

Inspection of Cliff Park Ormiston Academy

Kennedy Avenue, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 6TA

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have experienced an unsettled time. However, they say the new leadership has steadied and improved the school.

Most pupils are grateful for the recently established high expectations. They say this has brought much-needed calm to the behaviour in corridors and classrooms. Pupils respond well to clear routines. The orderly atmosphere helps them focus on their lessons.

In general, pupils respect their peers. But some pupils and parents say that there has been a historical culture of bullying and prejudicial language. The experience of most pupils is that the new leaders have improved this considerably. However, although pupils feel safe, aspects of bullying persist. Some pupils are reluctant to report concerns they have.

Pupils want to learn. They say the new curriculum helps them to understand and remember important knowledge, but it does not equip them to learn well in all subjects.

Pupils enjoy many opportunities. They show commitment to leadership roles. Pupils engage proactively in charity work. These experiences help pupils be prepared for the wider world.

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

The trust and leaders know there is a lot of work to do to improve the school. The trust has an accurate view of the school's provision. They identify that standards in the school declined during the pandemic. The trust acted swiftly to address this.

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum. They have put in place an ambitious new curriculum. Leaders ensure this is relevant to the local context of the school. They break down into detail what they want pupils to learn.

In some subjects, teachers deliver the curriculum successfully. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They model learning effectively. This means in the majority of cases pupils build up their knowledge over time. For example, pupils develop their literacy and mathematical knowledge well. But some teachers have not had the training they need to know how to help pupils build on prior learning. This inconsistency affects pupils' confidence. They are not always able to make connections between different things they learn. Because of this, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the support they need. Leaders identify pupils' needs accurately. Leaders make sure pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan get the help they need to access the curriculum successfully. However, teachers have not had sufficient

training to support the needs of other pupils with SEND effectively. As a result, some pupils with SEND do less well than they might.

Leaders have identified that some pupils struggle with reading. They have put in place an appropriate programme to support the weakest readers. It is too early, however, to judge the impact of this.

Leaders have implemented a clear behaviour policy. They have trained staff well about how to apply this. Leaders put the needs of pupils at the heart of their decision-making. They have reduced serious misbehaviour. Attendance has improved significantly, including for pupils with SEND. This helps vulnerable pupils not to miss learning because of sanctions or absence. Pupils understand the expectations, and this has changed the culture of behaviour. Because of this, there is little disruption to learning.

Leaders have established a well-considered curriculum for personal development. It includes well-planned guidance about careers. This encourages pupils to be aspirational for their next steps. However, the curriculum has not sufficiently influenced behaviour. It has not developed pupils' attitudes to the point where they regularly call out bullying or discriminatory language.

Many governors are new to their roles. They are quickly developing their confidence in supporting and challenging leaders. For example, they have asked leaders probing questions about attendance. They use this information to check how effectively leaders are improving this aspect of their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding is robust. Leaders have trained staff effectively so that they are vigilant in spotting and reporting concerns. Leaders respond to these promptly. They put well-considered support in place for vulnerable pupils who need it. This helps them feel safe.

Leaders liaise with agencies regularly where appropriate. This includes if they have any low-level concerns about staff. Records of safeguarding cases are thorough.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe. They learn a lot about online safety. Leaders make sure agencies come into school to inform pupils about local risks, such as gangs and county lines.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not being taught consistently well across a range of subjects. In some areas, teaching does not help pupils to make connections with what they have learned before and pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the guidance and training they need to teach all areas of the curriculum well.
- Sometimes pupils with SEND who do not have an EHC Plan do not get the support they need to understand and apply their learning. Because of this, they do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders need to train staff in how to support pupils with SEND. Leaders need to routinely monitor this support so that pupils can build up what they know with confidence and achieve well.
- Some staff do not follow up pupils' concerns about behaviour as well as they should. This includes incidents of bullying and prejudicial language. This means that some pupils are not confident to report issues they may have so that they can be resolved promptly and effectively. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum and school ethos supports all pupils to respect diversity. Staff should receive appropriate guidance and training to implement the school's behaviour policy consistently well across the school.

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	140364
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10208905
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	843
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dr Paul Hann
Principal	Harry French
Website	www.cliffparkoa.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 – 21 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Cliff Park Ormiston Academy is part of the Ormiston Academy Trust.
- The current principal was appointed in April 2022, following a series of leadership changes.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with executive leaders from the trust, senior leaders, other leaders, staff, pupils, and those responsible for governance, including the chair of governors, and other governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding inspectors checked the school's single central record, considered its safeguarding policy and procedures, and spoke to leaders, staff, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the 95 responses that were submitted from this academic year by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and 95 free-text responses submitted during the inspection. Inspectors considered the 60 responses to the staff survey, and the 100 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Zoe Fisher	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Whear	Ofsted Inspector
Katherine Douglas	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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