

# • Inspection of Outwood Academy

## Haydock Clipsley Lane, Haydock, St. Helens, Merseyside WA11 0JG

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 October 2024

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Philip Abram. 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. There is also an executive principal, Cara Ackroyd, who is responsible for this school and 27 others.



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

This is a school that is built on a strong foundation of mutual respect. Pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral support. There are strong relationships between staff and pupils. For example, around the school, staff greet pupils warmly and offer words of encouragement. This helps pupils to understand that staff care for them.

The school has high expectations of all pupils' academic achievement. With a strengthened curriculum, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are now learning more successfully, in most subjects, than they did in the past.

Pupils' wider development is carefully considered through a raft of exciting opportunities such as workshops with visiting poets, trips to outward bound centres and involvement in local community projects. Pupils spoke excitedly about the upcoming whole-school production.

There is a consistent approach across the school to how behaviour is managed. Staff model the positive behaviour that they expect of pupils. Pupils behave politely and courteously. Most follow the school's routines appropriately. There is a real culture of

praise in this school. 'Proud Thursday' is just one of the ways that pupils' work and effort is celebrated. Over time, pupils' aspirations are rising. They are happy in school.

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

The school, trust and governors, share a strong moral purpose which guides them to make decisions in the best interests of pupils. Each decision that the school makes is well considered to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have the same chances of success.

The curriculum is ambitious and logically ordered. It builds on what pupils have learned in primary school. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) have an appropriately adapted curriculum. This helps to ease their transition back into mainstream lessons.

Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. They are experts in their subjects. The school has invested heavily in training for staff around the delivery of the curriculum. This has led to firmly embedded routines and a consistent approach across the school. Pupils with SEND have their needs identified and are well catered for. Learning is broken down and adapted for them so that they learn successfully.

While most pupils respond when asked a question in class, they lack confidence to share their reasoning. In lessons, there are limited opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning. This hinders them from deepening their understanding and connecting their ideas as well as they could. At times, staff do not check whether pupils have understood what has been taught before moving on to new learning. This results in some pupils developing misconceptions that are not addressed.

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The published outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 11 are lagging behind the strides that have been made in the quality of education that pupils receive. They do not reflect how well pupils are learning currently. This is due to legacy weaknesses in the curriculum. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, take pride in their work. They build a secure body of knowledge over time.

The school has prioritised reading. Pupils who struggle with reading are given support that helps them to become fluent and confident readers. Furthermore, pupils are encouraged to read regularly. Pupils are developing a love of reading.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Raising attendance remains one of the school's priorities as too many pupils still do not attend school regularly. The school has approached this with vigour. There is increased capacity within the attendance team which has allowed more interactions with parents and carers. The school's actions have led to some improvements in attendance rates.

The school is motivated by preparing pupils to thrive in modern Britain. This includes raising pupils' aspirations through a carefully constructed careers programme. Pupils learn

to appreciate difference and to understand different religions. They are proud of the ways in which they can serve the school community in roles such as 'prime minister' or as mental health ambassadors.

Under the guidance and support from the trust, staff flourish. They report how changes to the marking policy have reduced workload. Knowledgeable governors hold the school to account well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning and express the reasoning behind their ideas. This means that pupils do not always get the chance to deepen their thinking as well as they could. The school should ensure that pupils develop their oracy skills effectively and are helped to deepen their learning across the curriculum.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment information effectively to check how well pupils have learned the curriculum. At times, some teachers move on to new learning before pupils are ready or pupils' misconceptions go unaddressed. The school should ensure that teachers are supported to use assessment information to shape future learning effectively.

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## **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).

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## **School details**

**Unique reference number** 148522

**Local authority** St Helens

**Inspection number** 10267406

**Type of school** Secondary

**School category** Academy sponsor-led

**Age range of pupils** 11 to 16

**Gender of pupils** Mixed

**Number of pupils on the school roll** 834

**Appropriate authority** Board of trustees

**Chair of trust** David Earnshaw

**[For academy] CEO of the trust** Lee Wilson

**Principal** Philip Abram

**Website** [www.haydock.outwood.com](http://www.haydock.outwood.com) **Date of previous inspection** Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 25 pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- 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.
- Outwood Academy Haydock converted to become an academy in January 2022. When its predecessor school, Haydock High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate for overall effectiveness.

## 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

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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.
- Inspectors spoke to the principal, the executive principal, the CEO, the chief executive principal, senior leaders and other staff.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with the vice chair of trustees, the acting chair and other members

of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, physical education, modern foreign languages and geography. 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.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times and spoke to pupils about their views of the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, minutes of trustee and local academy council meetings and the school's improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Jenny Jones, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector Tim Long Ofsted

Inspector

Stephen Ruddy Ofsted Inspector

Barbara Dutton Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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