

# Inspection of Astrea Academy Woodfields

Weston Road, Doncaster DN4 8ND

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

The principal of this school is David Scales. This school is part of Astrea Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rowena Hackwood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Benjamin Brown. There is also a regional director, Rebekah Ramsden, who is responsible for this school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Astrea Academy Woodfields has improved rapidly since its previous inspection. The culture within the school has been transformed. Pupils and staff appreciate the actions that leaders have taken to improve the quality of education. Pupils learn an ambitious curriculum that is well taught by passionate and knowledgeable teachers. Although not reflected in published outcomes in 2023, pupils are now developing a rich body of knowledge across the curriculum.

The school has high expectations. Most pupils behave extremely well. They feel happy and safe. Pupils understand and value the consistent approach to behaviour. Some pupils do not meet the school's high expectations. Leaders act swiftly to ensure the learning environment remains calm and productive. This results in suspensions for some pupils. There is extensive support for these pupils and the number of suspensions is reducing.

Pupils' personal development is a sharp focus for the school. Leaders ensure that pupils develop a rich set of experiences to build cultural capital and broaden their horizons. This includes visits to universities, museums and a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. The school is in the final of a national poetry competition that will take place in the Globe Theatre in London.

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

The school has an incessant focus on improving the quality of education that pupils receive. Leaders, with the support from the multi-academy trust, have identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. This knowledge is sequenced carefully so that it builds on what pupils already know and addresses gaps in pupils' prior knowledge.

The school has identified effective strategies to teach the content of the curriculum. Teachers use these strategies consistently. The school's approach to teaching ensures that pupils learn and remember what they have been taught. Teachers use questioning effectively in order to check pupils' understanding in lessons. They adapt their teaching well if they find gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Due to the weaker quality of education in the past, some older pupils did not make as much progress as they could have by the end of key stage 4, including in national assessments. Although this improved in 2023, the previous impact is reflected in the published outcomes that pupils achieved.

Leaders have allocated curriculum time to enhance pupils' reading. Pupils in Years 7 to 10 read a range of authors and genres through the 'Astrea Reads' curriculum. The school identifies the barriers that prevent pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read from reading fluently. Pupils receive the support that they need to become confident readers.

The school considers the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) carefully. This includes the use of both internal and external alternative education providers. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly. This means that pupils get the support that they need to do well. Leaders train teachers well. They provide teachers with precise information to help them meet the needs of these pupils.

Pupils told inspectors how much behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. Inspectors agree with this view. All staff apply the school's behaviour and rewards system consistently. This means that classrooms and corridors are places where pupils, including those with SEND, feel safe and can learn. There are still some pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour. This has led to a high number of permanent exclusions and suspensions. This academic year, the school has reduced the number of suspensions, alongside continuing to improve behaviour.

The school and the multi-academy trust have prioritised the improvement of pupil attendance. There is a specific attendance action plan that is checked by leaders and trustees regularly. The implementation of this plan has led to improvements. Overall attendance is increasing and there has been a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school. However, it remains that some pupils do not attend school often enough. The number of disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND who are persistently absent from school is still too high.

The sixth-form provision is small. One student described it as being 'like a family'. The school has created a curriculum that meets students' needs and matches the local labour market. Leaders have strengthened the curriculum and the provision for GCSE mathematics recently. Pupils are prepared well for their next phase in education, training or employment.

Leaders have an ambitious vision for Astrea Academy Woodfields. Their actions have improved the school significantly. Staff are proud to work at the school. Trustees maintain a strong oversight of the school and have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for improvement. They closely monitor the impact of the school's work on the quality of education, attendance and suspensions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Due to the weaker quality of education in the past, some older pupils did not make as much progress as they could have by the end of key stage 4, including in national assessments. This impacts the extent to which they are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment. Leaders should continue to

implement their plans to address these gaps to ensure pupils make better progress by the end of Year 11.

- Some pupils do not attend lessons often enough due to poor attendance or suspension. This means that they miss out on valuable learning. Leaders should continue to implement their plans to ensure these continue to improve attendance and reduce suspensions.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146370
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10310616
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	729
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	7
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Benjamin Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Scales
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.astreawoodfields.org">www.astreawoodfields.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is one of 26 in the Astrea Academy Trust. It joined the trust on 1 September 2018.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses eight registered providers and three unregistered providers of alternative education. Two pupils with education, health and care plans attend two of the unregistered providers for part of their education.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the multi-academy trust regional director and senior leaders responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, personal development and the sixth form. Inspectors met with representatives from the trust management board and board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They reviewed pupils' education, health and care plans. Inspectors visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported to learn.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for reading to discuss the support for pupils at the early stages of reading.
- The team scrutinised the school's records of bullying and spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and reviewed the school's data on external and internal suspensions. Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance and records of pupils who have joined or left the school roll.
- Inspectors visited the school's alternative provision, known as 'the bridge', which is located on the main school site.
- Inspectors visited pupils in one alternative provider of education and spoke to leaders in a second provider via telephone.

**Inspection team**

Stuart Voyce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindsay Oyston

Ofsted Inspector

Patricia Head

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