

Inspection of Fulwood Academy

Black Bull Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 9YR

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are calm, polite and benefit from the positive relationships that they have with staff. They celebrate diversity and make a strong contribution to the respectful environment that exists at the school. Pupils are happy.

Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond well to the high expectations that leaders have of their conduct and achievement.

Pupils relish the opportunities that they have to take on responsibilities at the school. Through roles such as reading buddies, prefects and members of the school council, pupils become confident and active leaders. They enjoy taking part in a wide range of clubs that help them to develop their talents and interests. These include music club, well-being club and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Leaders deal effectively with any incidents of bullying that may occur. Pupils feel safe because they have trusted adults available whom they can speak to about any concerns or worries that they may have.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. They have taken the necessary steps to address the issues that led to the results at the end of key stage 4 in 2022.

In most subjects, leaders have designed curriculums where the key knowledge that pupils should learn is clear. This supports the majority of pupils, including those with SEND, to achieve well. Leaders have placed the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) at the heart of the curriculum. As a result, the number of pupils choosing the EBacc route at key stage 4 has increased.

In the main, teachers use their strong subject knowledge effectively to design activities that help pupils to learn well. As a result, most pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education. In a small number of subjects, where leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking, the activities that teachers design do not help some pupils to develop a sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. When this happens, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. They use this information well to address any gaps or misconceptions that pupils have about their learning.

Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. Lessons are rarely interrupted because teachers deal effectively with any incidents of low-level disruption that may occur. Pupils benefit from the time that staff take to understand

their needs. Leaders use this information well to help a small number of pupils to improve their behaviour and attendance.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. They quickly and accurately identify the needs of less confident readers as soon as pupils join the school. They ensure that these pupils quickly gain the knowledge and skills that they need to become confident, fluent readers. This includes support with phonics as appropriate. Leaders ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly receive the support that they need to access the full curriculum and to achieve well.

Leaders have thought carefully about the books that pupils read. Pupils learn about a wide range of themes, which include immigration, refugees and healthy relationships. This helps them to develop their understanding of the wider world.

Leaders have established an inclusive culture at the school, where every pupil is valued. Leaders accurately identify any additional needs that pupils may have, including for pupils with SEND. They ensure that teachers receive the information that they need to support these pupils so that they can learn well alongside their classmates.

Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Through the well-designed personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn to value the views and opinions of others. They know how to take care of their physical and mental health. Leaders ensure that pupils know about the range of courses and careers available to them in the future. Staff mentors ensure that Year 11 pupils are well supported to continue their studies after leaving the school.

Trust leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They hold school leaders to account for the quality of education and carry out their statutory duties effectively. Staff value the support that they receive from leaders. They are proud to be part of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture at the school. They make the necessary checks on staff.

Leaders ensure that staff receive the training that they need to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff quickly report any concerns that they may have about pupils. Leaders respond effectively to these concerns to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need to keep them safe. This includes working with a range of other agencies when necessary.

Leaders ensure that pupils know how to stay safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. This means that teachers are not clear about the key knowledge that they should emphasise. As a result, some of the activities that teachers design do not help some pupils to develop sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding. In these subjects, leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking and provide teachers with the support that they need to design activities that help these pupils to achieve as well as they should.

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	135936
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10286271
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	771
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joan Dean
Principal	Andrew Galbraith
Website	www.fulwoodacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 July 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Fulwood Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2009.
- The school has been part of the Dunstone Education Trust since January 2015.
- Leaders make use of three registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical 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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, history and physical education. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector held meetings with members of the trust board, including the chair of trustees, and with members of the local governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of governors. He also met with the local authority school adviser and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss SEND, the curriculum, assessment, pupils' behaviour and attitudes and the provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They took account of the responses from pupils to Ofsted's online survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection. There were no responses to the online survey for staff.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils. They checked a sample of leaders' safeguarding records and reviewed the recruitment checks made on staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life and their views of behaviour and bullying. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Derek Yarwood	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Cahalin	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Wood	Ofsted Inspector

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