

# Inspection of Halcyon Way School

Gordon Street, Chadderton, Oldham OI9 9QE

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Inspection dates:	19 and 20 November 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive principal of this school is Sue Caine. This school is part of Kingfisher Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by co-chief executive officers (CEOs), Anne Redmond and Lisa Needham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Crabtree.

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

The school values are the strong foundation that give pupils the opportunity to thrive, grow and blossom. Pupils develop strong and trusting relationships with the adults around them. They also make friends and look after each other.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Every pupil has their own personal ambitious and achievable targets. This allows them to succeed both personally and academically. The school makes learning fun.

School is filled with laughter and joy. Pupils enjoy a range of activities that help them to learn. For example, visits from paramedics help pupils to understand more about health. Each year, pupils strengthen their understanding across a range of subjects. For instance, pupils learn about life cycles in science as they watch eggs hatch and nurture the baby chicks.

Pupils behave extremely well. This is because the adults around them know exactly what support each pupil will need to reduce any anxiety that they may have. This very positive and consistent approach allows pupils, over time, to manage their own emotions and behaviour. The school has created an ethos and environment where pupils feel happy, safe and well cared for.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that meets the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of the pupils in school. Every pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and this forms the core of each pupil's curriculum. A range of curriculum pathways ensure that pupils learn at the right level. For example, younger children and pupils who may be nonverbal learn to communicate through visual aids, sign and symbols. In other pathways, pupils access a more formal subject curriculum.

Teachers know their pupils very well. They choose activities and resources that will spark pupils' interests and keep them engaged. Staff reinforce key concepts and vocabulary. They use repetition to help pupils remember. Pupils are eager to learn.

Staff use assessment well to check pupils' understanding. They also have a clear view of each pupil's individual progress through the curriculum. This is shared with parents and carers. However, the school does not have sufficient oversight of the effectiveness of different subjects. This makes it difficult for the school to measure the impact of subject curriculums and to spot when some pupils are not learning as well as they could.

The school has recently introduced a new phonics programme. All staff have had the training that they need to deliver the programme in a consistent manner. New reading books help pupils to practise the sounds that they learn. This has got off to a strong start. The use of songs and poems also helps pupils to learn their letters and sounds successfully. Pupils read together as a class and in smaller groups. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this new programme.

The school's approach to behaviour is worthy of sharing with others. Before a pupil starts at the school, staff seek to understand their individual needs. From this information, staff develop a personalised and bespoke approach to supporting each pupil. The school has developed a supportive and positive culture around behaviour. This has enabled pupils with complex behaviour needs to feel safe, valued and successful in school.

Attendance is a high priority. The school works closely with parents to unpick reasons for pupils' absence. Staff are relentless in their approach to removing these barriers. This work is highly effective, as pupils' rates of attendance have improved considerably over the last academic year.

The curriculum supports the development of pupils' personal needs. Younger children learn about personal care and hygiene, for example brushing their teeth. The school has ensured that pupils understand about positive and trusting relationships. Staff help pupils to know about appropriate behaviours. For example, pupils learn when it is acceptable to hug someone, such as a close friend or family member. This helps pupils to keep themselves safe.

Pupils experience the traditions and customs of the world. This supports them to understand about different religions and celebrations. As part of learning about Diwali, for example, pupils explored bangles, sari fabric, and smelled the spices used in traditional food. This sensory experience helped pupils to deepen their knowledge.

The trust has ensured that strong values have been securely embedded in this school. It has delegated responsibilities to a local governing board who know their roles and responsibilities well. Governors meet regularly and know the main areas of strength and aspects of the school that need improving.

## **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 does not have sufficient oversight of the impact of subject curriculums. This makes it more difficult for the school to identify when pupils are not learning as well as they could. The school should ensure that it evaluates the effectiveness of subject curriculums so that governors and trustees can hold the school to account more 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143762
<b>Local authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10337711
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary special
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Helen Crabtree
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Anne Redmond and Lisa Needham
<b>Principal</b>	Sue Caine
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.halcyonway.co.uk">www.halcyonway.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened in January 2022.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- All pupils have an EHC plan or are undergoing assessment for an EHC plan. The school caters for pupils with severe learning difficulties and speech, language and communication needs.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children. However, at the time of this inspection there were no children under the age of four on the school's roll.

## 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). 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.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, senior school leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors spoke to the co-CEO of the multi-academy trust, the chair of trustees and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and early reading, religious education and personal, social, health and economic education. 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 in some other subjects, including mathematics, and they visited a sample of lessons.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including policies and analyses of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke to some pupils and staff about the school. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lunch and breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff. There were no responses from Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors also considered the views of parents and carers expressed through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Dean Logan

Ofsted Inspector

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