

Inspection of an outstanding school: Yeoman Park Academy

Park Hall Road, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG19 8PS

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 March 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils look forward to coming to this welcoming school. Staff care for pupils with kindness and respect. Staff know the pupils well. Relationships are very positive. Staff at the school are very skilled in meeting the children's complex needs.

Pupils feel safe in the school. They say that teachers keep them safe and look after them. One pupil said he feels safe because they are taught to be kind to each other.

Parents and carers say that their children are safe and happy at the school. One parent reflected the views of the others when they said, 'The staff are all so passionate about the children, and as a parent this makes me extremely happy.'

Pupils behave well at the school. They are taught that bullying is unkind. One pupil said, 'We do not want any of it in this school'. Other pupils said that bullying rarely happens and that if it did, teachers would sort it out. Pupils said they could talk to their teacher if they felt worried.

School leaders have high ambitions for all pupils and want the very best outcomes for them. They show this by ensuring that the things that have the greatest impact are prioritised.

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

Leaders have developed suitable curriculum 'pathways' to meet the varied and complex needs of the pupils who attend the school. They have thought carefully about what pupils will learn in each of these pathways. Leaders have prioritised communication skills. They have also developed other 'strands of learning' that are part of these pathways. These strands develop pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills. They also help to promote

pupils' social and emotional development. Some of these strands are more developed than others. Where strands are carefully planned, each learning step builds towards the identified end point. Where they are less developed, it is not clear how pupils will build their knowledge step by step.

Staff teach the curriculum so that pupils build on from their very early learning experiences. The early years provision prepares children well for their next steps. Teachers communicate well with parents. This ensures that teachers focus on providing experiences that will have the greatest impact on children.

Staff know the communication needs of all pupils well. Staff are skilled at helping pupils improve their language and communication. Pupils use individual strategies effectively to communicate what they need to others. Distress is minimised because staff understand the needs of pupils. As one staff member said, 'Because we know how our pupils communicate, we can give them the things they need when they need it.'

Staff understand that pupils may need to encounter the same things in different ways to connect their learning and embed their understanding. Staff provide many opportunities for this to happen by repeating learning. They take into account the targets from pupils' individual learning plans when planning activities. Input from health professionals is woven into learning to meet the physical development needs of pupils.

Staff assess the progress pupils are making against their targets. There are formal reviews of education, health and care plans as well as regular progress updates for parents. As a result, staff and parents understand pupils' development needs exceptionally well.

Staff use a variety of ways to introduce pupils to books and engage them with stories. However, not all staff have been trained to use a consistent approach to the teaching of learning to read. As a result, not all staff have the knowledge they need to provide effective support to pupils who are at the early stages of learning how to read. Sometimes, the books pupils read are not well matched to the sounds they know. This makes it harder for them to become confident readers as quickly as possible.

Students in the sixth form enjoy a well-structured 'pathfinder' personal development programme. They learn about employment, attend work placements and prepare for independent living. This helps to make them ready for their adult lives. Careers advice and guidance and visits to local colleges help students to make informed choices about their future. Leaders are planning more of this careers guidance for younger pupils.

Leaders review behaviour incidents to identify any patterns or trends. They then update pupils' support plans. This allows staff to identify any potential behaviour triggers or avoid situations that may cause increased anxiety for pupils. Most lessons are uninterrupted as staff are well trained to manage behaviour.

Staff help pupils to understand about appropriate behaviour in public. Pupils talked about experiences like going on a train with a member of staff and walking to the local shop. They also spoke about the range of sports and physical activities they do to keep healthy.

Leaders have identified pupils' interests and talents. They help pupils develop these, such as by providing piano lessons.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the support leaders give them. Staff say that leaders care about their well-being and are considerate of their workload.

In discussion with the principal, the inspectors agreed that the teaching of reading and developing clear steps for all aspects of the curriculum may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team are knowledgeable about pupils' individual needs and particular vulnerabilities. Staff are well trained to recognise any signs that might cause concern. Leaders closely monitor behavioural changes of any non-verbal pupils to identify any early indicators of concern.

Safeguarding records are clear and accurate. Concerns are recorded in a timely manner and followed up with the appropriate agencies when needed. Leaders have appropriate procedures in place to manage any allegations. Staff work with pupils and parents to ensure that there are safe controls on devices that are used to access the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that all of the component parts required for each curriculum pathway build towards the identified end points. There are some learning strands where the key knowledge is not sequenced to allow pupils to develop their understanding step by step. Leaders should ensure that in all curriculum pathways each component builds logically towards the identified end point.
- Not all staff have been trained to use a consistent approach to the teaching of learning to read. As a result, not all staff have the knowledge they need to provide effective support to pupils who are at the early stages of learning how to read. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge they need to help pupils learn how to read.
- Leaders have not ensured that the books pupils read are well matched to the sounds they know. This makes it harder for pupils to become confident readers as quickly as possible. Leaders should ensure that all books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Yeoman Park School, to be outstanding in March 2013.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144643
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10210927
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	19
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Quigley
Principal	Lucy Spacey (Executive Principal) Courtney Hoop (Principal)
Website	www.yeomanpark-ac.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils aged 3 to 18 who have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include: specific learning difficulty; visual impairment; hearing impairment; speech, language and communication; autistic spectrum disorder; social, emotional and mental health; multi-sensory impairment; physical disability; moderate learning difficulty; severe learning difficulty and profound and multiple learning difficulty.
- Pupils study one of three pathways, dependent on their needs. These are the 'pre-formal', 'semi-formal' and 'formal' pathways.
- The school has a separate building that is used by sixth-form students.
- The school uses one registered provider of alternative provision.
- The school became an academy in October 2017. When its predecessor school, Yeoman Park School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, executive principal and other members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these 'learning strands': reading and 'my communication'; 'my thinking and problem-solving skills'; and physical education and movement. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, met with some pupils to consider their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other areas of the school's provision.
- Inspectors visited the sixth-form provision.
- Inspectors heard pupils read books and visited whole-class reading sessions.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body and of the multi-academy trust, including the chief education officer.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Parent View. They considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaires. Pupils also communicated through adapted pupil surveys with support from staff.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors considered the relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff, met with the designated lead for safeguarding and spoke with staff and parents.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Karen Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022