

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Calday Grange Grammar School

Grammar School Lane, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside CH48 8GG

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Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

## Outcome

Calday Grange Grammar School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Stephen Gray. Calday Grange Grammar School is a single-academy trust. The school is overseen by a board of governors, chaired by Caroline Ashcroft.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are highly ambitious. They display excellent attitudes to their learning. Pupils are taught how to take responsibility for their academic progress. They do this insightfully. Across most subjects, pupils successfully achieve in line with the school's high expectations.

Pupils embody the values of 'pride, ambition and respect'. They are happy and proud to belong to this special community. Pupils exuberantly praise the myriad of opportunities available. For instance, many take part in drama performances, mountain biking and sports clubs. Mature and articulate sixth-form students act as positive role models.

Classrooms are calm environments where pupils learn free from distraction. Pupils want to improve themselves. They embrace the high expectations that the school sets for them. Moreover, they have a thirst for engaging in the wider development opportunities that the school provides. They are eager to participate in the plethora of leadership opportunities, including as form representatives, careers ambassadors or officers in the combined cadet force. Roles such as these afford pupils the chance to develop skills such as communication, problem-solving and teamwork.

The school provides pupils with caring pastoral support. Pupils know how to look after their mental health. They report that walking or spending time with Roxy, the school dog, helps to still their minds.

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

The school has designed a suitably broad and ambitious curriculum that allows pupils to build knowledge incrementally from Year 7 to Year 13. Teachers are experts in their fields who use their knowledge to explain new ideas clearly. Typically, they deliver the curriculum as leaders intend. In some subjects, there is inconsistency in how well teachers use the school's chosen teaching strategies. For example, some of the activities are not well suited to what teachers want pupils to learn and are not adapted well enough. This means that a small number of pupils, particularly those who have additional barriers to learning, do not build a sufficiently strong body of knowledge in those subjects as they could.

In the main, teachers systematically check pupils' understanding. Pupils can confidently articulate their learning. They attain highly in most subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, checks on pupils' learning are less effective. At times, some pupils have not secured the knowledge they need before teachers move on to new learning. Consequently, a small number of pupils develop gaps in their understanding.

Most pupils join the school as confident and fluent readers. They are encouraged to read widely and often. Pupils enjoy reading. For example, pupils love choosing books in the library or finding a quiet corner in which to enjoy a book. This continues in the sixth form, when students are provided with a wealth of different types of texts to support their studies. The very few pupils who are not confident in reading are supported effectively to develop their fluency and confidence.

The school accurately identifies where pupils need extra help, for example pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most teachers support these pupils well to achieve in line with their peers.

The sixth form is a thriving area of the school. Students who join the sixth form are supported to settle in quickly. Prestigious positions of leadership, such as head boy and head girl, are highly prized. Students appreciate the support that they are given for their next steps. Most students demonstrate deep levels of understanding in the subjects that they study. They achieve well.

Pupils follow the Calday Code and behave extremely well. They are respectful to staff and to one another. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about their enjoyment of school. They enjoy celebrating each other's successes, both academic and personal.

Pupils, including pupils with SEND, are developed beyond the classroom. They participate in an array of clubs and activities that help to develop their talents and interests. Pupils recently participated in a charity cake decorating competition. Not only did this allow them to display their creative skills, but the community also came together to raise money for charity. Pupils have a secure understanding of life in modern Britain. Their knowledge of this is built up over time. Pupils speak out about injustice. They accept and appreciate difference. The careers provision is well designed to meet the needs of all pupils.

The school takes great care of staff well-being. Staff benefit from a range of professional development opportunities. Governors know the school very well. The level of challenge that they pose to the school has increased over time. They hold the school to account effectively. Members of the governing body have supported the school well in improving performance, especially in ensuring that pupils benefit from a broad curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, assessment strategies are not used as well as they could be. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their understanding. The school should ensure that teachers are supported to check that pupils have understood what they have learned, before moving on to new content.
- In a minority of subjects, the curriculum is not delivered as the school intends. At times, some pupils are not supported as well as they could be to access the work. Consequently, some pupils, including some who have additional barriers to learning, do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that staff are supported to develop the knowledge and expertise to make appropriate pedagogical choices to better support pupils to learn effectively.

## **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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2016.

## 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>	139144
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348279
<b>Type of school</b>	Grammar (selective)
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,479
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	386
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Caroline Ashcroft
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Gray
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.calday.co.uk">www.calday.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 September 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a single-academy trust.
- 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.
- The school uses one registered and two unregistered providers of alternative provision for a very small number of pupils.

## 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the minutes of governors' meetings, the school's self-evaluation and development plan, and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

### **Inspection team**

Jenny Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Parker

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Yarwood

Ofsted Inspector

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