

Inspection of The Oldershaw School

Valkyrie Road, Wallasey, Merseyside CH45 4RJ

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The Oldershaw School is a community founded on kindness to others. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, told inspectors that they feel happy and safe at school. They are friendly and courteous, showing respect to others. Parents and carers are also supportive of the school. Typical comments received from parents were that the school is 'nurturing' and 'at the heart of the community'.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' learning. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. They achieve well overall. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils generally learn well in a calm environment with few interruptions. Most pupils behave well around the school. However, occasionally the behaviour of a small number of pupils outside lessons does not meet the expectations set by leaders. Pupils are confident to report any concerns about harmful behaviour, including bullying. Staff resolve such issues quickly and effectively.

Pupils do not tolerate derogatory behaviour. They enjoy positive relationships with each other. They are tolerant of, and celebrate, difference.

Leaders value the broader development of pupils. They work well to raise the ambitions and aspirations of pupils. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities that widen their horizons. They enjoy trips to Italy, London and Poland. They also engage in charity work to raise funding for others.

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

Leaders and trustees ensure that all pupils follow a broad curriculum. This has the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects at its heart. Students in the sixth form follow appropriate and well-planned courses. Subject leaders have thought about the curriculum in detail. In most subjects, they are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils need to cover and in what order. These subject curriculums are well organised. They include opportunities for pupils to remember, practise and build on what they already know. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not fully developed or has only just been put in place.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, revisit their learning regularly. Teachers check on pupils' understanding and use this information to help pupils with any misconceptions that they may have. As a result, pupils know more and remember more of the curriculum.

Many teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use their subject expertise well to help pupils remember and apply the essential knowledge that they have learned. Teachers in the sixth form have especially strong subject expertise. This helps students to progress through their subject curriculums well.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Teachers ensure that pupils are supported well to access the curriculum content. Pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as others in the school.

Pupils read regularly and fluently. Leaders accurately identify pupils who find reading more difficult. They provide a curriculum that makes sure that these pupils catch up to their peers quickly. These pupils quickly make gains in their reading knowledge.

Pupils behave well in most lessons. Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. However, pupils' behaviour outside of lessons can be less positive. A small number of pupils are not always able to self-regulate their behaviour at unstructured times. Sometimes, this leads to disruption in corridors and the dining room.

Leaders have developed a strong programme to support pupils' wider personal development. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, understand how to look after their own physical and mental health. They use this knowledge to keep physically healthy and maintain an active lifestyle. Teachers support pupils to be kind and resilient young people.

Pupils and students are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. The curriculum for pupils with SEND is particularly effective. This maintains a clear focus on employability. Pupils also benefit from a well-designed careers programme that meets statutory requirements. A high proportion of pupils continue their education further, including at universities.

Leaders have taken some positive actions to support the workload and well-being of staff. Staff are proud to work in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. They have effective arrangements in place to identify pupils needing help. Leaders work well with other agencies to provide timely support to pupils and their families.

Staff are clear about the dangers that pupils and students in the sixth form may face in or outside of school. This includes peer-on-peer abuse. Staff are vigilant and alert to the signs that pupils are at risk of harm. Pupils are clear about where they can get help. Pupils learn how to keep safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not well planned or sufficiently sequenced. This means that pupils' knowledge does not build on what they

already know. Leaders should ensure that the new curriculums are fully embedded so that pupils know and remember more in all subjects.

- A few pupils sometimes find it difficult to self-regulate their behaviour out of lessons. This sometimes leads to disruption in the corridors and in the dining room. Leaders should seek to improve the self-regulation of these pupils to ensure that movement around school and behaviour at unstructured times is calm.

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	136895
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10204396
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	920
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	84
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ian Cubbin
Principal	Jon Bush
Website	www.oldershaw.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new board of trustees was appointed in March 2021.
- Several pupils attend alternative provision at five external providers.
- The school operates its own off-site alternative provision for a small number of pupils at Wallasey Youth Hub, Wallasey Fire Station, Mill Lane, Wallasey, CH44 5UE.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the board of trustees.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of Wirral local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe. Inspectors also asked pupils how they learn how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they have any concerns.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups. No responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils were received.
- Inspectors considered the views of the parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, art and design, modern languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited the school's specially resourced provision for pupils and students with moderate learning difficulties.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects

Inspection team

David Hampson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Timothy Gartside	Ofsted Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
Helen O'Neill	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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