

Inspection of a good school: Lostock Hall Academy

Todd Lane North, Lostock Hall, Preston, Lancashire PR5 5UR

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2022

Outcome

Lostock Hall Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They said that they are happy and that they feel safe. Pupils explained that they are kind to each other and respectful of each other regardless of their differences. Sometimes, pupils do fall out with each other. However, bullying is rare. Pupils told inspectors that when bullying does happen, staff deal with it effectively. Pupils know that staff will listen to them if they have any worries or concerns.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Classrooms and corridors are calm. Pupils enjoy their learning. Leaders are equally ambitious for all pupils' achievement, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, progress well through the curriculum. They said that their teachers will help them if they find things difficult.

Pupils have access to a wide range of enrichment activities after school. Leaders ensure that these activities foster pupils' interests and talents. Pupils explained that they particularly enjoy sporting and performing arts clubs and activities. There are also opportunities for pupils to take on leadership responsibilities. For example, pupils become school ambassadors to help other pupils in the school.

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

Leaders have ensured that all pupils, including those with SEND, have access to a broad and ambitious curriculum. More recently, leaders' improvements to the curriculum have led to greater enjoyment and success for pupils, for example in modern foreign languages. As a result, more pupils choose to study a modern foreign language than they did in the past. As a direct consequence of leaders' actions, the proportion of pupils who study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects is increasing.

Most subject leaders have identified the essential knowledge that pupils must learn. These leaders have thought carefully about the order in which this knowledge should be taught. This helps pupils to build their learning securely over time. However, in a very

small number of subjects, leaders are refining the curriculum. In these subjects, leaders are in the process of identifying the knowledge that pupils must know and remember. As a result, in these subjects, some pupils do not deepen their knowledge of essential concepts sufficiently well.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Most staff use their expertise to deliver the curriculum well. In the main, teachers provide activities that help pupils to think carefully about their learning. Where the curriculum is well designed, teachers explain difficult ideas well, so that pupils deepen their understanding. Over time, teachers revisit topics and concepts to help pupils to remember more of their earlier learning.

In most subjects, teachers make regular checks on pupils' learning. This helps teachers to quickly address any misconceptions that pupils may have. Teachers adapt their teaching to address any learning that pupils may have missed or forgotten. Pupils use this information to help them to improve their learning.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify pupils who find reading more difficult. Leaders pinpoint the specific issues for individual pupils. Teachers have been trained well to support pupils who have fallen behind in their reading. These teachers provide effective support to ensure that those pupils who are behind with their reading knowledge catch up quickly. As a result, less confident readers make rapid improvements and catch up with their peers. As well as a school library, leaders have provided pupils with access to an online library with a wide range of books. Leaders encourage pupils to read for pleasure.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. They provide appropriate training to all staff to ensure that the specific needs of individual pupils with SEND are met. Teachers support these pupils well, so that they access the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils in the school. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Around the school, pupils conduct themselves well. They wear their uniform with pride. Pupils follow school routines diligently and they are punctual to lessons. They said that it is rare that learning is disrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders have developed a comprehensive personal development curriculum. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to discuss a wide range of topical issues. Leaders make suitable use of external experts to deliver some aspects of the personal development curriculum. Pupils said that they enjoy this learning. They spoke knowledgeably about British values, for example the dangers of prejudice and extremism.

Leaders provide pupils with effective age-appropriate sex, relationships and health education. Leaders also ensure that pupils receive high-quality independent careers advice. Leaders provide suitable opportunities for pupils to meet with local employers and to visit further education and sixth-form colleges in the local area.

Staff said that they are proud to work at the school. They explained that leaders value them and appreciate the work that they do. Staff said that leaders are cognisant of their workload. Trustees are effective at holding leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have well-defined procedures to ensure that staff identify potential safeguarding concerns quickly. They take appropriate and timely action to provide support for pupils.

Leaders provide regular safeguarding training for staff. Frequent updates keep staff up to date with the most recent safeguarding developments, including those in the local area. Staff know how to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They are prompt in sharing any concerns with leaders.

Leaders have made strong links with local external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families get the timely help that they need. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the personal development curriculum and through well-thought-out assemblies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the essential knowledge that pupils must know and remember. On occasions, this hinders how well pupils progress through the curriculum. Leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking, so that teachers know exactly what to teach and when.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2014.

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	137111
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10256116
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	726
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margaret Scrivens
Principal	Gaynor Gorman
Website	www.lostockhallacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at three registered providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that 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 met with the principal, other school leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. Inspectors also met with the chair of the trust board, the school improvement partner, and a representative of the local authority.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in history, English, science, and art. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited some lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4. Inspectors also observed breaktimes and lunchtimes.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, the school development plans, leaders' self-evaluation documents, and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding in school. An inspector also checked the arrangements for pupils attending alternative provision.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors also considered the response to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Erica Sharman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Thomas Fay

Ofsted Inspector

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