

# Inspection of De Lacy Academy

Middle Lane, Knottingley, West Yorkshire WF11 0BZ

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at De Lacy Academy are very happy and safe. They enjoy highly positive relationships with each other and with staff. Bullying is very rare. From the moment pupils enter the school, staff take every opportunity to interact with them. These interactions are warm and friendly. Staff regularly check that pupils are OK, celebrate their achievements and discuss their learning with them. The warmth and positivity are evident throughout the school, in lessons and at social times. Both staff and pupils enjoy their time in the school.

Pupils are mature, confident and inquisitive. They have consistently positive attitudes to their learning. In lessons, pupils are very focused and interested. They participate well. Pupils know that teachers will always help them if they get stuck.

The school has the highest expectations for all pupils; staff want the best for every individual. Staff work hard to give pupils a wide range of opportunities and experiences and to broaden their horizons, taking every opportunity to do so. Pupils behave exceptionally well throughout the school. At the same time, pupils are free to be themselves and both pupils and staff celebrate difference.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious and exciting curriculum for pupils. They place a high value on all learning across the range of subjects. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum is broad. They have made changes to encourage pupils to continue to study a range of subjects across their time in the school. For example, leaders have redesigned the curriculum in modern foreign languages to help all pupils learn a foreign language successfully. The curriculum is designed to be 'empowering', giving pupils everything that they need for academic success and to lead safe and fulfilling lives. In every subject, leaders have thought carefully about the best ways of building pupils' knowledge and skills over time.

Teachers are very effective at teaching new material to pupils. They explain things clearly and check that pupils have understood. They revisit what pupils have learned regularly in order to help pupils remember this in the long term. As a result of this high-quality teaching, pupils are developing rich and wide-ranging knowledge and skills. Teachers are focused on ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND), are keeping up with the ambitious curriculum. They break learning down into smaller steps to support pupils who are finding learning difficult. Pupils across the school read often. They enjoy reading and are proud of the progress they are making. Leaders provide a range of support to help pupils who are not yet confident readers. This support is offered to a large number of pupils, and is carefully targeted on individual needs. For example, if pupils have gaps in their knowledge of phonics this is quickly addressed through short and effective extra teaching sessions. The quality of education and support at De Lacy means that all pupils are able to achieve.

Pupils make the most of every learning opportunity at De Lacy Academy. They are highly motivated. Pupils are keen to contribute to lessons. They understand the expectations which staff have of their behaviour and they consistently meet these. Pupils listen to staff because they know that they have their best interests at heart. Pupils who sometimes struggle to meet expectations are well supported. They say that staff help them to improve their behaviour. Pupils consistently told us that staff are consistent, fair and caring.

Bullying is very rare. Pupils have confidence that if it does occur, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively. This is a fully inclusive school. Pupils respect one another and celebrate their differences. As a result, pupils in the school feel confident being themselves. Pupils actively celebrate their own identities, cultures and backgrounds with the support of their peers and staff. Pupils learn from each other.

The school's approach to preparing pupils for life is exceptional. Leaders have designed an ambitious programme of learning and opportunities for all pupils. Pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities and participation is high. Pupils learn a great deal about their community, about Britain and about the wider world. Staff take every opportunity to broaden pupils' horizons, through informal conversations and planned activities. For example, catering staff introduce pupils to a diverse range of foods and staff develop pupils' knowledge of food cultures around the world during lunchtimes.

All aspects of the personal development curriculum are carefully designed to build pupils' knowledge. Leaders check that pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum is highly effective. Pupils place a high value on this and say that what they learn is useful and age-appropriate. Pupils receive regular and high-quality advice and guidance about what they might do when they leave school. They are well informed about their options for the future. They are very grateful for the support they receive. The school makes sure that all pupils benefit from the range of opportunities on offer. For example, staff identify and remove barriers which might prevent some pupils with SEND from enjoying the same opportunities as their peers. Leaders place a high value on positive interactions, and support pupils to engage with each other, and staff, in positive ways. As a result, pupils are confident and kind.

Leadership at all levels of the school is highly effective. The multi-academy trust (MAT) supports leaders in their work to continually improve the school. Trustees and governors know the school well and have an active role in its success. Senior leaders are open and transparent. They care for their staff and do everything they can to support them in providing the very best for their pupils. If staff have concerns, they raise these with leaders and they are acted upon quickly. For example, leaders have made changes to policies after discussions with staff. Leaders have worked hard to remove any unnecessary workload for staff. Staff feel trusted and supported in the school. The training and professional development offered to staff is of a very high quality. The support for teachers who have recently joined the profession is exceptional and as a result they are flourishing.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a robust safeguarding culture in the academy. Every member of staff takes responsibility for keeping pupils safe. Leaders support staff with highly effective training and guidance. They make sure that staff have the knowledge and support they need to protect pupils. Staff know what to do if they are worried about a pupil and they consistently take swift action if they have any concerns.

Pupils who need further support get the help they need. The school works with a wide range of other agencies very effectively. Leaders do everything they can to reduce the risks which pupils might face.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They are very knowledgeable about the risks they might face and they show a mature attitude to, and full appreciation of, issues such as sexual consent and sexual harassment.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138006
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10231571
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	773
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Steven Peter Hodsman
<b>Principal</b>	Chris McCall
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.delacyacademy.org.uk">www.delacyacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- De Lacy Academy is a smaller-than-average secondary school.
- De Lacy Academy is part of Delta Academies Trust, a group of 33 primary schools, 16 secondary schools and two alternative provision schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than the national average.
- The school uses two alternative provision settings for pupils: The Elland Academy and Pinderfields Hospital PRU.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, modern foreign languages and drama. As part of this, they held discussions with senior leaders, subject

leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at work they had completed.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in a range of other subjects. They looked at plans to support the personal development of pupils and spoke to pupils about what they had learned and the experiences and opportunities they had in the school.
- Inspectors visited a range of lessons across subjects. They visited assemblies and observed social times and the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors talked to staff, pupils, parents and carers. They analysed the responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, pupil survey and staff survey.
- Inspectors met with the SEND coordinator, spoke to pupils with SEND and their parents, reviewed plans to support these pupils and visited lessons to see how these pupils are supported to learn.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, reviewed documentation related to safeguarding and referrals to the local authority. They also spoke to staff about how they keep children safe.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the MAT and the local governing body and reviewed documentation relating to governance.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Jenner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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