

# Inspection of an outstanding school:

## Quarry Hill Academy

Bradleigh Avenue, Grays, Essex RM17 5UT

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2022

### **Outcome**

Quarry Hill Academy continues to be an outstanding school.

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

Pupils love coming to this school. They are very happy and safe and say that they enjoy their learning. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic learners taking great pride in their work. Pupils show the school's core values of responsibility, honesty and compassion within their everyday school activities.

Leaders have extremely high expectations that every child will achieve their very best and 'aim high, fly high'. These expectations are realised in the impressive achievement of pupils as they move to secondary school.

Throughout the school, leaders have created an environment that is highly inclusive, safe and calm, where positive behaviour is the absolute expectation. As a result, pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary, both within and outside classrooms. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and courtesy. Bullying is rare.

In addition to the wide range of clubs offered by the school, leaders are extremely proactive in securing many exciting opportunities for children to experience outside the classroom. This includes attending the Wimbledon tennis championships and the Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup, as well as participating in fundraising for charity.

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

Leaders have created a curriculum that is very ambitious across all subject areas. The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities that they may not have otherwise experienced. This is further complemented through the provision of educational visits, visiting authors and speakers. Pupils' learning is carefully planned so that all pupils are able to gain the knowledge they need. This is supported by teachers' delivery of engaging and interactive lessons in which all pupils can succeed.

Teachers frequently review pupils' progress across all subjects. This enables teachers to

identify pupils who need extra help through additional tutorial sessions. Once this support is in place, pupils rapidly catch up.

Teachers quickly identify any pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This means that support systems are immediately put in place and these pupils are able to access the same learning as other pupils. For example, the school has successfully admitted and integrated a number of pupils whose needs other schools felt unable to meet. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same exceptional progress as their peers.

Leaders make sure that the nursery and the early years are fun and engaging places for children to learn. There is a clear focus on building on and consolidating prior knowledge and in enhancing children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children behave very maturely as they play and learn together.

Leaders have embedded a very strong culture of reading across the school, so pupils develop their love of reading. Once they join the school, children immediately begin the phonics programme. Teachers provide lively and engaging lessons for pupils which enable all pupils to become confident readers. Teachers' focus on rich and varied texts means that pupils have the opportunity to read texts by many different authors across a range of cultures and time periods. The school also enables parents to help their children learn to read by providing reading workshop sessions and tutorials. Children who speak English as an additional language are very well supported to make rapid progress through small-group or one-to-one work. Pupils talk excitedly about the books they have read and their favourite authors.

Pupils approach challenging tasks in lessons with enthusiasm and confidence that they can solve any problem. They have a deep understanding of how to be a good friend. They behave exceptionally well.

Pupils take part in weekly 'big question' assemblies. These assemblies are interactive and enable pupils to discuss moral and spiritual issues. Pupils are confident in expressing their views and show maturity, respect and knowledge within these discussions. They are motivated to demonstrate exemplary behaviour at all times and to work well with others. Pupils embody the school's core values of responsibility, honesty and compassion.

Celebration events allow pupils to actively explore different cultures, traditions and beliefs. There is an extremely high take up by pupils of clubs, trust-wide competitions and opportunities to work with charities and the local church. Pupils have a very deep understanding of what it means to become a citizen in modern Britain and their responsibilities as a citizen. They are keenly aware of the importance of showing respect and tolerance to all.

Staff feel that all leaders are extremely supportive and considerate of their workload and well-being. They enjoy the opportunities to work closely with other staff across the trust, to share ideas and planning to create the best possible curriculum opportunities for pupils.

Governors are active in monitoring leaders' actions. They have a deep understanding of the

school and the vision of leaders. Governors are rightly proud of the school, its pupils and the high ambition of its leaders.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel safe and are safe. Pupils are easily able to show their awareness of an age-appropriate range of risks, including online. They are confident in talking about any concerns with adults in the school.

Leaders have created a culture of vigilance across the school where safeguarding processes are robust. This includes safer recruitment and the management of allegations.

Staff are highly responsive in identifying and responding to any safeguarding concern, securing the appropriate help from external agencies.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in June 2016.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139576
<b>Local authority</b>	Thurrock
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227085
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	508
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The trust board
<b>Chair</b>	Tara Frankland
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Wakeling
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.quarryhillacademy.org.uk">www.quarryhillacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The nursery caters for children aged two, offering both full- and part-time places.
- There is on-site childcare provision for children aged two and over, which is separately registered and inspected.
- The school provides a wide range of before- and after-school clubs as well as offering all pupils breakfast every day, free of charge.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, early years leader, special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders.
- The inspector also spoke to the chair and one other member of the governing body as well as the chief executive officer of the Catalyst Trust.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and humanities. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject

leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and outside during social times.
- The lead inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and policies, speaking to staff and local governors and holding discussions with pupils.
- The lead inspector viewed a range of the school's documentation provided at the start of the inspection, including the school improvement documentation and governing body minutes.
- The lead inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. She gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Rowena Simmons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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