

# Hollinwood Academy

Roman Road, Hollinwood, Oldham, Lancashire OL8 3PT

## Inspection dates

3–4 July 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, governors and staff work together successfully to fulfil their ambitious expectations for all pupils. They are highly committed to improving the life chances of pupils.
- The outstanding curriculum is a key strength in the school's provision. Pupils follow a curriculum that is skilfully tailored to their abilities, talents and aspirations.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by excellent additional activities, including summer schools, holiday and after-school clubs.
- The school's extensive partnership working with health and social care professionals, children's services, other schools and parents and carers ensures that pupils' all-round needs are met fully.
- Teachers have in-depth knowledge of each pupil's specific learning needs. They use highly effective assessment and teaching strategies to help each pupil to learn successfully.
- Teaching assistants make a highly significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- All staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and well-being.
- The outstanding curriculum and excellent teaching support pupils of all abilities to make excellent academic progress and extensive gains in their social and communication skills.
- Highly positive relationships between staff and pupils are fundamental to the school's success. Pupils feel extremely safe and flourish as they grow in confidence.
- Staff are sensitive and perceptive in helping pupils to manage their behaviour and impulses. Pupils are highly motivated and extremely kind and considerate towards each other.
- The early years provision is outstanding. Children thrive in the happy environment. They make excellent progress because activities are planned carefully to build on prior learning.
- Governors and the directorate team have excellent knowledge and skills to support and challenge school leaders.
- Leaders at all levels are highly skilled and support continuous improvement in the school. They constantly adapt provision to meet pupils' changing needs. They are aware of the need to continue to develop the professional skills of all staff in order to sustain pupils' outstanding outcomes.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Continue to develop teachers' knowledge and skills and share good practice across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Leaders have established a culture of high expectations for pupils. It is based on the premise that pupils can make excellent progress academically and gain effective social and communication skills, given the right support. Staff are highly motivated and work together effectively to achieve this end.
- An experienced and knowledgeable 'directorates' team provides highly effective strategic leadership. The chief executive officer of the multi academy trust (MAT) is based on site. As a national leader of education and former principal of New Bridge, the outstanding special school located on the same site, he provides excellent challenge and support to leaders.
- The head of school and senior leadership team provide excellent leadership. Senior leaders have an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This is based on thorough checks on teaching and analysis of pupils' progress. They manage the performance of staff successfully.
- Leadership responsibilities are delegated productively. Leaders at all levels are skilled and knowledgeable. Middle leaders check provision in their areas of responsibility thoroughly and lead improvement effectively. Staff readily seek advice from each other and are keen to share good practice.
- Staff benefit from a wide range of training and professional development. They are highly motivated and keen to participate in research and training to improve their teaching skills. They participate in several research projects, including mathematics teaching, use of technology to support learning, developing pupils' expressive language and writing skills. New staff receive an excellent induction and mentoring from more-experienced staff. All staff receive in-depth training on the special needs of pupils in their care.
- The assessment system, devised by MAT leaders and used across the MAT, is a highly efficient tool. It enables staff to identify precisely any gaps in pupils' learning and identify how pupils learn best. Staff use this information skilfully to plan subsequent teaching. The system contributes significantly to pupils' excellent academic, personal and social progress.
- The curriculum is excellent and a key strength of the school. It is personalised and adapted to meet each pupil's specific needs. Pupils are able to follow different pathways that meet their abilities and support their aspirations. Primary school aged pupils have a curriculum adapted to their needs, encompassing all national curriculum subjects and giving them wide experiences. Older pupils are able to follow an adapted curriculum and/or the full range of GCSE and A-level subjects. Specialist curriculum pathways, for example in performing arts, sports, computing, information and communication technology and horticulture, provide options for pupils with a high skills base in specific areas. Pupils also have access to excellent vocational options, including a range of accreditation and work placements. Pupils are taught by specialist staff within the school or in the future will be supported to attend Crompton House.

- The curriculum is enriched by extensive additional activities. The school is open for 48 weeks of the year and summer schools and holiday clubs are well attended. They provide families with respite as well as providing pupils of all ages with positive activities that enhance their learning. The many after-school activities are similarly well attended. Pupils enjoy the youth clubs and sporting activities. Their learning is enriched further by visits out, residential visits and visitors to the school.
- Pupils are excellently prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about British values in many areas of the curriculum and explore them in detail in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and citizenship. The elected school council regularly offers advice to school leaders.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is integrated successfully into all aspects of the school's work. Pupils are supported to develop resilience and values that help them to deal with moral and social questions. They are taught about, and show respect for, people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
- Partnership working is an important and influential aspect of the school's work. School staff work closely with health and care professionals, parents and carers to ensure that the needs of each pupil are met fully. The school's pastoral staff liaise closely with a range of outside agencies to ensure that families can access the support that they need. School leaders participate in peer reviews and share good practice with schools across Greater Manchester and within the MAT. Leaders ensure that staff can access a range of forums and training with other schools in order to share good practice.
- Engagement with parents is highly effective. Parents and carers have access to teachers daily, to talk through their children's learning at home and any concerns that they may have. Parents and carers receive regular in-depth reports on their children's progress.
- Parents who made their views known through verbal and written communications to inspectors and Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, were extremely positive. Typical of the comments received was: 'Since his time at Hollinwood [child] has developed his academic, social and communication skills to a level beyond anything we had hoped ... his improvement has improved the quality of all our lives.' The inspection confirms parents' positive views.
- The school is constantly evolving and adapting to cater for the differing needs of pupils as they enter the school. The focus on continuous improvement is a key strength; leaders at all levels are well aware of the areas for improvement. They continue to develop the skills of all staff to meet the changing needs of pupils.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors and the 'directorship' team have excellent knowledge and skills to support and challenge school leaders. Governance is provided through a local governing body, which reports to a directorship team. Directors oversee key aspects of the school's work, such as standards, safeguarding, mental health, human resources, extended school provision, equality and diversity and staff's professional development.
- Governors and directors have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and development areas. They have a clear moral purpose to improve the life chances of pupils. They manage the performance of the head of school effectively and oversee the

development of staff successfully.

- Governors and directors manage the school's finances effectively. They receive detailed reports about the impact of all funding. This includes the pupil premium, sports funding, catch-up funding and additional funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They check the progress of pupil groups carefully to make sure that additional funding makes a difference.
- The school has an excellent reputation in the region and is currently heavily oversubscribed. Governors are mindful of the need to keep classes small in order to continue to meet the needs of all pupils as successfully as it does now.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. Staff work closely with parents, carers and professional agencies to ensure pupils' safety and welfare in school and in a range of contexts outside school. As one parent commented: 'Not only does the school support the child, they also support families.'
- Rigorous policies and procedures to safeguard pupils are followed by all staff. Leaders comply with safe recruitment regulations. Staff have completed a range of safeguarding training and have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities.
- Leaders are proactive in supporting and leading developments in safeguarding for children who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD). For example, the school's director for equalities and diversity is leading on a university research project with a counter terrorism unit and an expert panel of practitioners. They are exploring the misidentification and elevated vulnerabilities of pupils with ASD within the context of the 'Prevent' duty.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Teachers have consistently high expectations for the achievement of pupils of all abilities. They have an in-depth knowledge of each pupil's specific learning needs. They use highly effective strategies to build on pupils' prior learning systematically. They know pupils' potential barriers to learning and minimise them successfully.
- Teachers plan their teaching carefully to appeal to pupils' interests and enable them to succeed. They take full account of pupils' targets on their education, health and care plans and individual education and/or behaviour plans. Activities sustain pupils' attention and provide the right amount of stimulus. Pupils are captivated by the activities and delight in their own and others' success.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Teaching is based on incisive assessment that identifies precisely what pupils know and can do and the next steps in their learning. Where appropriate, new learning is presented in small steps to enable pupils to achieve.
- Teaching is skilfully adapted to provide just the right amount of challenge. The

adaptable teaching groups and personalised curriculum help pupils to build on their knowledge and skills rapidly. As one parent said: '[My child] is excelling in all areas thanks to the wonderful staff. In the space of a few months he can read, write, swim, interact and work well with others. He did not have these skills before attending.'

- Teachers integrate pupils' social and emotional development into all activities. Pupils' academic achievement accelerates as they develop effective learning strategies and become increasingly proficient in their communication skills.
- Pupils who need more help receive precise teaching in small steps, reinforced with practical activities. In a nurture group, for example, pupils were supported to recall and reflect on what they had learned during field work and applied this knowledge to a mapping activity in geography.
- The most able pupils are taught very effectively. Pupils often have gaps in their education due to absences from their previous schools. Precise assessment and specialist subject teaching address gaps in pupils' learning quickly. Some pupils are exceptionally talented, for example in art, mathematical calculation, information technology and science. Their needs are met fully. They are challenged and supported to extend their learning.
- Teachers use highly effective questioning and prompts to sustain pupils' attention and deepen their learning. Pupils are encouraged to express their understanding in their own words and given time to think through responses.
- Teaching assistants make a highly significant contribution to pupils' learning. They collaborate in planning and complement the work of teachers skilfully. Strong teamwork ensures that consistent approaches are used.
- Pupils' key skills are developed exceptionally well. Mathematical, information technology and computing skills are taught explicitly and used extensively in other subjects. All pupils use a tablet to record some of their work and receive instant feedback on it from the teacher. Pupils find this approach to learning highly motivating.
- Pupils' literacy, communication and language skills are integrated into learning across the curriculum. Teachers skilfully develop pupils' expressive language and vocabulary in all lessons. Pupils grow in confidence in speaking and increase their powers of concentration when listening as they move through the school. Reading and writing skills are taught explicitly and skilfully.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Positive, constructive relationships between staff and pupils are fundamental to the school's success. Staff know pupils extremely well. Staff are alert to pupils' needs and encourage and nurture them. Pupils flourish as they grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils' safety and personal and social development underpin everything that the school does. Parents attest to the difference that the school has made to their child's well-

being, stating for example: 'Our [child] has grown into a bright, confident young person, led by the school's positive and caring approach to teaching and nurturing. Without the school, we would be in a very, very different and difficult place.'

- Pupils said that they feel extremely safe and well looked after in school. They feel safe to have a go at new things when they are learning and feel safe from bullying or harassment. Bullying is rare and pupils said that everyone knows it will be dealt with thoroughly if it happens. Pupils are sensitive to others' well-being. They said that there is never any name-calling based on race, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability.
- The school has a detailed e-safety policy. Pupils complete a six-week course in e-safety before they are able to bring their own devices into school. They use them responsibly (or risk losing their 'user-license') and know how to keep safe online.
- Highly effective partnership working with a range of external agencies, including social care, health services, police and family support, helps pupils and their families to know how to stay safe in a range of different contexts. Pupils learn how to avoid risks that they may encounter in the wider community, for example those associated with drugs, alcohol and extremist views.
- Pupils benefit from support from a range of therapists, including speech and language, occupational therapy, clinical psychologists and health advisers. Therapies help pupils to develop effective strategies to deal with social and emotional difficulties as well as supporting their academic progress. Weekly yoga sessions help pupils to relax and develop strategies to calm their emotions.
- Pupils are helped explicitly to understand and manage their feelings and helped to look after their mental health. They are helped to develop empathy and recognise feelings in others. For example, in a PSHE lesson, pupils competently considered how different people may react in different scenarios, such as moving to a new house.
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance is excellent. Pupils receive careers advice and work-related learning from Year 7 onwards. Pupils are able to follow a range of curriculum pathways to develop their talents and support their career aspirations. Pupils are well aware of the qualifications and skills that they need for different jobs and they work hard at them.
- There are no pupils attending alternative provision outside the multi-academy trust. A few pupils attend New Bridge School, which is on the same site, for additional lessons. Their safety and attendance are closely checked.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Many pupils enter the school after having struggled to 'fit in' and manage their behaviour in previous schools. Staff are sensitive and perceptive in helping pupils to manage their behaviour and impulses. They set clear expectations for behaviour, reinforce positive behaviour and provide pupils with effective coping strategies. Pupils' behaviour improves rapidly and significantly as a result.
- Pupils are extremely respectful of the school's behaviour code. They help each other to

maintain positive behaviour in class and around school. Peer mentors support younger pupils and in a pupil's words: 'They help you if you are feeling sad and help you feel better.'

- Pupils are highly motivated by the personalised approach. Teachers plan activities carefully to minimise barriers to learning and engage pupils' interest. Pupils' increasing confidence and enthusiasm supports them to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Pupils are extremely kind and considerate. They do their best to help each other out and respect each other's needs. For example, when one pupil became distressed, his friend gave him his ear defenders and helped him to gradually join in the rest of the lesson.
- Pupils know that there are occasional 'meltdowns' when they or their peers struggle to contain their anxieties. However, they said that staff always deal with them 'kindly to minimise upset to the pupil concerned or others and keep them safe.'
- The vast majority of pupils have excellent attendance, reflecting their enjoyment of school. Many pupils have not attended school for some time before joining, but they quickly re-engage and attend every day. There are a few pupils who, due to illness and medical needs, are not able to attend, so persistent absence is above average. Staff support these pupils effectively by providing learning and therapy for them at home.
- Staff work effectively with families to help them to sustain pupils' positive behaviour in the home. This ensures that strategies are used consistently and pupils develop self-management and resilience in all contexts.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils join the school at all ages, and many have gaps in their education. Detailed baseline assessment and precise and targeted teaching supports pupils to make outstanding progress from their various starting points.
- Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress because they are helped successfully to overcome barriers to learning. One parent stated: 'My [child] has been here 18 months and moved from P scales to almost age-appropriate levels thanks to the work of the school.' This is typical. Pupils make rapid progress as a result of exceptional teaching and highly successful personal development.
- The most able pupils make excellent progress and are expertly supported to fill gaps in their learning. Their skills and talents are built on successfully. Pupils say work is challenging and interesting. The instant feedback and personal dialogue with teachers about their learning adds more challenge.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same excellent progress as others in school. Their progress compares favourably with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally who have very low starting points. The pupil premium is used effectively to enhance learning and ensure equal access to enrichment.
- The broad curriculum supports pupils to make excellent progress in a wide range of subjects. Pupils who do the standardised assessment tasks at the end of key stages 1 and 2 do well in them. Pupils who have complex needs and significant learning difficulties make excellent gains in their personal and social skills and achieve academic

success in small steps.

- Older pupils complete accreditations and qualifications according to their abilities, interests and career aspirations. Pupils attain a range of qualifications, including GCSEs in a range of subjects, level 1, 2 and 3 functional skills in English and mathematics, arts awards, creative and performing arts accreditation, horticulture qualifications and many more. Pupils also make excellent progress in courses requiring resilience and perseverance. They complete the Duke of Edinburgh's bronze, silver and gold award, for example.
- There are not any students currently in the post-16 provision. Similar arrangements exist in this provision for students to access a range of qualifications suited to their abilities and needs. The school has an agreement with Crompton House High School, enabling students to access A-level courses.
- Pupils' outstanding personal development and rapid progress prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage in their education, training or employment. All pupils who have left school have sustained places in further education.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- Leadership of early years is highly effective. Leaders have a clear overview of strengths and constantly adapt and improve provision as children's needs change. Practitioners are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They work together constructively to ensure that all children benefit from a well-rounded, relevant and precisely targeted curriculum. Additional funding is used effectively, for example to meet the needs of disadvantaged children.
- Practitioners know the children extremely well. Assessment is used successfully to identify precisely what children know and to inform planning for their next steps. Provision is adapted effectively to meet children's varying needs.
- Excellent transition procedures support children to make a stress-free start. Leaders visit children in their home or nursery setting, so that they have a full understanding of their prior learning and needs. This ensures that children receive the right level of challenge in their learning and support for their personal, social and emotional development from the start.
- Children often have low starting points, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. They make outstanding progress in these and other areas of learning, because activities are planned carefully to build on prior learning.
- Ongoing communication with parents and carers is maintained on a daily basis. Leaders ensure that there is a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour and helping them to learn at home and school.
- Teaching is outstanding. The classrooms and outdoor areas are expertly organised to support all areas of learning. The day is planned carefully to provide children with the routine that they need, while also giving them freedom to explore and develop their skills. Children respond happily to the daily welcoming routine, which settles them and stimulates their thinking. Practitioners prompt and question children very effectively in

directed and self-initiated activities. Any misconceptions are addressed immediately.

- The development of children's vocabulary and expressive language is a constant focus and is modelled exceptionally well by adults. In a reading and writing guided session, for example, children joyfully recalled the story of 'The Enormous Turnip' and used time connectives accurately. Children rehearse what they want to write verbally and this helps them to link spoken words with writing.
- All statutory welfare requirements are met. Children's health, safety and personal development are prime considerations. Children feel safe and they are safe. The warm and reassuring approach of practitioners helps children to grow in confidence.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. They cooperate with staff, are kind to each other and willingly share resources. On occasions when children struggle to maintain positive behaviour, staff quickly adapt what they are doing and help them to calm down.
- Children are prepared thoroughly for the next stage of their education. The move is planned carefully and provision is adapted to children's needs so that it supports their continuous development.

## School details

Unique reference number	140388
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10046583

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	All-through/Special
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	164
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Robert Cockcroft
Head of School	Mrs Jaina Walton
Telephone number	0161 883 2404
Website	<a href="http://www.hollinwoodacademy.org">www.hollinwoodacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@hollinwoodacademy.org">info@hollinwoodacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened in 2015. It has not been inspected previously.
- The school provides education for pupils aged from four to 19 years who are on the autism spectrum and/or have significant communication and interaction difficulties. There are not currently any students in the post-16 provision. Early years provision consists of two Reception classes organised according to children's learning needs. Classes throughout the school are organised according to pupils' special needs and abilities.
- The school is part of the New Bridge Multi-Academy Trust, part of the New Bridge group, which is an organisation for children and young people who have additional needs. The group is under the leadership of a chief executive officer. The school shares a site with New Bridge School. Governance is provided through a local governing body, which reports to a 'directorate' team. Directors oversee key aspects of the school's work.

- The number on roll has increased significantly in the last two years. Most pupils are male; around a fifth are female. The vast majority are White British. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They either have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan or are currently being assessed for one.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some observations were carried out with senior leaders. Inspectors looked at pupils' work in classes and carried out an in-depth scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked with pupils in lessons and during break times. They met with groups of pupils and gained their views about safety and bullying, teaching and learning.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders, staff, therapists, the chief executive of the MAT, governors and directors.
- Inspectors looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning. They took account of the school's records of monitoring and management of performance and training. Safeguarding policies and procedures were examined.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, and several other written and verbal responses of parents and 44 responses from staff.

## Inspection team

Jean Olsson-Law, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector

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