

The Elland Academy

Gelderd Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS12 6DQ

Inspection dates

13–14 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal, senior leaders and staff have created a school which is absolutely focused on achieving the best outcomes for pupils. It is a school that helps pupils turn their lives around and gives them a better future.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are exceptionally well supported. As a result, pupils overcome many of the barriers they have faced and get their education back on track. They leave the school at the end of Year 11 with the values and positive attitudes they need for the next stage of their lives.
- The principal and senior leaders are resolute in their drive for excellence. They have a deep understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve in the school.
- Systems to support and drive improvement are strong. Pupils' learning and progress are assessed and tracked well. However, leaders do not use this information with the precision needed to secure substantial and sustained progress in English, mathematics, science and a range of academic and vocational subjects.
- Pupils make strong progress in English, mathematics and a wide range of subjects because teaching is effective. Occasionally, in mathematics for example, the work set by teachers is not pitched at the right level for lower-attaining pupils and the most able.
- Pupils achieve a range of qualifications and develop the skills they need to move on to further education or training. A high proportion move successfully on to college courses at the end of Year 11.
- Leaders and staff provide high-quality care and support for pupils. The most vulnerable pupils, including those who are looked after by the local authority, are exceptionally well supported. Personal learning advocates (PLAs) have a pivotal role in supporting pupils and 'keeping them on track'. This is highly valued by parents.
- The academy trust and members of the education advisory board (EAB) make a strong contribution to the school's leadership and management. EAB members support and challenge leaders effectively and, in doing so, hold them to account and add to the school's drive for improvement.
- All pupils have a history of poor or irregular attendance and many have had frequent and lengthy exclusions at their previous schools. Almost all pupils improve their attendance dramatically while placed at Elland Academy.
- Pupils work and learn cooperatively and behave well with minimal direction from adults. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and well supported.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, especially in mathematics, by making sure that:
 - senior leaders use assessment and tracking information in an incisive way to secure outstanding outcomes for pupils
 - teachers use assessment and tracking information to plan learning activities which promote excellent learning and rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The principal, senior leaders and staff are uncompromising in their drive for excellence. They have worked tirelessly to create a school which makes a life-changing difference to many of its pupils. This was exemplified by one pupil, who told inspectors, 'I have achieved more than anyone ever expected.' She went on to say, 'This school has helped me to find a new path and a better future.' Inspectors agree that Elland Academy is a dedicated, hardworking and cohesive school community which makes a huge positive difference to its pupils.
- Pupils achieve outstanding outcomes in their personal development, behaviour and welfare as a result of effective leadership and high-quality support. Pupils make exceptional progress in improving their behaviour and developing the positive attitudes they need to be successful learners. As a result of strong and effective leadership, there has been sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and the outcomes achieved by pupils in English, mathematics and a wide range of academic and vocational subjects.
- The principal and senior leaders have an incisive understanding of the school's performance. This is because they are systematic in the way they check all aspects of the school's work. The school's summary self-evaluation provides a clear picture of the school's strengths and the school improvement plan is sharply focused on the areas needing further work. Although the principal and senior leaders track the progress pupils make accurately, this information is not analysed with the razor-sharp precision needed to secure excellent teaching and outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Similarly, senior leaders use performance management to keep their colleagues focused on the things they want to change and improve. While teachers and other adults are held to account, they are also well supported through a wide range of training and development opportunities. Staff told inspectors that Elland Academy is a special and unique place to work.
- Leaders and staff are absolutely relentless in identifying and tackling the many barriers pupils experience. Additional funding, including the pupil premium, is used in an effective way and, as a result, disadvantaged pupils make strong progress and do as well as other pupils who have similar starting points. There is an equally deep determination for pupils who are looked after by the local authority to achieve the best possible outcomes. Leaders and staff make sure this group of pupils receive the high-quality support they need.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of academic and vocational subjects and courses which help pupils to acquire and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. It is enriched and enhanced by a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities, which include sporting, artistic, creative and therapeutic activities. The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme helps pupils to acquire and develop the crucially important knowledge and skills they need to keep healthy and stay safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is similarly well promoted and the values of tolerance and respect for other people are at the heart of everyday life at Elland Academy. This is preparing pupils well for the next

stage of their education and for their lives as citizens in modern Britain.

- The academy trust, principal and senior leaders work proactively with primary schools in the local area to support pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion. The special educational needs coordinator and a dedicated multi-agency team provide timely and effective support for individual pupils and groups of pupils. As a result of equally effective support, a small number of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 are successfully reintegrated into their mainstream secondary schools following 12-week placements at Elland Academy.
- No parents completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. However, inspectors met with a group of parents on the second day of the inspection. This group of parents were unequivocally positive about the profoundly positive impact of the school's work on their children's learning and life chances.

Governance of the school

- The EAB, the school's governing body, makes a strong and influential contribution to Elland Academy's leadership and management.
- EAB members are knowledgeable about key areas of the school's work because they visit the school regularly and receive detailed information and reports from the principal and other senior leaders. They are meticulous in the way they challenge senior leaders and, in doing so, add considerably to the school's drive for improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The principal and senior leaders have created a culture of absolute vigilance. Staff are alert to the signs that a pupil may need help and protection and leaders act quickly and decisively when they have concerns. Senior leaders and staff 'go the extra mile' to make sure that the most vulnerable pupils and their families get the essential help and support they need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations and plan learning activities which interest and motivate pupils. In general, teachers set work which builds on what pupils already know, understand and can do. There are occasional exceptions to this, for example in mathematics, when the work set is unchallenging for some pupils and others do not secure their knowledge and understanding before moving on to new work. This means pupils make good rather than outstanding progress. Senior leaders have a sharp focus on securing highly effective teaching across the school. They are tackling this area for development quickly and to good effect.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use well to explain ideas and concepts. They spot and tackle errors and misconceptions in pupils' work quickly and question pupils skilfully to develop and deepen their knowledge. Pupils who need help to improve their reading, writing and spelling skills are given well-targeted and effective support.

- Teachers are quick to praise pupils for their hard work and positive attitudes. They want pupils to do well. Their effective approach to supporting pupils' social and emotional development has a positive, often profound, impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils' growing pride in themselves and their work can be seen in their books and folders from English, mathematics, science and a wide range of other subjects. Pupils are keen to redraft and improve their work, correct errors and complete extension tasks when they are challenged and encouraged by teachers. This further exemplifies their positive attitudes, increasing resilience and determination to do well.
- In general, pupils' learning and progress are assessed systematically and well. Teachers give pupils clear, detailed and helpful feedback, which helps them to take their next step in learning with greater confidence. Occasionally, this is less effective and, as a result, pupils do not make rapid gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers are working hard to improve this aspect of their practice with the strong and effective support of the principal and senior leaders.
- Reading and writing are taught consistently well. Pupils who need additional help get well-targeted specialist support to improve their reading skills and, as a result, grow in confidence and make fast progress. Pupils, including the most able pupils, read with increasing accuracy and fluency as a result of the help and the support they receive. Years 8 and 10 pupils read confidently to the lead inspector using a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words. Pupils were keen to discuss their books and had a mature understanding of what they were reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. As a result, pupils make exceptional progress in overcoming the social, emotional and mental health difficulties they experience. Year 11 pupils told inspectors that, 'It has been a really good journey' at Elland Academy. They said that teachers and PLAs have helped them to turn their lives around.
- Pupils' growing confidence, pride and positive attitudes can be seen in the work in their books and folders. They work hard and want to do well. Importantly, pupils develop their independence, skills and ability to work and learn cooperatively. Pupils are excited and optimistic about the next stage of their education, in part, because of the effective careers information, advice and guidance they receive.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep healthy and stay safe as a result of the well-thought-out PSHE programme and the effective work of PLAs. Pupils learn about the risks associated with drugs and alcohol, extremism and radicalisation, sexual exploitation, crime and anti-social behaviour. They are taught about personal safety and how to use computers, mobile phones and the internet safely. This includes understanding the consequences of sharing personal information and images on social media. As a result, pupils are better equipped and more confident to make safe and healthy choices.
- The values of tolerance and respect for other people are actively promoted throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged and expected to be thoughtful and considerate. This

helps them to be well prepared for the next stage of their education and for their lives as citizens in modern Britain.

- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are well supported. Senior leaders and staff have effective oversight of the safety and welfare of this group of pupils. Their personal development, learning and progress are tracked in a similarly systematic way and, as a result, they make strong progress in overcoming the complex difficulties they experience.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school's high expectations are understood and fully accepted by pupils. Their conduct and relationships with senior leaders and staff are excellent. Pupils respond well to the school's nurturing approach and behave consistently well with minimal direction from adults. Given pupils' histories of irregular attendance and frequent exclusion, the principal and senior leaders are rightly proud of these outcomes.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying and that they feel safe and extremely well supported at the school. Parents share their children's confidence. This was exemplified by one parent, who told inspectors, 'Communication with my son's PLA is great. I can ask him about anything and I know he will deal with it.'
- Pupils join the school throughout Year 10 and during Year 11. Many have had high levels of absence at their previous schools and most have had lengthy fixed-term exclusions as a result of their social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils' attendance improves dramatically during their time at Elland Academy. Those with the lowest levels of attendance are skilfully supported and, as a result, make huge gains. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who are looked after by the local authority is similar to the attendance of other pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make strong progress from their different starting points in English, mathematics and a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. They make fastest progress in English, science and the vocational subjects. Although pupils develop secure mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills, rates of progress in this key subject are not as strong as those seen in English and science. Crucially, pupils leave the school at the end of Year 11 with the entry level, level 1 and level 2 qualifications they need to move successfully on to further education or training.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make similarly strong progress and achieve equally well. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make strong progress because their needs are identified quickly and accurately and they access high-quality support and intervention. The most able pupils make fast progress in English, science and the vocational subjects. Although improving, some of the most able pupils and those who need help to catch up could make faster progress and achieve better outcomes in mathematics.
- Pupils read with increasing confidence and skills as a result of well-targeted interventions and effective support. Standardised assessments show that pupils make

strong progress in improving their reading and spelling skills. Importantly, pupils develop their interest in reading and understanding of texts again, as a result of effective teaching and high-quality intervention and support.

- Pupils make exceptionally strong progress in their personal and social development. As a result, they acquire the vitally important skills needed to be more confident and resilient learners. This, combined with the qualifications they achieve, prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. The proportion of pupils moving on to further education or training has improved substantially since the school opened and is high when compared to the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	141140
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10031016

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

Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Rev Graham Brownlee
Principal	Alice Ngondi
Telephone number	0113 212 7010
Website	www.ellandacademy.org.uk
Email address	info@ellandacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The Elland Academy opened in September 2014. It is an alternative provision free school for pupils who have a history of poor or irregular attendance or who have social, emotional and mental health needs. It is sponsored by Delta Academies Trust.
- All pupils are currently in key stages 3 and 4. Pupils join the school throughout the academic year, usually following a period of significant disruption as a result of non-attendance or exclusion. Generally, key stage 3 pupils are placed at the school for a short time, usually 12 weeks, before returning to a mainstream secondary school. Typically, key stage 4 pupils are placed at the school for a longer period of time. A small number of key stage 4 pupils have been placed at the school for over a year.

- The special educational needs coordinator and a dedicated multi-agency team provide outreach support for 35 pupils in key stages 1 and 2 at six primary schools in Leeds and Wakefield.
- A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. However, the school does not receive the full amount of this funding from placing schools and local authorities. The school does not receive Year 7 catch-up premium or primary physical education and sport premium.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and few speak English as an additional language.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider: The Hunslet Club.
- A high proportion of pupils receive support for their special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans is very small.
- There is no data for the outcomes achieved by Year 11 pupils at Elland Academy in the Department for Education's performance tables.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning on both days of the inspection. They also spoke to pupils, listened to them read and examined the work in their books and folders. Several lessons were visited jointly with the principal and senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents, senior and middle leaders, two members of the EAB and two representatives from Delta Academies Trust.
- No responses were recorded on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire or Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. Inspectors considered the 27 responses to the staff online questionnaire.
- The lead inspector visited The Hunslet Club, an alternative provider used by the school, with one of the school's designated leaders for safeguarding.
- Inspectors examined documents relating to governance, self-evaluation, school improvement planning, pupils' progress, attendance, behaviour, the curriculum and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Nick Whittaker, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Geoffrey Brookes

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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