

# Inspection of Albright Education Centre

South Tipton Campus Site, Alexandra Road, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 7NR

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Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

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

Albright Education Centre is an extraordinary place. This community is driven to make a very special difference to pupils. Leaders, staff, parents and carers have created a culture where all staff are determined to make the most significant and positive difference to pupils.

Expectations are high that every moment will count in ensuring pupils learn, remember and can do more. Some pupils join Albright because of previous difficult school experiences. This can mean that pupils' self-belief has suffered. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities may have struggled in other settings before they joined this school. Because of caring staff and determined leaders, these barriers are overcome, and expectations are fulfilled. Pupils leave as confident learners eager to be part of the world around them.

Behaviour is exemplary. Some pupils have had long periods away from school, and some have faced suspension or exclusion from previous schools. Some bring with them some challenging behaviours. However, at Albright, staff never give up on pupils and believe every day is a fresh new start. They quickly act to provide the right support at the right time. Pupils thrive on this care, support and belief.

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

Leaders, supported by an attentive governing body, have set high expectations for pupils' time at Albright. Across all subjects, leaders have carefully identified the key learning that pupils need to know. Over time, pupils build their knowledge at any school site or through the exceptional home tuition service. This means pupils are ready to succeed when returning to their previous school, new school or college.

When pupils start, staff work tirelessly to understand their additional needs. For some pupils, this might be a previously unmet need; for others, there might just be gaps in their learning caused by prior poor attendance. Whatever the reason, staff are swift to act to assess these needs. With the support of services such as speech and language therapists, educational psychologists or mental health support services, they identify the right provision to overcome challenges.

Staff are skilled at checking that pupils have learned the intended curriculum. Through caring conversations in lessons or easily understandable feedback in books, pupils know how to get even better. When pupils fall behind, a range of interventions help them catch up. Staff are skilled at balancing the need to ensure pupils learn the curriculum while empowering a sense of personal belief.

Reading is a priority. Staff are well trained in reading approaches, meaning pupils quickly learn phonics, decode words and take meaning from their reading. Well-chosen authors and types of writing enthuse an excitement about books. For example, at the hospital provision, staff quickly gain pupils' voice in the books they like or have previously read. From this, they carefully create learning experiences that build on their learning at school.

For some pupils, prior school attendance has been inconsistent, or their time at school has been difficult. However, at Albright, staff work closely with families and pupils to understand why attendance was difficult in the past. From this understanding, strong plans empower greater attendance in school.

The environment is one in which pupils feel safe, and that fosters respect. Staff summed this up by describing a 'can-do' culture where young people are at the heart of the work done by adults. This is about more than providing a nurturing environment that meets social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. It is also about ensuring that pupils develop the confidence to do well so that they are set up for their next steps.

At Albright, no moment is wasted in preparing pupils for time after school and the world around them. Lessons in personal, social, health and economic education develop an understanding of the challenges of growing up in the West Midlands. The curriculum in other subjects also breeds a sense of awe and wonder, and the young pupils reflect on the work of great artists such as van Gogh and da Vinci, and classical composers. Performing arts, small animal care and forest schools, to name just a few, enrich pupils' time at the school.

Careers provision is exemplary. Pupils very quickly build a personal ambition about what they want to achieve in life. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences linked to careers. This includes visits to and from various providers and settings and information about different routes. Pupils also benefit from individual and regular independent career advice from appropriately trained and qualified staff. For example, the sixth form is exemplary at quickly understanding the prior learning experiences of pupils and swiftly identifying the best learning pathway.

Parents, carers, staff and pupils are united in their excitement and pride in Albright Education Centre. Parents told inspectors how the school had made a tremendous difference for their children. Staff are grateful for the support leaders provide and the opportunities for professional development.

## **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 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>	103887
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	10343773
<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 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>	86
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	8
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Nikita Silvester-Grant
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Hazelwood (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://albrighteducationcentre.co.uk">https://albrighteducationcentre.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Albright Education Centre is a provision based on three sites and one outreach service. There are three teaching centres for pupils with various needs, including social, emotional and mental health needs at Tipton (two sites: academy and sixth form provisions) and the Albright Plus site at West Bromwich.
- Albright provides hospital education provision at Midlands Metropolitan University Hospital.
- The school also runs an outreach provision that supports pupils at home until they can access education at one of the centres.
- There is also an outreach service to support provision in mainstream schools that involves staff working alongside staff from mainstream and specialist provisions.
- Since the last inspection, a new chair of governors was appointed, in September 2020.

- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: English, including reading, mathematics and science. In these subjects, they visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils and staff about how these subjects were taught. Inspectors also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they were planned and taught.
- Inspectors visited all of the Albright sites, including hospital provision. They also spoke with some mainstream schools that Albright works with to evaluate the impact of its reintegration work. One inspector spoke with the home tuition service leaders.
- During the inspection, inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject teachers, teachers and pupils. They also talked with parents, carers, pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority. A conversation was also held with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors also took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text responses.

## Inspection team

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ian Tustian

Ofsted Inspector

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