

Inspection of Outwood Academy Valley

Valley Road, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 7EN

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is David Cavill. This school is part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Lee Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Earnshaw.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 seven years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 15 and 16 November 2022. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Outwood Academy Valley. Most meet the high expectations the school has of them. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite and respectful. Most pupils work well in lessons. During social times, pupils behave well. Some pupils said that some staff are not always fair when dealing with behaviour issues and, on occasions, some pupils disrupt lessons. Some pupils struggle to meet the school's expectations. Sometimes, they are suspended from school or removed from lessons.

Pupils said that bullying happens occasionally. They are confident that staff will deal with any bullying issues well. Pupils feel safe in school. They appreciate the support they get from their learning managers.

When they start school in Year 7, pupils follow a programme to help them be safe, respectful and responsible. Pupils enjoy this programme and say it helps them settle into school. Many pupils participate in the extensive range of wider opportunities the school provides. Some pupils take part in 'student voice', and some are anti-bullying ambassadors and peer mentors. Pupils are proud to take on these responsibilities. Pupils also enjoy taking part in sports clubs and after-school homework clubs. Many pupils enjoy taking part in school productions.

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

There is an ambitious and well-planned curriculum in place for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It is clear what pupils will learn and when. This helps teachers deliver the curriculum well. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain new learning clearly. Most teachers use effective questioning to check and develop pupils' understanding of key knowledge. Teachers provide regular feedback to pupils. Pupils respond well to this feedback. This helps pupils to improve their work and address gaps in learning. In the subjects where this is done consistently well, for example in mathematics and English, pupils achieve exceptionally well.

The school is committed to developing a love of reading in all pupils. Pupils have regular library lessons, and the school organises many events to promote reading. Pupils make good use of the books in the library. Pupils who need extra help to develop their reading skills receive well-thought-out support. This helps them to improve their reading and comprehension skills. Most pupils with SEND are well-supported in lessons. Most teachers ensure that these pupils get the help and support they need to access the curriculum and achieve well.

Students in the sixth form benefit from an ambitious curriculum. Teachers in the sixth form have expert subject knowledge and deliver the curriculum well. Students

feel well supported. They have a range of opportunities to develop their independence. They are well prepared for their next steps.

The school aims for all pupils to behave well because it is 'who I am'. The school regularly reinforces its high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils and staff understand these expectations. As a result, most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. A minority of pupils do not always behave well. Some of these pupils are repeatedly removed from lessons. This means some pupils miss out on learning. The number of suspensions is high and some pupils are repeatedly suspended. The school has started to take action to support these pupils in improving their behaviour. This work is at an early stage and is yet to have a sustainable impact. Most pupils attend school well. They enjoy getting rewarded for their good attendance. Some groups of pupils do not attend as well as others. The school is aware of this and has provided extra support for these pupils. This is helping to improve their attendance.

There is a well-planned curriculum in place for pupils' personal development. In 'life' lessons, pupils learn how to be safe online and in the community. They learn about the importance of being respectful to everyone, however different. Pupils also learn about different religions and human rights. However, some staff do not always deliver the 'life' lessons well. Some pupils do not develop a secure understanding of some important topics. They are not always as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. Pupils get good career advice and guidance that prepares them well for their next steps.

The school is well led and managed. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported. The trust and those responsible for governance provide effective support and challenge. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The work to support pupils who struggle to meet the school's expectations of behaviour is at an early stage of implementation. Some pupils are repeatedly suspended or removed from lessons and miss out on their education. The number of pupils who are repeatedly suspended is high. The school should ensure that it supports pupils with more challenging behaviour effectively so that pupils do not miss out on their education.
- The personal development curriculum is not always delivered consistently well. This means that some pupils do not have a fully secure understanding of some important topics. Some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain

as they could be. The school should ensure that it monitors how well the personal development curriculum is implemented so that any inconsistencies can be addressed.

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	138247
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10298476
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1713
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	216
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Earnshaw
CEO	Lee Wilson
Principal	David Cavill
Website	www.valley.outwood.com
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 November 2022

Information about this school

- The school is part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers and five unregistered alternative providers.
- The school's sixth-form centre is located close to the main school site at Valley Road, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 7EL. This centre is shared with sixth-form students from another school in the same multi-academy trust.
- 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the principal, the vice-principals, assistant principals and trust leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science, geography, history and design and technology. 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 discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors visited tutorial sessions and an assembly.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND, from a range of year groups. Inspectors spoke with pupils at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.
- The lead inspector met with a trustee and the chair of the local academy council.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO and other trust leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Paul Halcro, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Cole	Ofsted Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Ridley	Ofsted Inspector
Damian Painton	Ofsted Inspector
Hazel Henson	His Majesty's Inspector

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