

Inspection of Pine Green Academy

Valley Park Campus, Cromer Gardens, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV6 0UB

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pine Green Academy is an inclusive school with dedicated leaders. Staff support all pupils to be happy at school. They help many pupils to manage anxiety so they can begin to learn again. Pupils visibly relax as they come into school. Pupils are supported by staff who understand their needs and know how to help them.

The school motto, 'we are all different, and all valued,' is at the heart of everything the school does. Pupils are expected to behave well and respect each other, and they mostly do. Bullying is rare. Pupils value rewards for good behaviour and they work hard to achieve them. Attendance is improving, but too many pupils still do not attend school regularly enough.

Leaders have high ambitions for all pupils. Teachers plan sequences of lessons that match pupils' needs. However, leaders have not yet fully designed a curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge over time.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of different cultures. Pupils also enjoy and value experiences in the local community. For example, they are enthusiastic about educational visits such as the recent trip to Cannock Chase Water Park.

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

The trust and governors are committed to improving the school. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed the pace of some planned improvements. The new leaders have listened to the staff and pupils about the behaviours that previously made them feel unsafe and have addressed these. As a result, pupils are in class more often, and there is a positive atmosphere in the school. Staff now trust school leaders and have high aspirations for pupils.

The leaders' ethos is that 'with the right support and curriculum, all pupils can learn'. Rigorous assessment processes are in place and staff make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. These checks provide adults with useful information about pupils' needs. The adults use this information to ensure that all pupils get the right support and intervention to help them achieve.

The leaders are ambitious that the curriculum for secondary-age pupils enables them to enjoy learning and make positive choices. However, leaders have not yet designed a curriculum for all subjects which is well sequenced. Leaders have not checked the curriculum plans closely enough. This means that leaders have not identified that the staff need more support to plan the curriculum.

The primary curriculum is not as well developed. The leaders have not considered the key information they expect pupils to learn in each subject. Pupils are not helped to build their knowledge over time, and they are not as well prepared as they could be for the secondary curriculum.

The school is determined that all its pupils will learn to read confidently. Leaders have successfully introduced age-appropriate phonics and reading schemes and specific assessment tools. Teachers have the skills to support and motivate their pupils to learn to read. As a result, pupils are making progress in their reading.

There is a well-planned careers education programme for pupils. The work experience programme helps pupils to gain experiences in their community. It encourages them to think about future careers. This support prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.

The leaders and staff work hard to support and help pupils manage their behaviour. The pupils are confident that staff will act to resolve poor behaviour, including bullying. Many pupils are absent from school too often and miss vital learning. Leaders are working with parents and pupils to improve attendance.

Targeted support from different staff help pupils to learn tolerance and understanding of others. Pupils learn by taking part in exciting trips, listening to visitors who come to the school and taking care of several small animals at the school. For example, they care for a school puppy. These carefully planned opportunities develop pupils' sense of respect and responsibility for others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know pupils exceptionally well. Staff are highly trained and understand potential risks that pupils may face. Staff escalate concerns should they need to. Records of such concerns are meticulously kept.

The trust regularly monitors safeguarding procedures at the school. They provide advice, support and guidance to school leaders. They check that safeguarding procedures are implemented well.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe by studying the personal, social and health curriculum. Leaders have carefully planned this curriculum to cover statutory requirements. Staff sensitively teach lessons to reflect the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is well sequenced to build on pupils' prior knowledge. This means that pupils do not always build the knowledge they should over time. Leaders should ensure that the key information they expect to pupils know, understand and remember is taught in a logical order.

- Leaders in the primary phase have not given enough thought to setting out the key information they expect pupils to know and remember. As a result, pupils are not as well prepared as leaders expect for the secondary curriculum. Leaders should define the key knowledge pupils need to know and remember as part of the school's primary curriculum.
- Leaders have not monitored the development and implementation of the curriculum closely enough. They have not ensured that the staff have sufficient training and knowledge to understand the features of a well-planned curriculum. Leaders should improve their understanding of the quality of education to ensure that they identify and make the improvements needed.
- Although attendance is improving for individual pupils, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means many children are not accessing the curriculum. Leaders need to work closely with parents and pupils so that all pupils attend school regularly.

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.

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	142086
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10241254
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Meehan
Headteacher	Daniel Hartley (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.pinegreenacademy.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18 and 19 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Pine Green School (previously Northern House School) joined The Shaw Education Trust in March 2020.
- The trust appointed a new executive headteacher and a head of the secondary department. They started at the school in September 2022. Together with the head of the primary department, they form the school leadership team.
- The school shares its site with a pupil referral unit, which is also part of the trust.
- The board of directors of the trust has overall responsibility for governance. However, the operational running of the school is delegated to a local academy council.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Most pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not use any off-site alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 held meetings with the senior leaders, representatives from The Shaw Education Academy Trust, representatives of the local academy council and the behaviour support team.
- Inspectors also held meetings and talked informally with staff and pupils to gather general information about school life.
- The lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website and additional documents provided by the school during the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. She reviewed a sample of pupils' case files and the single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- Inspectors examined leaders' analysis of incident records and individual pupil support plans. They observed informal times of the day, including lunchtime, to evaluate pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the pupil questionnaire and the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Amanda Clugston, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Lewis	Ofsted Inspector

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