

# Inspection of Garstang Community Academy

Bowgreave, Garstang, Preston, Lancashire PR3 1YE

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 March 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Satinder Singh. This school is part of the Fylde Coast Academy Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dean Logan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Gutteridge.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils' enjoyment of school has increased in recent times. Most show a keen interest in learning. They respond well to the school's raised expectations for their academic outcomes. In some subjects, pupils achieve well, but this is not the same for others. Some pupils are not benefiting from the positive changes to the curriculum as quickly as they should. This is because some of these changes have been implemented too slowly.

Pupils are typically polite and they show respect to staff and to each other. They value the friendships that they forge during their time in school. This helps pupils to feel safe and happy. The new behaviour systems are followed well by most staff. This has led to improvements in pupils' behaviour. However, a small proportion of pupils continue to misbehave. This spoils the learning of their peers.

The school has worked with the trust to enhance the strategies used to tackle bullying. Nevertheless, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not feel confident in reporting their concerns to teachers. This is because they feel that the issues they raise would not be resolved effectively.

The school offers a wide range of clubs and trips to expand pupils' interests. Pupils relish the chance to take part in a variety of sporting events. Some pupils enjoy representing their school at local community competitions. These opportunities help some pupils to build their confidence when working as part of a team.

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

The school's collaborative work with trust experts has meant that the quality of education has begun to improve. This has helped the school to start to rebuild the trust of some stakeholders. However, at times, the changes to the schools' policies and systems have not been communicated effectively. As a result, some pupils, parents and carers have negative perceptions of the school. The morale of some staff is low. These staff are not assured by the school's work to manage their workload.

Members of the local governing body and trustees have offered suitable challenge to help the school reshape the curriculum so that it is broad and ambitious. The school has also taken steps to offer pupils a wider range of subjects. There are early signs of improvement. For instance, there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils who wish to study languages in key stage 4. This is leading to an increase in the number of pupils who are studying the full suite of English Baccalaureate subjects.

In most subjects, the school has identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. Teachers know the order in which subject content should be taught. This helps them to ensure that learning activities build on pupils' prior knowledge

meaningfully. In many subjects, this helps pupils to gain a secure understanding of the subject content.

In some subjects, teachers use assessment strategies to inform their teaching effectively. However, in other subjects, teachers do not identify and address gaps in pupils' learning well enough. This hinders some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, from learning new content successfully. In contrast, the school's approach to identifying the needs of pupils with SEND is more successful. Teachers make sure that these pupils can access learning. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve well.

Reading has a high priority. Pupils who find reading difficult receive the support that they need to help them read successfully. The frequent 'reading canon' sessions widen pupils' interests in reading. The trust's 'wiki' vocabulary prompts have helped raise the profile of literacy across the curriculum. As such, many pupils read frequently.

In the main, pupils understand and respond to the school's 'grow, care and achieve' values positively. They generally behave well. Nevertheless, at times, the pupils' behaviour is not managed consistently well. Occasionally, this leads to disruption in learning.

The school, with the support from the trust, is acting to reduce the barriers that prevent some pupils from attending school regularly. However, this work is in its infancy. As such, the low attendance rates of some pupils have not been sufficiently addressed.

The school's personal, social, health, economic education (PSHE) curriculum has been successfully redesigned. Pupils develop a strong understanding of healthy lifestyles. They know how to keep themselves safe from drugs and harmful social situations. Nonetheless, the opportunities to celebrate and promote diversity through the PSHE curriculum is still being refined. This is so that pupils have a better understanding of life in modern Britain. The school's comprehensive careers programme raises pupils' aspirations. For instance, pupils take part in projects with local colleges, universities and businesses. This provides them with transferable skills to help them to succeed in their next stage of education, employment or training.

The members of the local governing body and the trustees know the school context well. This helps them to challenge and support 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)

- Assessment strategies are not used consistently well across different subjects. As such, the misconceptions and gaps in subject knowledge that some pupils have are not remedied well enough. Consequently, some pupils do not build a secure body of knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers can use assessment strategies effectively to help pupils to succeed.
- The new behaviour systems are not used consistently well by some staff. At times, this means that the poor behaviour of some pupils hinders the learning of others. The school should ensure that the strategies to address poor behaviour are understood and followed across the school.
- Some pupils do not have confidence that their concerns about bullying will be resolved. This stops some pupils from sharing their worries and lessens their enjoyment of school. The school should ensure that it enhances its approach to improving the relationships pupils have with their teachers so that pupils gain confidence in reporting their concerns.
- At times, the school does not communicate the changes to its policies and procedures clearly enough. As such, some staff, parents and pupils continue to have negative perceptions of the school's provision. The school should ensure that it clarifies the reasons behind some of its improvement work so that it re-establishes the trust of stakeholders and boosts staff morale.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137342
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294361
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	821
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mark Gutteridge
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Dean Logan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Satinder Singh
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.garstangcommunityacademy.com">www.garstangcommunityacademy.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Fylde Coast multi-academy trust.
- The current headteacher was appointed in January 2023.
- The school uses four registered alternative providers 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the local governing body and the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees and the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the alternative providers.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour across the school, including at social times.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, history, design and technology and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance, alternative provision, careers, the provision for SEND and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and records relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- 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 inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

## Inspection team

Amina Modan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Dympna Woods	Ofsted Inspector
Vicky Atherton	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Cahalin	Ofsted Inspector

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