

Inspection of a good school: Perryfields Academy

Oldacre Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 0RG

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 July 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Clare Harris. This school is part of Broadleaf Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Claire Pritchard, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Neil Turner.

What is it like to attend this school?

Perryfields Academy is a warm, friendly and welcoming school. Pupils lie firmly at the centre of the school's values of 'aspiration, support, collaboration and focus'.

Pupils are happy and safe. They speak about positive developments in the school such as the new behaviour policy and 'line ups'. The school has high expectations of pupils, although these expectations are not always fully realised as pupils do not achieve well enough.

The positive relationships between staff and pupils are tangible throughout the school. Pupils treat each other with tolerance and respect and they say Perryfields is a school where you 'can be who you want to be'. Pupils behave in a calm and orderly way around the school site. They display positive attitudes in their lessons.

The school's 'Perryfields Promise' ensures that pupils can develop personally, emotionally and socially. Pupils take part in a range of events such as public speaking, trips and visits locally and abroad, visits to universities and work placements. The school's recent production allowed pupils to use their dance, drama, singing, speech and art skills. Pupils have a real sense of pride in their achievements and thoroughly enjoy having these celebrated at the annual award event hosted at a local football club.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum they want their pupils to follow. They have recently redesigned the curriculum. Consequently, they have identified what they want pupils to know, do and understand at key points. This is further developed in subjects such as English and history, but is still in its infancy in mathematics.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and generally present subject information clearly. However, pupils sometimes have inconsistent learning experiences due to the varying quality in how well the curriculum is taught. For example, teachers do not always check carefully enough that pupils have the secure knowledge they need before moving on to new topics, which can hinder their progress.

The school has set out the strategies and methods it wants teachers to use when implementing the curriculum. However, not all teachers use these methods well enough to address misconceptions. As a result, pupils' abilities to remember what they have been taught is variable.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as their peers. The school has prioritised supporting pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans. These pupils have their individual needs met effectively and achieve well. The school is now working to ensure that the provision for pupils with SEND who do not have an EHC plan is as secure and consistent.

The school has prioritised reading. It quickly identifies pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge and provides targeted and effective programmes of reading support. This means that pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or who are SEND, can catch up with their peers. Pupils are encouraged to read widely in a range of different forms. The school has high ambitions for pupils to read often in and out of lessons.

Staff and pupils share the view that behaviour has improved in the school. The school has high expectations of pupil behaviour and, quite rightly, challenges when these expectations fall short. Pupils display kindness and respect for other pupils. Perryfields is a school where differences are celebrated. Good behaviour is praised in lots of different ways such as end-of-year trips to Drayton Manor and rewards events.

The school provides a broad range of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils take advantage of these opportunities, giving them vital life skills, such as developing their confidence, raising self-esteem, collaborating and problem-solving. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education. Careers information is shared in detail with pupils across year groups, and they benefit significantly from this. In Art, for instance, pupils are encouraged to think about different careers that artists can pursue.

Staff are proud to work at Perryfields. They are appreciative of the ways in which the school, including trustees and governors, thinks about their workload and well-being. Staff work well together as a team for the benefit of all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that teachers consistently check if pupils have the necessary knowledge before moving on to new topics. This results in some pupils being moved on to new work before they are ready, leading to a lack of retention of key knowledge and unaddressed misconceptions. The school should ensure that all teachers consistently check for understanding, so that pupils retain and apply key knowledge.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use approaches or select activities to deliver the curriculum as leaders intend. This limits how much pupils learn in lessons and the progress they make over time. The school should support teachers to utilise appropriate teaching methods and activities so that pupils can consistently learn well.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged Perryfields High School Specialist Maths and Computing College to be good in January 2018.

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	148267
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10344176
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	989
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Neil Turner
Headteacher	Clare Harris
Website	www.perryfieldsacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 January 2018

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Broadleaf Partnership Trust.
- The school works with four registered alternative 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

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the school's senior leaders, the local academy committee and trustees and the CEO and Director of Education.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, history and English. 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.
- 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 inspection team considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Neil Warner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jane Epton

Ofsted Inspector

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