

Inspection of a good school: Wykham Park

Ruskin Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX16 9HY

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 September 2023

Outcome

Wykham Park continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Sylvia Thomas. This school is part of Aspirations Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Steve Kenning, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by James Pomeroy.

What is it like to attend this school?

The majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and conduct themselves politely when interacting with staff and each other. Pupils understand the school's values of kindness and inclusivity and welcome all from this diverse community into their school. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils can be successful, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils are learning well.

The school teaches pupils how to behave well and the vast majority do so. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and provide any additional support needed to help pupils to meet these. There is rarely any disruption to learning as a result. While bullying does happen occasionally, pupils know that staff will not tolerate this and it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Staff ensure that they keep pupils safe and most pupils know who to talk to if they have any concerns.

The school provides a wide range of clubs and trips so that pupils can develop their interests and talents. This includes the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, theatre productions and trips to local and international events. They learn about leadership through the school council and the head pupil system in the sixth form.

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

The school is highly ambitious for pupils, including pupils with SEND and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and well sequenced, building knowledge from Year 7 to Year 13. They are reflective and continually seek ways to improve further so all pupils can be successful. This includes providing additional support for those at the early stages of reading so that all can access

the curriculum effectively. The school checks pupils' reading carefully and provides the right extra support to help pupils to learn to read accurately and fluently. This focus on reading is embedded throughout the school and pupils learn how to read confidently. The school offers an extensive range of subjects, including technical and vocational qualifications, providing pupils with many choices when they leave the school.

Although outcomes do not yet reflect the ambitions the school has for all groups of pupils, all staff have the right subject knowledge and skills needed to support pupils to be successful. Staff benefit from opportunities for training and collaborative work across the trust. Expectations of current pupils' work are high and it is often of a high standard. Pupils can discuss their learning over time, making links to what they have studied before and how it connects to what they are learning about now. In the sixth form, pupils are achieving highly and are well prepared for their next steps in education or employment. The 'academic nurture groups' provide bespoke, effective help for those who need it.

However, some pupils find it difficult to engage with the school and are not attending as regularly as they should. This means there are gaps in their learning. The school is working hard to address this and there have been some recent improvements. There is further work to do in this area to make sure these gaps do not continue to widen and that the majority of pupils attend school regularly.

The school ensures that all pupils, including those with SEND or who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have a vast range of opportunities beyond the curriculum. This includes clubs, trips and competitions across the trust which provide pupils with further opportunities to work with wider groups and organisations beyond the school. For example, sixth-form students work with local businesses to develop projects which enrich their understanding of the world of work. Pupils' personal development is valued and prioritised highly. The school has considered a range of ways to ensure that pupils have multiple opportunities to learn about building positive relationships, tolerance and equality, as well as how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils are taught the importance of respecting different cultures and religions through assemblies, as well as the mentoring programme and the personal, social, health and economic curriculum.

Teachers in the school feel well supported. Leaders consider workload carefully and provide opportunities for staff to be involved in any changes, including the recent adaptations to marking and feedback. Leaders consider the well-being of staff and support is provided by the trust as needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils are not attending school regularly. This means these pupils are not yet achieving highly enough, especially those from more disadvantaged backgrounds. The

school needs to continue to develop the positive work they have already started to ensure that all pupils are attending school whenever possible and provide support to help pupils to catch up on missed learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in 2018.

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	138499
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10276824
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	954
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	64
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Pomeroy
Principal	Sylvia Thomas
Website	www.wykhampark-aspirations.org
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2018

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Aspirations Academy Trust.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school uses one alternative provider.
- 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 judgement 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.
- The inspection was the first ungraded inspection since the school was judged to be good in May 2018.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, science, history and art. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors also scrutinised a range of documents, including the school and trust's evaluation of the school and their priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with a range of senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors also met with representatives of the trust, including the national director of education and standards, the regional chief executive and the chair of trustees.
- 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 views of pupils, parents, carers and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Zoe Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Taj Bhambra

Ofsted Inspector

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