Inspection of Outwood Academy Hemsworth

Wakefield Road, Pontefract WF9 4AB

Inspection dates:	4 and 5 March 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Sixth-form provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The principal of this school is James Pape. This school is part of Outwood Grange 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), Lee Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Earnshaw.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where pupils and staff embrace learning. They work together to create a stimulating environment that values education. The school has high ambitions for pupils in all areas. The school's positive attitude towards achievement and success benefits all pupils. Pupils thrive and make great progress. This progress is not restricted to their subject knowledge. Their social awareness and personal responsibility also improve over time.

The sixth-form students are fantastic ambassadors for the school. They support and lead the younger pupils. Their polite and professional approach to education typifies the school's aspirations for all pupils.

The school's extracurricular offer supports pupils in developing talent and having new experiences. The range of activities and trips, from sports clubs to museums and theatre visits, is open to all pupils. Pupils cherish their residential experiences in Malta and Italy. These trips create lasting memories that they often recall and discuss with joy.

Most pupils come to lessons eager and curious, which helps keep classes calm. Transitions between lessons and behaviour at social times are well managed. Pupils care about respect and kindness. They show positive attitudes towards one another during social times.

The school draws pupils from various backgrounds. Difference is not seen as a weakness at Outwood Academy Hemsworth. Pupils and staff recognise everyone's worth, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This mindset helps to boost pupils' self-belief in what they can achieve.

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

The school offers a broad range of subjects. Leaders carefully sequence their curriculum, which strengthens students' understanding. For example, in mathematics at key stage 3, pupils are taught core mathematical functions and take this deeper and further as they progress to complex problem-solving in key stage 4. The pupils love a challenge in mathematics. Pupils apply their knowledge well in discussion tasks where they use subject-specific language appropriately. Across subjects, pupils explore interrelated topics. For example, in performing arts, pupils explore experiences and imagination, which is also woven into the art curriculum lessons. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to check how well pupils understand key details and information in lessons before moving on.

The school values reading. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading receive appropriate support. They make rapid progress in their ability to read with accuracy and fluency. All pupils have dedicated reading time throughout the week, allowing them to read both independently and collaboratively with their peers. This greatly enhances their enjoyment of reading. Staff undertake training that empowers them to teach reading well and meet the needs of pupils.

The school is working with the community. It has partnered with families to support pupils and help them through challenges. However, there is work to do in this area. Some families, especially those of pupils with SEND, want to know more about their child's education and care at school. The school identifies and meets the needs of pupils with SEND. Identifying the specific needs of different pupils enables staff to understand pupils' barriers to learning and how these can be overcome in the classroom.

Students in the sixth form enjoy their studies. The pupils discuss and debate the content of the curriculum in depth. The staff facilitate debates that range from authors' use of language to the current political landscape in the country. In addition, they receive careful support to help them with what is next in their learning journey, whether this be continuing with full-time education or employment.

The school sets clear rules for behaviour, and pupils demonstrate that they understand these well. Expectations are high, and most pupils meet and exceed these. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, are polite and respectful. The school works with families to support pupils in attending school more often. This is working well. In addition, the number of pupils who receive suspensions is also decreasing. This is an area where the school is continuing to focus their energies successfully.

The school's personal development offer is strong. Assemblies, dedicated curriculum time, education visits and engagement with members of local industry support pupils in their understanding of the world they are part of and how to be a positive contributor to society. Personal development helps students stay safe. It also guides them to make smart choices in school and their community. The school's honours system has caught the pupils' interest. Pupils receive honours for a wide variety of reasons such as contributing positively to their growth and that of their classmates.

The trustees, academy council members and school staff are committed to giving pupils the best chance to succeed at Hemsworth. They have a positive restlessness to provide pupils with an experience that stands them well for their future. This energy pushes them to keep the school improving.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some lessons, opportunities to check pupils' understanding are missed. Where this is the case, staff move on to the next stage of learning when some pupils have not secured the knowledge needed to access the new learning. The school should ensure all staff are supported to employ strategies to check pupils' understanding in lessons routinely.

- At times, the school does not always ensure effective communication with families, particularly with those families where pupils have SEND. As a result, some families do not feel they fully understand the strategies that the school has in place to support their children. The school must ensure that the quality of communication with families improves so that pertinent information relating to the support children receive in school is shared with families clearly.

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	145938
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10346707
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	1,111
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	56
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Earnshaw
CEO of the trust	Lee Wilson
Principal	James Pape
Website	www.hemsworth.outwood.com
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 October 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school currently uses four registered alternate provisions and two unregistered 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the academy council members and a trustee.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the executive principal and the principal. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, personal development, careers, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics, science, performing arts and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at the quality of the school's provision in the sixth form, including meeting with leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with students.
- Members of the inspection team looked at a range of documentation regarding the support pupils with SEND receive. Inspectors looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND across the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes of academy council meetings.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at social times.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff formally and informally throughout the inspection. Responses to staff, pupil and parent surveys were considered by the inspection team.
- 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.

Inspection team

Richard Jones, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
James Franklin-Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Kilgannon	Ofsted Inspector
Katie Spurr	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Barber	Ofsted Inspector

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