

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Whitehill Community Academy

Occupation Lane, Illingworth, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX2 9RL

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

Whitehill Community Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Christopher Kimberley. This school is part of Trinity Multi 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 (CEO), Michael Gosling, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Baker. There is also an executive principal, Charlie Johnson, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this school behave well and are happy and well mannered. Staff have high expectations for behaviour and academic achievement. Pupils respond positively to these. They are ready for the next stage of their education. Pupils fully understand the new behaviour policy. They follow recently introduced clear routines, such as 'track the teacher' when learning. This ensures consistent expectations in all lessons across school. Pupils enthusiastically collect reward points, which lead to star badges. They wear these with pride.

There are many opportunities for personal development. Pupils know and live by the school's values of 'ready, respectful, responsible'. They develop confidence through taking part in events such as singing in public, performing in shows and competitions and attending residential visits. A variety of trips and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum.

Pupils hold leadership roles in school. For example, they can be librarians in the new outdoor library, art ambassadors, mental health leaders and school councillors. Trusted adults support pupils if they have any concerns. Pupils feel safe in school and use the 'call it out' boxes to raise any concerns. Assemblies tackle issues such as internet safety and teach pupils about fundamental British Values. Pupils are proud to attend Whitehill Community Academy.

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

This school has undergone significant changes since the last inspection. The school has joined a new multi-academy trust and has experienced significant changes in leadership and staffing. New policies and a fresh curriculum are in place. The school is seeing the positive impact of these changes. Leaders at all levels have high ambitions for the pupils in their care.

Children in the early years make a strong start to their education. Leaders give careful thought to what they want children to learn. The outdoor space helps children to develop their gross motor skills through climbing and large equipment activities. Staff develop positive relationships with families. The school supports parents and carers to know how to help pupils with their learning at home. Expertly trained staff teach the phonics programme. Pupils learn to read quickly. Any pupils who need additional support with reading receive it.

Staff receive training in their specific teaching areas and subjects. They have strong subject knowledge. The mathematics and reading curriculums are fully embedded across school. There is a love of reading across the school. Pupils access a wide range of high quality 'wonder books' in every classroom. All teachers receive one-to-one training in delivering mathematics.

In the wider curriculum, some subjects are more embedded than others. Where a small number of foundation subject curriculums have been changed very recently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are now being revisited. Staff use assessment effectively, quickly addressing errors during lessons. Leaders analyse pupils' progress through the curriculum. This information is used to identify and quickly close gaps in learning for all pupils. Most pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.

The school swiftly identifies and provides effective support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff adapt lessons and use resources to support learning. A small number of pupils learn in the 'nurture' and 'oasis' provision areas. The curriculum is fully adapted to meet their needs. Specialist staff support and teach pupils. Pupils make positive progress against their individual targets.

Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. They are tolerant of those who live different lifestyles to themselves. Taking part in charity and fundraising events gives opportunities for pupils to help others. Pupils enjoy being part of the local community. They visit a local care home and raise funds for charity in the local supermarket. Leaders are determined that pupils will become responsible citizens.

Most pupils attend school very well. Attendance is above the national average. Where families struggle with attendance or encounter difficulties, the pastoral and safeguarding teams work together effectively to provide support.

Parents are invited into school regularly. Recent events have included learning workshops, a Mother's Day breakfast and a coffee morning for parents of pupils with SEND. The

school has adapted how it communicates with families. It keeps families well informed about events and learning in school.

Staff are proud to work in the school. The staff team feels well supported by leaders at all levels. Trustees and governors have a wide range of skills and expertise. They support and challenge the school to continue improving. The shared vision of all leaders ensures high ambition for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, changes to the curriculum are recent and need time to embed. In these subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This means that previous learning needs be revisited before moving on. The school should continue to implement the planned changes to the curriculum so that pupils can recall their learning across all subject areas.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

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	136547
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10346415
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	634
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Baker
CEO of the trust	Michael Gosling
Principal	Christopher Kimberley
Website	www.whitehillacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Trinity Multi Academy Trust.
- This school is larger than the average primary school.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with senior staff in the school, including the principal and executive principal. The lead inspector also met with the chair of trustees, the CEO of the trust and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. An inspector also spoke to parents at the school gates.
- 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 throughout the school day, including at lunchtime, during lesson visits and while moving around school. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour at the school.
- Inspectors reviewed the parental responses received through Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the views of the school staff.

Inspection team

Helen Haunch, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jane Clayton

Ofsted Inspector

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