

# Inspection of a good school: Horsforth School

Lee Lane East, Horsforth, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS18 5RF

---

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 October 2023

## Outcome

Horsforth School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Paul Bell. This school is part of Horsforth School single-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paul Bell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rosemary Edwards.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This school believes in opportunity and achievement for all. It is highly effective in achieving this aim. Pupils benefit from an expansive choice of courses that prepare them well for their future careers and aspirations. The school has high expectations for all pupils. There is an inclusive ethos at the school that supports and challenges pupils to achieve their best. Pupils study a well-constructed curriculum and are taught by well-trained teachers.

Pupils are happy, and they behave well in lessons and around the school. Bullying rarely happens but is dealt with swiftly should it arise. Pupils are challenged to earn 'character badges' through completion of activities that develop character and resilience. Pupils are taught about local dangers, such as road safety, and how to keep themselves safe online.

Pupils experience a diverse array of enrichment activities, from learning about robotics to school theatre productions. The school actively engages with the community and has provided notable support for local charities, such as the 'Candlelighters' charity that supports children with cancer and their families. Sixth-form students are an asset to the school. They lead clubs and revision sessions and act as role models for younger pupils.

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

The school has planned an effective and inclusive curriculum. Pupils can choose a wide variety of subjects to study at the school. The curriculum prepares pupils well for future education, employment and training opportunities. Pupils and students in the sixth form make excellent progress through the curriculum. They achieve well on their courses.

Pupils learn topics in a well-structured and sequenced way. This helps pupils to learn and remember new knowledge and concepts over time. Pupils benefit from precise and regular assessment that identifies where and how they can improve. The school ensures that lessons are ambitious and that there are high aspirations for all. Pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well and helped to develop their resilience.

Teachers are skilled, well trained and knowledgeable. Lessons are designed to ensure that previous learning is regularly recapped. Questioning is used effectively to build and develop pupils' understanding. On some occasions, teaching activities do not encourage pupils to think or discuss ideas in sufficient depth. This means that pupils do not routinely develop a more complex understanding of some topics.

The school prioritises reading. All pupils receive timely assessments of their reading ability. This enables teachers to identify pupils' needs and put targeted support in place. This helps pupils to make rapid progress with their reading. A new reading curriculum has been recently introduced. Teachers read shared texts aloud in tutor time, and pupils have dedicated library lessons to develop a love of reading. It is too early to gauge the impact of some of these newer initiatives.

Pupils are courteous and polite to teachers and visitors. They are attentive in lessons. The school ensures that attendance matters to all pupils. As a result, attendance at the school is consistently high. Leaders have established a strong culture of respect at the school. If consequences such as suspensions are necessary, the school ensures that pupils are reintegrated back into school with appropriate support.

The school provides an extensive programme of personal development. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and dangers such as sexting in an age-appropriate way. They experience various day-long events that build knowledge of topics such as hate crime, anti-bullying and autism awareness. Sixth-form students learn about pertinent themes, including road safety and sexual harassment. The school prioritises mental health and well-being and has recently become accredited with 'MindMate Friendly' status.

Pupils and students in the sixth form thrive on extensive enrichment opportunities. For example, students develop leadership skills through mentoring pupils in lower year groups, participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and sports leadership programmes. Pupils become mental health ambassadors, cadets and school parliamentarians, and they participate in charity work. In one notable example, the school recently raised over £11,000 in support for childhood cancer.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and are proud to work at the school. There is a strong culture of teamwork and most staff feel that their workload is well managed. Leaders have ensured that there are plentiful training opportunities for staff to develop their expertise and careers. Trustees are knowledgeable and well briefed about school performance. They meet with senior leaders regularly and hold them to account effectively.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, pupils are not encouraged to explore ideas in sufficient depth. This means that opportunities to develop a thorough understanding of important concepts are sometimes missed. The school should ensure that pupils are encouraged to consistently discuss and explore concepts as thoroughly as possible.

## 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 2013.

## 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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>	137775
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290191
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,563
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	323
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Rosemary Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Bell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.horsforthschool.org">www.horsforthschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has been an academy since 2012.
- The school uses four registered alternative providers of education.
- 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

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, staff and pupils. They met with trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: science, mathematics, English and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons and considered how the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND were addressed. They observed pupils at various times of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke to representatives of the alternative provisions used by the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the views of parents; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Carr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tudor Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

Pritiben Patel

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023