject teachers and met with a selection of pupils.

- Inspectors spoke to many pupils informally during their breaktimes. The views of pupils were also considered via the Ofsted pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents submitted via Ofsted Parent View, including a range of written comments.
- The responses of staff to the Ofsted staff survey were considered. Inspectors also met with groups of subject leaders and pastoral leaders, as well as with recently qualified teachers.
- The effectiveness of safeguarding was evaluated by talking to leaders, teachers and pupils. Documentation and records were also considered.

Inspection team

Thomas Walton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Mike Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Considine	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector

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