

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Leeds City Academy

Bedford Field, Woodhouse Cliff, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS6 2LG

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 December 2024

Outcome

Leeds City Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Richard Chattoe. This school is part of White Rose Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer (CEO), Sarah Carrie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stewart Harper.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this happy and inclusive school. They know that the school dedicates itself to helping them to become the best that they can be. Pupils are proud to be a part of the vibrant school community. Older pupils value the improving quality of education and the wonderful care that they are receiving.

Pupils rise to the very high expectations the school has for them. Their behaviour is impressive. They conduct themselves very well in lessons. Pupils enjoy contributing to class discussions and working on their own. They are keen to learn. Pupils say the school welcomes them from the day they join. This includes pupils who join at different points in the year. The bespoke support they receive helps them to achieve well.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills. Pupils take on these roles with pride. The student council has an important voice in representing the core values of both the school and the trust. They have opportunities to build their aspirations through activities, such as visiting a global computing company in London. Female pupils promote female role models and lead academic lectures through their involvement in the 'empower group'. Such activities contribute well to the culture of respect in the school.

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

The ambitious curriculum is carefully designed to help pupils build important knowledge and skills over time. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive exceptional support. The school captures a thorough understanding of their needs when they join. The tailored support they receive helps them access the ambitious curriculum from the outset. As a result, these pupils secure increasingly impressive outcomes.

Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their learning during independent tasks. This helps them to use the knowledge they have learned. Pupils can recall their learning and create links between different topics. For example, in geography, Year 10 pupils link recent learning about tectonics to their previous knowledge of plate margins. Pupils remember their learning well over time.

The reading curriculum helps pupils develop their enjoyment of reading. Well-chosen texts help pupils develop an understanding of difference. For example, pupils read texts that give insights into the lives of young carers and the challenges they face. The school identifies pupils who need help at earlier stages of reading. Some pupils receive support to develop their phonic knowledge. Other pupils have tailored support within lessons. Such strategies help pupils to successfully develop their reading skills over time.

The school prepares pupils very well for life beyond school. The school has developed the 'DNA' curriculum to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about important topics, including a deep understanding of healthy relationships. They articulate their understanding of sensitive themes around this very well. The careful development of topics as pupils get older helps prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils are proud of the many nationalities in the school. Pupils learn about the cultural heritage of other pupils. They enjoy learning about fundamental British values. These rich experiences help pupils to develop a deep understanding of world they live in.

The school has a unified and established approach to supporting good behaviour. Staff teach pupils how to be ready for the world of work. Through extensive careers support, pupils build ambitious plans for their future. Pupils describe how they want to enter the world of medicine or social work. These ambitions help drive their positive attitudes in lessons. The school supports pupils whose attendance needs further improvement. Recent changes are having a positive impact. However, the persistent absence of some pupils remains high. This means these pupils miss important learning opportunities.

Leaders at all levels are driven by a common goal. That is to provide the best education and give the best life chances for the pupils in the school. Their actions have a clear purpose and come back to that goal. As a result, the school is going from strength to strength. Adults in the school know their workload and well-being is considered. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The persistent absence of some pupils remains high. This means they miss out on the valuable learning experiences the school provides. The school should continue to embed their attendance strategies to further reduce the persistent absence of some pupils.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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	139646
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10346495
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1048
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stewart Harper
CEO of the trust	Sarah Carrie (Acting CEO)
Principal	Richard Chattoe
Website	www.leedscityacademy.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the White Rose Academies Trust.
- The school uses eight alternative providers of education. Three of these are unregistered.
- 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 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 principal, senior vice principal and other members of the senior leadership team during the inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke with the chair of the trust board. They also spoke with the chair of the local accountability board (governors).
- The lead inspector met with the interim CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, 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 inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils through meetings held with them and through their responses to Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Peter Cole

Ofsted Inspector

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