

Inspection of Garforth Academy

Lidgett Lane, Garforth, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS25 1LJ

Inspection dates:	5 and 6 November 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Anna Young. This school is part of Delta 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 (CEO), Paul Terence Tarn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steven Peter Hodsman. There is also an executive principal, Chris McCall, who is responsible for this school and others.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since December 2013. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils consistently meet the school's high expectations of their conduct. They are mature and respectful members of the school community. In lessons, they are committed to their learning. Around school, pupils show high levels of self-control. The school's strong pastoral support helps pupils if they do struggle to meet these expectations. Many pupils play a positive role in the support of others. For example, some pupils act as reading ambassadors, working with younger peers to improve their reading. Sixth-form students act as excellent role models to pupils in key stages 3 and 4.

The school has high aspirations for pupils who attend the school. Pupils meet these and achieve very well. They are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. The school's highly effective careers advice and guidance ensure that pupils are well informed and progress onto pathways that support their personal ambitions.

Pupils enjoy a broad range of activities that extend their education. This includes a high number of pupils accessing the school's Duke of Edinburgh award programme. Other opportunities that the school provides cater for a variety of interests. For example, some pupils choose to take part in the school's Latin programme, while others enjoy participating in performing arts.

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

Pupils learn an ambitious and academically demanding curriculum. Leaders have placed the English Baccalaureate at the centre of the school's curriculum offer. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve extremely well across the breadth of the subjects that they study. This is reflected in consistently high outcomes in public examinations.

Teachers are experts in their subjects. In lessons, they use the school's agreed lesson structure consistently well. They present new information clearly, routinely checking that pupils have understood any prior knowledge that they require. Teachers skilfully ask questions to extend pupils' thinking. Opportunities to address pupils' misconceptions are rarely missed. As a result, pupils develop a strong understanding of the curriculum.

Pupils who do not read at the expected level for their age are well supported. The school has a carefully structured programme of support that enables pupils to catch up quickly. This allows pupils to fully access the school's curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. This begins when they join the school. Additional support is in place as pupils move from Year 6 into Year 7. This helps new pupils to integrate quickly. The school works effectively alongside external professionals, such as the local authority deaf and hearing impairment team, to identify strategies to help pupils with SEND. The school provides teachers with detailed information on how to support pupils with SEND in lessons. Staff use this to enable pupils with SEND to learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Students in the school's sixth form benefit from a rich and diverse range of qualifications. They achieve highly. Over time, the school has updated its offer to reflect the interests of pupils and local employment opportunities. The school increasingly makes use of employer partnerships to strengthen its offer, such as for students completing T-level qualifications. A high proportion of these students secure future employment or training in the industries that the school partners with.

Pupils benefit from a comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum during their 'life' lessons. They learn to discuss and debate moral issues in a respectful and considered way. This helps to create the school's accepting and inclusive culture. This permeates into pupils' highly positive and respectful attitudes to learning. Relationships between pupils, and with staff, are consistently strong.

The school provides an extensive range of opportunities to enrich pupils' education. All pupils experience educational visits during their time at the school, often including residential visits or overseas travel. Many pupils hold positions of leadership responsibility, such as trained peer mentors. Others complete charitable work or work that supports the wider community. For example, some pupils volunteer in a local residential care home. Sixth-form 'next gen leaders' completed social action projects, including on vaping, and presented these at a conference and to the local member of parliament.

Pupils attend school regularly. Rates of absence are lower than the national average. The school carefully analyses attendance and behaviour data to identify patterns and trends. It uses this information to remove barriers and improve pupils' attendance and behaviour effectively.

Staff are well supported by leaders at all levels. The school provides them with high-quality training. This enables adults to complete their roles confidently. Staff are committed to the school and pupils who attend. The school plays a significant role in sharing best practice within the wider trust. Those with responsibility for governance know the school well. They use the information that is available to check on the impact of the school's work effectively.

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

Unique reference number	136343
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10346411
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1,891
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	356
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steven Peter Hodsman
CEO of the trust	Paul Terence Tarn
Principal	Anna Young
Website	www.garforthacademy.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 December 2013 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Delta Academies Trust.
- The principal and other leaders have started in their current roles since the previous inspection.
- The school uses three registered and one unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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. 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. The 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.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trust board, the local governing board and a representative of the trust's CEO.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the principal. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, sixth-form provision and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and design, modern foreign languages, history and child development/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 visited lessons and looked at pupils' work from a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation regarding the support that pupils with SEND receive. They looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from governing board meetings as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times.
- The views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

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