

Inspection of Academy@Worden

Redwood Avenue, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 1RN

Inspection dates:	21 and 22 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Alan Hammersley. This school is part of Academy@Worden, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Alan Hammersley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Maureen Woodall.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Academy@Worden. They appreciate the range of wider, cultural opportunities that are on offer to them. Pupils treat each other with kindness. They show respect for diversity.

Pupils told inspectors that the school will listen to their concerns. This helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and happy in school.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They make visitors to their school feel welcome. In lessons and during social times, there is a calm and orderly atmosphere. Pupils understand the school's high expectations of their learning. They work hard to meet them. The school acknowledges pupils' efforts with a range of rewards. This supports them to behave and achieve well.

Pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of experiences outside of the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in the life of the school. During the inspection, inspectors saw the commitment that pupils had in preparing to showcase their talents in the school show, 'Shrek'. Pupils regularly contribute to the school community, for example, as volunteer peer readers and through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. This enriches their learning.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. It has thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils should learn. The curriculum is ordered sensibly to ensure that pupils have the prior knowledge to learn successfully.

Teachers deliver the curriculum clearly using their secure subject knowledge. Typically, teachers use activities that ensure pupils know and remember more. Teachers check what pupils have learned effectively through a range of strategies. Consequently, they have an accurate view of what pupils know and can do before moving on to new learning.

The published outcomes for 2024 show an improvement in pupils' achievement by the end of Year 11. The school has continued to make positive changes to the curriculum. One of these changes is the priority it has given to reading. The school has developed comprehensive support for pupils at all stages of reading, including those pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read. The library is at the centre of the school and is encouraging pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils read well because of these changes. Developments to the curriculum have also resulted in an increase in the proportion of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate suite of qualifications.

The school supports pupils with SEND effectively through a range of strategies inside and outside of the classroom. However, the school does not systematically identify the needs of a small number of pupils until too late in their school journey. Consequently, some pupils do not receive the support that they need quickly enough.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations that the school has for their behaviour. This means that learning is uninterrupted. However, the school does not routinely use the information that it gathers about behaviour or some other aspects of its provision effectively enough. Therefore, sometimes, support is not targeted at identified groups of pupils to make the biggest difference. The school has created highly effective systems to ensure that pupils' attendance is consistently high. These actions have had a positive impact on the attendance of disadvantaged pupils to ensure that they access education regularly.

Pupils benefit from a thoughtfully designed personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. They learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. They know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities. However, at times, leaders do not ensure that they support disadvantaged pupils to take full advantage of this rich offer.

Trustees share the school's ambitious vision for its pupils. They offer support and challenge to the school to achieve its development aims. Staff appreciate the range of professional development opportunities that the school offers. Staff value the school's consideration of their workload and well-being. They are immensely proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The additional needs of a small number of pupils with SEND are not routinely identified early enough. Consequently, these pupils do not receive the support that they need in a timely enough manner. The school should ensure that staff are suitably equipped to identify and meet the needs of these pupils.
- The school does not systematically use the information that it gathers to improve some aspects of its provision. As a result of this, the school's actions sometimes do not target the areas that will have the most impact. The school should strengthen its use of the information that it collects to match its actions strategically to the areas where it will make the most difference.

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	139290
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10379978
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	574
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Maureen Woodall
CEO of the trust	Alan Hammersley
Headteacher	Alan Hammersley
Website	www.academyatworden.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed to his role since the last inspection.
- The school uses three registered alternative provisions for a small number of pupils.
- 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

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 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.
- 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 the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, computing, history and modern foreign languages. 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.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including governor meeting minutes, the school's self-evaluation, development plan and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke to representatives of the local authority and the trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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