

Inspection of Cockburn John Charles Academy

Old Run Road, Old Run Rd, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS10 2JU

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has improved hugely since leaders took over. Leaders and staff ensure all pupils are valued. Pupils from many different backgrounds and cultures attend the school. Leaders and staff encourage pupils to have pride in their local community. Staff help pupils to explore career opportunities locally and further afield. Leaders provide pupils with an exciting range of extra-curricular experiences, including over fifty extra-curricular clubs. Some pupils gain valuable work experience via links with local and national software developers. Pupils benefit from access to high-quality sporting facilities.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported effectively. Staff are ambitious for pupils to do well. However, some pupils cannot access the most challenging courses that would best prepare them for their next steps in education, employment or training. Such courses are not currently offered at the school.

Leaders have raised standards. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons. Most pupils are keen to learn. Bullying happens occasionally. Most of the time, pupils report their concerns to staff. Incidents are resolved quickly. Incidents of prejudiced behaviour have reduced significantly over time.

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

The curriculum offer overall is strong. In each subject, the curriculum is designed to help pupils learn and remember. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers meet weekly within departments to discuss next week's lessons. This helps them to know exactly what pupils need to learn.

Some subjects, such as creative media production and sports studies, are compulsory for every pupil. These subjects have been carefully chosen to prepare pupils well for local career opportunities in Leeds. However, they do not provide the most ambitious knowledge or skills in order to prepare all pupils, especially the most-able pupils, for their next steps. The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a group of subjects that provide pupils with a wide range of knowledge and skills. This ensures that pupils have many options for further study when they leave school. It includes English, mathematics, science, history and/or geography and a modern foreign language. Leaders provide the opportunity for all pupils to follow the EBacc if they want to. However, it is not promoted consistently to all pupils.

Support for learners with EAL and SEND is strong. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about pupils' individual needs. They provide highly personalised support. Leaders make sure that teachers have the information and training to be able to teach all pupils with SEND effectively.

Assessment is well planned. Staff use a range of strategies to identify pupils' misconceptions quickly. Staff provide pupils with opportunities to improve their work, which helps them to learn.

Leaders and staff do all that they can to develop pupils' reading. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read are given highly effective support. Leaders insist that all pupils read regularly. Pupils read challenging texts within subjects. As a result of leaders' actions, pupils develop confidence and fluency when reading. This increases pupils' enjoyment of reading.

Leaders have developed an exemplary personal, social and health education curriculum. It is meticulously planned and sequenced so that all pupils have the knowledge they need to stay safe, including online. The curriculum, which is supported by a highly successful assembly programme, prepares all pupils for life in modern Britain. Staff have a detailed understanding of local risks to pupils, such as radicalisation.

Leaders' approach to developing pupils' character is excellent. Leaders take every opportunity to reinforce their values and high expectations. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding is carefully embedded within subjects. Leaders create further opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility. For example, members of the school council take pride in representing their peers. Leaders have listened to the council and implemented changes. For example, they have updated the school PE kit.

Trustees and senior leaders schedule regular and highly effective training for staff. Leaders are tenacious in taking every opportunity to support staff to become even more effective in their role. Leaders carefully consider educational research in learning and behaviour to make sure their work has impact on pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Leaders work hard to encourage pupils to report any concerns. There is an online portal where pupils can raise worries that they have. Pupils can and do talk directly to staff, particularly the heads of year, when they need support. Leaders respond quickly and very effectively to all concerns, however big or small. They use a range of strategies to support pupils. These are tailored to the needs of each pupil. Leaders make timely referrals to other agencies where necessary. They keep detailed records of safeguarding cases.

Recruitment checks are carried out on new staff joining the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school provides a strong curriculum offer overall. Nevertheless, there are some missed opportunities to be even more ambitious. Some pupils cannot access the most challenging academic courses that they are capable of taking in order to maximise their preparations for their next steps in education, training or employment. Leaders should reflect on how aspirational the curriculum is for all pupils, including the highest performing pupils.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Most pupils understand the rules and protocols and comply with them. However, there is more work to do before behaviour can be regarded as exemplary. For example, when pupils are not strictly supervised their conduct can deteriorate. Some pupils do not consistently show high levels of respect for others and do not demonstrate high levels of self-control. Incidents of prejudiced behaviour need to reduce further. Leaders should take the necessary steps to ensure pupils epitomise the highest standards of behaviour.

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	145927
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10227787
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1152
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Nuttall
Executive Headteacher	David Gurney
Website	www.cockburnjohncharles.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The predecessor school, South Leeds Academy, became part of Cockburn Multi-Academy Trust in 2018. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- A new executive headteacher, head of school, and a new chair of trustees took up post when the school became part of Cockburn Multi-Academy Trust in 2018.
- The school makes use of alternative provision. Three providers are used. They are The Stephen Longfellow Academy, Southway and Elland Academy. These are all registered with the Department for Education. The school also manages an off-site provision, 'Footsteps', which caters for pupils from Cockburn John Charles Academy and a small number of pupils from other schools in Leeds.
- Through its careers programme, 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, multimedia, PE and dance. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about curriculum assessment in some other subjects. Inspectors visited specific lessons to check provision for pupils with education, health and care plans.
- Members of the inspection team met with those with responsibility for pupils' personal development. Inspectors also met with those with responsibility for supporting learners who have EAL.
- Inspectors met with three trustees, including the chair and vice-chair of the board. They also met with a member of the local governing body.
- Inspectors took into account 79 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and 11 responses from parents to Parent View. This included 11 free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils to discuss their views about the school. Inspectors also took into account 46 responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey.
- An inspector spoke with one provider of alternative provision who is currently educating a small number of pupils who usually attend this school. An inspector also visited 'Footsteps', a provision overseen by Cockburn John Charles.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks. They spoke to governors, the designated safeguarding leader, the behaviour lead and looked at how incidents are logged and followed up. Inspectors explored a range of case studies in detail. Inspectors also spoke to a range of teaching and non-teaching staff to check their understanding of safeguarding training.

Inspection team

Zoe Helman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Mills	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Cole	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Featherstone	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Wren	Her Majesty's Inspector

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