

# Inspection of Bristnall Hall Academy

Bristnall Hall Lane, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 9PA

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 November 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Good

The principal of this school is Louisa Pritchard. This school is part of the Academy Transformation Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sir Nick Weller, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Patricia Beanland.

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

Bristnall Hall Academy is a truly inclusive and harmonious school. Staff care deeply about each pupil and want the very best for them. Everyone is proud to be part of a close-knit school community that is working together with a common purpose. Pupils know that staff will go the extra-mile for them, and staff do this gladly.

The school expects every pupil to attend well and give their very best each day. Pupils are undaunted by this challenge and work judiciously with their teachers. Staff recognise pupils' efforts and hard work. They celebrate pupils' achievements and are quick to offer support if pupils need an extra boost. This helps pupils to make fantastic progress and achieve highly across a range of academic and vocational subjects.

The school's strong community ethos is reflected in pupils' behaviour. Pupils learn what exemplary behaviour looks like, and staff model this to them. Pupils respond by 'buying in' to a culture that recognises each other's right to learn. Classrooms ooze enthusiasm and productivity and the school buzzes with happy voices at breaktime and lunchtime. Pupils know if their behaviour dips below the standard expected then staff will treat them fairly and respectfully. This culture builds pupils' self-esteem and helps them become compassionate and confident young adults.

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

The school is relentless in its continued desire to improve. Staff are committed to this and want to play their part. They feel valued and know that leaders will listen to their views. The principal summed this up accurately, describing everyone as being 'on the bus' together. The school and wider trust has prioritised staff professional development. This draws on, shares and develops staff expertise across all facets of school life. Pupils reap the reward of this dedication, care and energy at every turn, from the thought staff put into each lesson, to being helped to safely cross the road at the end of the day.

Pupils learn a wide-ranging curriculum. At key stage 3, this is well balanced, with equal emphasis given to the creative and technical subjects. Pupils have a broad choice of options to choose from at key stage 4. The school has placed an academic core at the heart of this offer, with a range of vocational options that tap into pupils' aspirations and interests. This means pupils are well equipped to excel as they take their next step.

The school has developed detailed and ambitious subject curriculums. These set out the important building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Teachers help pupils to join this knowledge together to broaden and deepen their understanding. For example, in history pupils draw on their prior knowledge of 'empire' when considering the concept of 'imperialism' in relation to the First World War. The school is taking rapid action to further develop subjects where there is relative weakness. Teachers craft explanations carefully, question pupils skilfully and

adapt their practice thoughtfully. Consequently, pupils learn the curriculum exceptionally well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive. Their needs are identified accurately. Relevant information is then shared with and used by staff to support pupils. This helps pupils with SEND learn the ambitious curriculum and supports their wider social and emotional development exceptionally well.

The school has developed a vibrant reading culture. Bookshelves full of new and exciting books sit in every corridor for pupils to take and read. Teachers read to pupils and share their love of reading at every opportunity. The library is a busy and bustling hub of the school. Pupils who need support to improve their reading get the help they need from trained staff.

Pupils benefit greatly from an impressive and expansive personal development curriculum. The school has taken great care to ensure that pupils have the knowledge to keep themselves safe and well. Beyond the classroom, many pupils take part in the plethora of clubs, trips and visits on offer. There really is something for everyone, from fantasy role-playing games to musical theatre. Pupils are strong advocates of their school. They willingly and enthusiastically contribute to school life in many ways. For instance, the school trains older pupils as 'agents of change' so that they can promote diversity, celebrate difference and challenge discrimination. This, combined with a comprehensive careers education that involves every subject area in the school, readies pupils to be active and responsible citizens in the wider world.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes

pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139043
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240352
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,088
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sir Nick Weller
<b>Principal</b>	Louisa Pritchard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bristnallhallacademy.attrust.org.uk">www.bristnallhallacademy.attrust.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is one of twenty schools that make up the Academy Transformation Trust.
- The school uses part-time alternative provision for a small number of pupils at four registered providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement 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.

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography, art and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed the curriculum in design and technology, and history.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal and other senior and middle leaders, including the joint coordinators of SEND.
- Inspectors spoke with members of the local governing body, the chair of trustees, the chief executive officer and other executive trust staff.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and personal development programme with leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to a pupil survey, a staff survey and Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

## Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Kent	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Epton	Ofsted Inspector
Russell Hinton	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Hackfath	His Majesty's Inspector

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