

Inspection of Laisterdyke Leadership Academy

Thornbury Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD3 8HE

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Laisterdyke Leadership Academy is a school that is improving swiftly. The school has undergone significant changes since the previous inspection. The quality of education experienced by pupils has improved substantially. The headteacher, supported by trust leaders, has led the changes with passion and determination.

Pupils' learning has improved. This is, in part, because leaders have raised their expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Older pupils told inspectors that behaviour is much improved. Classrooms and corridors are calm and quiet.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know that staff will listen to their worries and do their best to resolve them. Staff deal with bullying promptly and effectively. They care about all pupils and look after their welfare effectively.

School leaders' recent work on the curriculum, supported by trust staff, is reflective of their high aspiration for pupils. While this work on the curriculum is highly effective, the most recent Year 11 pupils did not benefit from it fully, as evidenced in their most recent examinations.

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

Leaders have shown an urgency to improve the quality of education for pupils. They have supported culture change across the school. This has resulted in a positive climate and cooperation from all staff.

Pupils choose from a broad range of subjects in all Year groups. The number of pupils who choose to study subjects such as history, geography and modern foreign languages in Year 10 is high.

Leaders' ambitious curriculum thinking has helped to identify the most important content pupils should learn and in what order. This contributes to pupils building up their knowledge incrementally. In most subjects, pupils produce work of a high quality and remember what they learn. However, in a very small number of subjects, pupils' learning is inconsistent. This is partly because teachers do not always present information or utilise effective teaching methods in a way that helps pupils know more over time.

Well-planned professional development helps to enhance teachers' subject knowledge. As a result, teachers are able to implement a creative curriculum. For example, in English, Year 7 pupils study the theme of 'nurture' in text written by Maya Angelou. Teachers follow a consistent approach to planning and classroom routines. These routines help pupils to quickly settle in lessons. However, at times teachers can provide too much support. This limits pupils' learning and independent thinking.

Leaders have prioritised reading. There are a large number of pupils who do not read as well as they should when they start school. Leaders have put in place systems to precisely identify and support the specific reading problems that individual pupils face. The strategies are having a positive effect in helping more pupils to read fluently.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Appropriate support plans, called 'star maps', contain useful SEND information. Teachers use the information effectively to remove learning barriers and provide individual support to pupils should they need it.

Pupils and staff say that behaviour has improved significantly in recent years. Staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Support and appropriate consequences are in place for those pupils who do not meet the high behaviour expectations. Some pupils spend time outside the classroom in the 'impact room', where they reflect upon their behaviour.

Leaders give a high priority to attendance. The attendance team strives to reduce persistent absence through a series of proactive strategies. However, it is too early to see the full impact of this work.

Pupils benefit from a well-considered personal development curriculum. Pupils speak with confidence about topics such as consent and equality. While the school has a range of extra-curricular activities, too many pupils do not participate. Pupils benefit from good quality guidance and advice about careers.

Leaders, including the local accountability board and the trust, have a detailed understanding of the school's context and its strengths and weaknesses. The school benefits from the resources and expertise from the trust to improve the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and the safeguarding team are knowledgeable. They know their pupils and the community well. There is an established, strong culture of safeguarding in the school.

Leaders ensure that staff are alert to national and local safeguarding risks through providing regular training that is matched to the needs of the pupils. Leaders follow up concerns promptly with outside agencies. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about the dangers of the internet and have a strong understanding of the importance of consent.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, pupils are capable of more than is asked of them. Teachers can provide too much support, which means that opportunities for pupils to apply what they know can be limited. Leaders and teachers should ensure that the teaching methods, resources and approaches used by staff help pupils to develop independence in their learning so that they rely less on the support of others.
- In a small number of subjects, implementation of the curriculum is less developed. Leaders must continue to support staff through targeted professional development and share best practice across subjects to ensure that teaching is as effective as it can be.
- A significant minority of pupils do not take advantage of the opportunities to promote their personal development. As a result, their wider development is limited. Leaders should increase the range of extra-curricular opportunities and promote attendance at those in place already, so that more pupils find new interests and develop their talents.

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](#)' 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	142681
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10255719
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	884
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kamruddin Kothia
Principal	Stephen Dixon
Website	www.laisterdykeleadershipacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Star Academies.
- The current principal was appointed in January 2021.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- 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 qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with leaders with overall responsibility for safeguarding and looked at school records. They also scrutinised the single central record.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the local accountability board, the chief executive officer and executive leaders.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses.

Inspection team

Julian Appleyard, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Cole	Ofsted Inspector
Katie North	Ofsted Inspector
Pritiben Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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