

Inspection of Bowling Green Academy

Stainland Road, Stainland, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX4 9HU

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Bowling Green are totally committed to their learning and to helping each other. Pupils are mature and polite. They treat each other with respect. If pupils are struggling in a lesson, then other pupils will encourage them and make sure that they do not give up. Pupils develop excellent vocabulary, not just to talk about what they know but also how they feel. Pupils use words like 'disgruntled' or 'confident' from a young age.

In lessons, pupils are fully focused on their work. They do not stray for a moment from what they should be doing. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Pupils know that some pupils need a little more help with their behaviour and understand and support them to behave. Leaders' work to improve the behaviour of all pupils is highly effective. Attendance is high and leaders support those who need to improve it.

Children in the early years get the precise teaching and support that they need, whatever their starting points. They rapidly pick up important knowledge and skills such as writing their name or how to wait for their turn. Pupils through school continue to improve their knowledge and can talk about what they know using expert vocabulary.

Parents and carers appreciate the culture of high expectations in the school. Leaders inform parents about how well their child is doing and what is happening in school. There is a real sense of community helped by events such as coffee afternoons.

Pupils' knowledge of the school values and virtues is truly exceptional. Not only can they name the school values or fundamental British values but can talk about how they use them too. Pupils know, understand and celebrate differences in society. They have an incredibly mature and deep knowledge of areas such as individual rights and understand that families can look different.

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

Leaders have placed reading and language at the heart of the curriculum. Phonics is expertly taught from the moment that children arrive in Reception. Leaders have trained staff to teach phonics to a very high standard. Staff can spot where pupils have gaps in their knowledge and swiftly and effectively address them. Nearly all pupils keep up with where they need to be in their early reading and those that do not are given extra help to catch up. Pupils achieve well. Pupils also enjoy listening to teachers reading books. Pupils are captivated by stories and join in with refrains or stop and listen, spellbound by what might come next.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. It clearly sets out what pupils need to be taught and when. The early years provides the important foundational knowledge for what comes after. In most subjects, pupils acquire deep and rich knowledge about topics such as the Anglo-Saxons or fractions. They can

explain what they know because teachers match up the vocabulary to these important concepts. Leaders have identified that some subjects still need development, namely art and design, and music. Leaders are acting quickly to make the changes needed. Currently, sometimes teachers do not give work to pupils in these subjects that helps them to achieve the aims of the curriculum successfully. Sometimes teachers are not clear on what the precise knowledge that pupils need to remember from the lesson is. Leaders are aware of this and are providing effective training to teachers so that they teach each subject to a high standard.

Teachers use 'flashbacks' to help pupils remember important information from past learning. This also helps teachers to see where pupils still need some more support. Teachers use a range of methods to check that pupils have remembered what they need. This is particularly strong in phonics and mathematics where teachers are highly skilled in ensuring pupils' knowledge is secure before moving on to new teaching.

Leaders have created an inclusive culture in the school. They leave no stone left unturned in helping pupils who may be vulnerable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified and accurately assessed. They then receive the right support, such as in early writing in Reception. Staff are well trained by leaders to offer this support. Interventions, such as in extra phonics or speech and language, are highly effective. Pupils with SEND are also encouraged and supported to attend trips and clubs in school so that they benefit from the full range of what the school offers.

Leadership at all levels is exceptionally strong. Leaders have clear methods for checking on the quality of what is happening in school. Trust leaders work with school leaders on what this looks like day to day through 'typicality weeks'. This helps leaders to have an accurate evaluation of their area of leadership. Leaders then work with staff to swiftly make the improvements that are needed. Staff appreciate this support and the consideration of their workload while making any necessary changes.

Trustees have a clear oversight of all of this and challenge and question leaders to check everything that is planned is happening. Due to these highly effective systems, leaders are constantly making rapid improvements to each part of the school. Where standards are not quite where leaders want them to be, leaders know what is needed and work alongside staff to quickly get them to the ambitious level that leaders aim for in all that they do.

Leaders have developed a curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) that is highly effective. Leaders have matched this curriculum with experiences and clear messages given in assemblies. Pupils are very well informed about what it means to be a good friend. Older pupils know to resist peer pressure when it is not something they want to do. They talk intelligently about individual liberty and how they should stand up for what they believe and what is right. Their character and maturity in these areas are truly breath-taking.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff report even the smallest concerns that they have about children to leaders. Leaders deal with these concerns promptly. They help to get families the support that they need. Leaders have a very clear and accurate view of what is happening in school, such as rare instances where homophobic language is used. They act on this immediately and work to educate children on why it is wrong and how to conduct themselves in future. There is a real culture from all staff of spotting any small issues and dealing with them to stop problems escalating.

Pupils themselves are well informed about being safe online and road safety around the school. Leaders are expert in responding to needs such as explaining the dangers of vaping at an appropriate stage. As with the rest of school, everything is very well connected to provide the help and education to children and families that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, teachers sometimes give work to pupils that is not precise enough in securing the knowledge and skills set out in the curriculum devised by leaders. Pupils do not produce the high-quality work or make the small steps towards the outcomes that leaders expect in these cases. Leaders should continue to train teachers so that they have the curriculum and pedagogical understanding that they need in these subjects to precisely match work to the components needed to achieve the curricular goals.

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	148202
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10269186
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	149
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Carlton Midgley
Principal	Jamie Stuttard
Website	www.bowlinggreenacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bowling Green Primary Academy is part of the Great Heights Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- There is a breakfast club that runs each morning.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 spoke to the principal, the chief executive officer of the trust, the director of school improvement for the trust, some local governors and some members of the trust board.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors carried out deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and art and design. In these deep dives, inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils

and teachers and looked at some of pupils' work. Each deep dive included a visit to the Reception class.

- To look at provision in other subjects, inspectors looked at pupils' work in music, science and languages as well.
- Inspectors spoke to the special educational needs coordinator and visited some pupils with SEND in their lessons to see how effectively their provision was matched to the assessed need.
- In order to support an evaluation of behaviour, inspectors observed lunchtimes and spoke to different groups of pupils about what behaviour is like day to day.
- Inspectors discussed the PSHE curriculum with leaders and looked at the work that pupils produced in it. Records of club attendance was also talked about with leaders with a focus on pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils' participation.
- Inspectors observed the checks that leaders make on the staff and volunteers in the school. Inspectors also looked at the safeguarding records that leaders keep and how they use these to help families who may need it.
- The online survey that parents completed was evaluated and all comments were considered. Additionally, survey responses from staff and pupils were collected and evaluated.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nick Coates

Ofsted Inspector

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