

Inspection of a good school: Halewood Academy

The Avenue, Wood Road, Halewood, Knowsley, Merseyside L26 1UU

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 March 2022

Outcome

Halewood Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said that Halewood Academy is a caring community. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils appreciate the strong relationships that they forge with staff. These relationships help pupils to develop their self-confidence. Pupils said that they feel happy and safe. They are confident to report any concerns about bullying. Staff resolve these issues quickly and effectively. Leaders do not tolerate derogatory behaviour. Pupils respect differences between people.

Pupils are generally friendly and courteous, including when moving around the school. Most pupils behave well. However, a small minority of pupils are not able to self-moderate their behaviour outside of lessons.

Pupils take part in a range of activities that inspire and interest them. For example, pupils enjoy trips to places of interest and local universities. Many perform in drama productions, enjoy badminton and play football against other schools.

Parents and carers are generally supportive of the school. A typical comment from parents is that the school creates 'well-rounded individuals'.

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

Trustees, members of the local governing body and leaders have high ambitions for pupils. Leaders have put in place a curriculum which has the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) suite of subjects at its heart. More pupils now follow EBacc courses as a result.

The curriculum is well organised. Leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which it should be taught. Subject leaders are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn in their subject curriculums.

In most subjects, there are opportunities for pupils to practise and build on what they already know. Teachers ensure that pupils revisit their learning regularly. This helps pupils to remember the curriculum and achieve well.

In a small number of subjects, pupils lack confidence in their learning, and they struggle to make links with what they have learned previously. This is because, in these subjects, pupils have less opportunity to revisit and strengthen their previous learning. As a result, some pupils do not progress through these subject curriculums as well as they should.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers provide effective support so that these pupils can learn the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils in the school. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning to read are supported well by staff to help them to read more fluently. This helps these pupils to improve their confidence in reading and better access the wider curriculum. Teachers support pupils well to develop subject-specific vocabulary.

Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. They behave well in lessons. Typically, pupils can learn without disruption. However, a small minority of pupils behave less well at other times. Some staff are unfamiliar with, or do not use, the agreed approaches for dealing with pupils who show unacceptable behaviour. On occasion, this leads to disruption at unstructured times and in the dining room.

The personal development curriculum helps pupils to become responsible citizens. This curriculum includes opportunities to learn about age-appropriate relationships and sex education and health education. Pupils learn about other cultures and beliefs. Teachers prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils benefit from a well-designed careers programme. A high proportion of pupils move on to further education and training, including those pupils with SEND.

Trustees and governors provide effective support for leaders. They provide clear direction for the school and know the school well. They continually challenge leaders to develop further the quality of education for all pupils. Leaders take positive action to support the workload and well-being of staff. Staff appreciate the efforts made by leaders to reduce their workload. Staff are proud to work at Halewood Academy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are clear about the dangers that pupils may face. This includes when pupils are online. Staff are vigilant and alert to the signs that may indicate that pupils are at risk of harm. Adults report concerns about pupils in a timely manner and leaders follow up on these concerns appropriately.

Pupils are confident to seek help from staff when they need it. Leaders are quick to identify whether pupils require additional support from external agencies. They ensure that pupils and their families get the help that they need. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. This includes learning about the dangers of peer-on-peer abuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to revisit previous curriculum content. This means that some pupils lack the confidence and the secure knowledge they need to make links with what they know already. Leaders should ensure that teachers design learning that affords pupils the opportunity to consolidate prior knowledge and secure their earlier learning.
- Some teachers do not follow the systems for managing pupils' behaviour. As a result, a small minority of pupils are unable to self-regulate their behaviour during unstructured times, and this is not dealt with consistently well by staff. Leaders should ensure that behaviour management systems are understood and applied consistently by staff in order to secure improved behaviour from this small minority of pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2017.

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	139614
Local authority	Knowsley
Inspection number	10226236
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	1,073
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Fowler
Principal	Tracey Rollings
Website	www.halewoodacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 and 27 April 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Halewood Academy is part of Wade Deacon Trust.
- The school's sixth form closed in July 2018.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at four local providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, trustees and local governors. Inspectors also met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English and history. They visited a sample of lessons in these subjects, discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

reviewed pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.

- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views of behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- An inspector looked at safeguarding policies and reviewed leaders' records of checks on the suitability of staff and governors. They met with the leaders who have overall responsibility for safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils about leaders' work to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included some free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Hampson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

David Woodhouse

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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