

Inspection of Edgar Wood Academy

Heywood Old Road, Heywood OL10 2QN

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The acting headteacher of this school is Karen Hutley. This school is part of the Altus Education Partnership Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Richard Ronksley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Deborah Ball.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), feel happy and safe at Edgar Wood Academy. They are well cared for by staff.

The trust and the school have high expectations for pupils' academic achievement. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because, while the curriculum is ambitious, it is not delivered consistently well. As a result, across a range of subjects pupils' learning is uneven.

The trust has recently worked with the school to put in place a new behaviour policy. Most pupils settle into lessons and follow new classroom routines well. Nonetheless, the school's new systems for managing pupils' behaviour are not as effective as they should be. At times, some pupils continue to misbehave and do not engage with their learning.

Pupils enjoy taking part in different clubs. For example, they relish opportunities to learn how to crochet, write short stories and develop their debating skills. Pupils take pride in leading projects that help the community. For instance, they like to write and send cards to local elderly residents and raise money for different charities.

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

The school works closely with the trust to ensure that the curriculum is broad and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND. In most subjects, the curriculum is carefully designed to identify the key knowledge that pupils should learn and in which order this content should be taught. However, weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum hinder how well pupils build on their prior knowledge in different subjects.

In some subjects, teachers use their strong subject knowledge to expand pupils' vocabulary. They explain concepts to pupils with clarity and confidence. Typically, pupils achieve well in these subjects. In other subjects, however, the school has not ensured that teachers have sufficient expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively. For example, the learning activities that teachers select do not enable pupils to acquire a secure body of subject-specific knowledge over time. This means that some pupils do not learn in these subjects as well as they should.

In those subjects where the curriculum is delivered well, teachers use assessment strategies skilfully. Over time, they check pupils' knowledge and adapt the delivery of the curriculum to address pupils' misconceptions effectively. In other subjects, where the delivery of the curriculum is less effective, teachers are not equipped to identify where pupils have gaps in their learning.

Staff use robust systems to identify and respond to the precise needs of pupils with SEND. Nevertheless, the achievement of some pupils with SEND is hampered by weaknesses in some teachers' delivery of the curriculum.

The school identify and support pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. Many of these pupils are reading with increasing confidence and fluency. Pupils are encouraged to read more widely and discuss the books that they have read. This increases their enjoyment of reading and inspires them to read for pleasure.

Most pupils are polite and respectful. However, despite the school's efforts, a small number of pupils persistently display disruptive behaviour. At times, staff do not receive the guidance and strategies that they need to address these behaviour issues effectively. On occasion, the poor behaviour of a small number of pupils slows down the learning of their peers.

The programme to promote pupils' wider development is strong. Pupils learn about the importance of the fundamental British values. They understand and respect the different opinions and beliefs that others may hold. Pupils know how to look after themselves when under stress or if they are sad. They enjoy using the school gymnasium to improve their physical fitness. Pupils visit a range of universities and colleges to learn about future education or employment choices. These experiences help to raise pupils' aspirations.

Members of the local governing body and trustees are at the early stages of improving their work with the school. At times, they do not have sufficient information to challenge the school as rigorously as they should. In some areas, this has occasionally delayed the actions taken to make improvements. The school and the trust are increasingly mindful of the impact of policy change on staff's workload. Most staff value the support that they receive and enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not delivered skilfully and effectively. This means that pupils do not build on their learning as securely as they should in these subjects. This also hinders teachers from identifying and addressing pupils' misconceptions as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that teachers are suitably equipped to design learning that supports pupils to build on what they know already and check that this knowledge is secure.
- A small number of pupils' poor behaviour is not sufficiently addressed. This means that some pupils continue to misbehave and, occasionally, disrupt the learning of

others. The school should develop effective behaviour systems that help staff to manage pupils' behaviour consistently well.

- At times, trustees and local governors do not gather enough information to hold the school to account as effectively as they should. This limits the effectiveness of actions taken to tackle weaknesses in the school. Trustees and local governors should work closely with the school so that necessary improvements can be made swiftly and effectively.

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

Unique reference number	148596
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10294428
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Deborah Ball
CEO of the trust	Richard Ronksley
Headteacher	Karen Hutley (acting headteacher)
Website	www.edgarwood.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened with the Altus Education Partnership multi-academy trust in September 2021.
- The current acting headteacher was appointed in October 2023.
- The school do not make use of any alternative provision.
- 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.

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

- This was the first routine inspection that 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the CEO of the trust, the school's acting headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors met with a range of other staff and leaders during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with members of the local governing body and the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during social times and during movement around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, modern foreign languages, design and technology and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for personal development, pupil premium, behaviour and attendance, alternative provision, early careers teachers, SEND and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation, attendance and behaviour records.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Amina Modan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Stephanie Gill	Ofsted Inspector
Tuesday Humby	Ofsted Inspector
Craig Yates	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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023