

Outwood Academy Ripon

Clotherholme Road, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 2DE

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2016

Overall effectiveness **Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The vision and enterprise of the Chief Executive and the outstanding drive of academy leaders have resulted in rapid and sustained improvement and high achievement.
- The distinctive role of academy trust subject directors has created outstanding subject leadership, highly accurate assessment and teaching sharply focused on learning needs.
- The curriculum is successfully designed to enable pupils to achieve highly in English and mathematics and at GCSE.
- Highly sophisticated systems for analysing underachievement result in immediate action that improves teaching and pastoral support.
- Pupils achieve exceptional outcomes. They make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Attainment at GCSE was significantly above average in 2015.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve exceptionally well and attain higher than other pupils nationally at GCSE.
- More-able and less-able pupils make equally outstanding progress in English and mathematics, including those with special educational needs.
- Outstanding teaching is typified by high expectations, strong subject expertise, high quality assessment and excellent behaviour management. Questioning is highly effective in extending learning and tackling misconceptions.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding because expectations of behaviour are high, needs are identified precisely and acted on promptly, and pupils develop strong resilience and a capability for making improvement.
- The local academy council has a clear strategic vision. It is effective in monitoring improvement.
- In the well-led sixth form, learners make strong progress in vocational subjects, but progress in academic subjects is not as good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that achievement in the sixth form is as strong in academic as vocational subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The vision of the Chief Executive and the drive of the Regional Chief Executive have brought about rapid and sustained improvement in the quality of education and the achievement of pupils. The trust's sophisticated and highly developed leadership systems provide an exceptional level of expertise. The academy's success has led to the substantive Principal taking up the temporary leadership of an academy that requires improvement. The acting Principal is leading the day-to-day raising of achievement very effectively.
- Dynamic leadership by the trust and the academy has raised achievement and improved teaching. Many trust subject directors are examiners and successful subject leaders with a high level of practical expertise and insight. They teach regularly in the academy and continuously coach and mentor subject leaders. Tried and tested schemes of work, revision programmes and approaches to assessment from the trust provide a strong framework for teaching, learning and the management of the curriculum. Leaders use this exceptional range of experience and resources well to quickly identify and tackle emerging weaknesses in pupil or teacher performance.
- Professional development is securely focused on the development of skills to meet pupils' needs. Detailed analysis of gaps in learning leads teachers to consider how to adapt their teaching to meet these needs. Regular formal and informal observation of teaching, and analysis of pupils' work and progress, inform professional development. Weekly staff development refreshes teaching by drawing on the bank of teaching strategies used across the trust.
- The accuracy of assessment is rigorously checked against a portfolio of standardised work in all subjects and at all levels. Formal assessments are moderated by examiners to ensure that assessment criteria are understood and applied correctly.
- In-depth analysis of each pupil who is not making enough progress identifies obstacles to learning and actions are planned from a wide range of options. Senior leaders hold middle leaders closely to account for the success of these actions. This reinforces the high expectations for pupils to succeed.
- The highly focused activities funded by the pupil premium enable disadvantaged pupils to achieve outstanding academic success.
- The curriculum is highly successful in enabling pupils to achieve success in English and mathematics. A large proportion of pupils benefit from the extra support for literacy and numeracy in Years 7 and 8. At Key Stage 4, some pupils take an extra English or mathematics option which enables them to achieve at least a grade C at GCSE. Literacy is systematically reinforced across all subjects, for example through 'words and spellings of the week'.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced despite the constraints of a small school. A few subjects are offered as part of the enrichment programme or in the option system at Key Stage 4. The Key Stage 4 programme for Years 9–11 is flexibly designed, carefully constructed and regularly reviewed. It enables pupils to achieve high levels of success by the end of Year 10. Vocational courses are very popular and successful. The 'Life' programme, the vertical mentoring groups and assemblies provide effective opportunities for learning about British values.
- **The governance of the academy**
 - The Chair of the Local Academy Council and other governors from the predecessor school are rightly pleased with the high impact of the extra leadership capacity and the highly systematic and purposeful management procedures brought by the trust. Relationships and communication between central executive members and local members are highly effective.
 - The local academy council effectively monitors and challenges the trust's budget, financial procedures and spending of the pupil premium funding. It is well informed about key performance information and makes an important contribution to strategic decisions about academy developments. They are well trained in the new pupil progress performance measures and are up to date with safeguarding issues.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies are up to date, staff are fully trained and referrals to other agencies are well managed and timely. Positive staff–pupil relationships and rigorous analysis of pupils' behaviour and welfare result in prompt responses to any emerging safeguarding issues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teachers have clear objectives, focus on challenge, systematically plan the stages in learning, frequently assess progress and clearly identify the next steps for each pupil.
- Teachers' assessment of learning is precise and accurately linked to well-defined criteria for success. Regular and systematic peer and self-assessment enables pupils to gain a deeper understanding of what they have achieved and what they need to do next. Teaching meets the range of learning needs with a high degree of accuracy.
- Frequent, detailed and precise analysis of each individual who is making less than expected progress is followed promptly by well-considered actions by class teachers to improve progress.
- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and skill in presenting ideas and explanations. These are continuously extended by the trust's subject directors who apply their high levels of experience and expertise to help teachers find ways to overcome obstacles to learning.
- Deep subject knowledge is evident in the high quality of teachers' questioning. In the best lessons, pupils give detailed responses to questions and teachers deftly follow up questions to extend learning.
- Feedback in lessons is often highly effective. Teachers regularly alter the questioning or adapt the activity and deal with individual pupils' misconceptions in a timely way.
- Teachers are highly consistent in their use of the behaviour management system which ensures that classrooms are almost always conducive to learning. Pupils of all abilities develop the confidence to articulate their ideas and explain their views to the class. Pupils are keen to participate and get involved.
- Teachers consistently communicate the academy's high expectations. Praise is used frequently and effectively to encourage and support learning.
- Most parents responding to the Parent View survey (Ofsted's online questionnaire) said that their child was being taught well and making good progress. They are well informed about their child's progress through frequent reports. The academy has responded effectively to parental concerns about the uneven pattern of homework.
- On occasion, pupils' skills in spoken French are not always as highly developed as their skills in written comprehension.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The academy goes to great lengths to instil positive behaviour for learning and to improve pupils' life chances. If they exclude a pupil, they welcome them back with the slate wiped clean.
- Over three years, attendance has risen rapidly from low to above average.
- Pupils appreciate the clear direction and constant individual feedback that they receive about their effort and progress. They work very hard to improve their work and the culture of the academy enables them to build strong resilience to succeed in their classwork and assessments.
- Staff know pupils very well. They forensically assess how well each pupil is progressing academically and they scrupulously analyse any obstacles that may hinder a pupil. Actions are prompt and followed up formally and informally by senior leaders. Pastoral staff are highly accountable for interventions designed to help pupils move forward and the impact of actions is reviewed frequently and systematically. A strong careers programme provides personalised advice and guidance.
- Parents of pupils with special educational needs who wrote comments in response to the Parent View survey were highly positive about the understanding, care and support from staff.
- Bullying incidents are low. Most pupils feel safe and have trusted adults they can go to for any help. Most parents responding to Parent View said that their child feels safe. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development equips them to succeed academically and to behave as mature, responsible and respectful young adults.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have developed highly positive attitudes to learning which has a significant impact on the progress they make. They value the calm and well-ordered learning environment which enables them to contribute their ideas and develop their understanding. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and treat each other with respect.
- Relationships with staff are very strong and behaviour around the academy is of a high standard. Punctuality is excellent.
- Exclusions have halved since the last inspection but the proportion of temporarily excluded pupils remains above average. A few find it difficult to always comply with the high standards of behaviour set in the academy. However, few are excluded more than once for the same type of offence. The high standards of discipline contribute to high achievement, including by those who have been excluded. In 2015, two thirds of Year 11 pupils who were excluded succeeded in gaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, which represents a high level of success.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress, and attainment at GCSE was significantly above average in 2015, including in English and mathematics. In 2015, the proportions making or exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics were high compared with national figures. Progress in mathematics was in the top 1% in England. Overall, pupils' progress at GCSE was significantly above average. The current Year 11 is on track for similarly outstanding progress.
- Achievement in humanities and modern languages was weaker but has improved rapidly and the achievement of current pupils is outstanding in these subjects.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is exceptionally high. In 2015, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils gaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, was above the average for other pupils nationally. It was more than double the average for disadvantaged pupils nationally. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils making or exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics were above others nationally.
- In mathematics, more-able pupils make faster progress than more-able pupils nationally. In English, they make similar progress to more-able pupils nationally. Less-able pupils make much faster progress in English and mathematics than less-able pupils nationally.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is significantly above average, including in English and mathematics.
- Pupils with parents serving in the armed forces make at least as much progress as pupils from non-service families.
- Pupils who enter the academy with lower levels of literacy and numeracy are given sustained and effective support in Years 7 and 8 and, where necessary, in Key Stage 4. As a result, they make excellent progress. Since the last inspection the number of books borrowed from the library has doubled to more than 10,000 a year. Many pupils read at home and weaker pupils develop the confidence and stamina to tackle difficult texts in curriculum subjects.
- At age 16, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education or training.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Learners' individualised study programmes build effectively on their prior attainment and meet all the requirements of 16–19 provision. Most learners take a blend of level 3 academic and vocational subjects. They make strong progress in vocational subjects and develop their employability skills. Progress in academic subjects is not as good.
- Most academic courses were delivered by a partner school. Increasingly, the academy is delivering its own courses and all academic courses will be in-house next school year.
- Teaching is good and is enabling learners to progress well. Where learners are not making enough progress they are receiving effective support and guidance.
- In 2015, disadvantaged learners achieved as well or better than others in the sixth form.

- Almost all learners who entered the sixth form without a GCSE at grade C or above in English or mathematics successfully achieved a grade C.
- Learners receive effective information, advice, guidance and support to make appropriate post-16 choices. Learners have received strong support when applying for universities and other destinations. Learners have progressed to destinations in universities, college and employment that meet their aspirations. The academy is extending its links with universities, businesses and employers.
- Learners enjoy the opportunities to take responsibility and widen their experience. All Year 12 take part in work experience. They are trained as peer mentors and all sixth formers make a contribution as a member of the mentor teams helping younger pupils to make progress. They take a lead in organising fundraising and social events and have opportunities to go on visits. Attendance is high and punctuality is good in the sixth form.
- The sixth form curriculum is limited by its small size and its cost effectiveness is reduced by the number of small classes. The effective sixth form leadership team is working closely with another trust academy sixth form and has adopted good management systems.

School details

Unique reference number	137412
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10001073

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	540
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	53
Appropriate authority	Outwood Grange Academies Trust
Chair	Annette Beckwith
Principal	Angela Sweeten (Principal) with Robert Tarn (Regional Executive Principal), Sir Michael Wilkins (Chief Executive)
Telephone number	01765 604564
Website	www.ripon.outwood.com
Email address	admin@ripon.outwood.com
Date of previous inspection	26 March 2012

Information about this school

- Outwood Academy Ripon is a small secondary school with a small sixth form. It is part of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is average.
- Ten per cent of pupils are from families in the armed forces.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- A very few students attend alternative off-site education provided by the Grove Academy.
- In 2014, the academy met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Chief Executive and the Regional Chief Executive are National Leaders of Education (NLE). The substantive Principal has been leading another academy since the autumn term 2015. The acting Principal has been in post since September 2015. A number of subject directors from the trust, who are Specialist Leaders of Education (SLE), work permanently part time in the academy and add capacity to leadership.

Information about this inspection

- The first day of the inspection was a short inspection by two inspectors to judge whether the academy continued to be good. Inspectors converted the inspection to a full section 5 with four inspectors on the second day. Inspectors observed teaching and carried out learning walks in order to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. On the first day, most observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Almost all teachers were observed during the two days.
- Meetings were held with executive leaders of Outwood Grange Academy Trust, senior academy leaders, members of the local academy council, subject directors from the academy trust, subject leaders, pastoral leaders and groups of pupils. An inspector heard Year 7 pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including academy policies, safeguarding documents, school self-evaluation and monitoring records, pupil progress information, attendance and exclusions data and a wide range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors took account of 59 responses to the Parent View online survey.

Inspection team

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