

# Inspection of a good school: Coal Clough Academy

Swindon Street, Burnley, Lancashire BB11 4PF

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 January 2024

## Outcome

Coal Clough Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Holly Clarke. This school is part of Education Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sharon Roscoe, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ian Brown.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They know that they have adults around them who believe in them and want them to succeed. Most pupils have not had a successful experience in their previous schools. Coal Clough Academy gives pupils the support that they need to put the past behind them and to focus on the future. Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations for their achievement. Pupils thrive and excel as individuals and in their learning.

Pupils benefit from the happy family atmosphere in school. They enjoy socialising with their friends and with staff at break- and lunchtimes. Pupils play table tennis and indoor or outdoor games together. They know that staff will listen to them and help them if they are struggling to learn or have any worries. This supports pupils to feel settled and confident in school.

Pupils understand and accept that the school's policies are there to keep them safe. For example, pupils were positive in their response to a recent change to the policy on mobile phones. Sometimes, pupils do fall out. When this happens, staff respond swiftly to help pupils to resolve any differences and to move on.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that considers the wide range of pupils' needs. This includes the high number of pupils who join the school throughout the academic year. The school identifies and meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively.

Teachers are well trained. They are skilled at adapting the curriculum to ensure that all pupils can access learning. Teachers use assessment strategies well to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They support pupils to address these gaps and to move on in their learning. Over time, pupils make significant progress from their starting points.

The school has recently prioritised reading for pleasure. Staff have completed training to help them to support pupils who are not confident and fluent readers. Pupils now have more confidence to read out loud and to appreciate literature. Although pupils have a renewed enthusiasm around reading, the opportunities for them to read for pleasure and across all subjects are limited.

Most pupils had very poor attendance at their previous schools. This school ensures that pupils' attendance is a high priority. It analyses data carefully and is aware of the main reasons for any absences from school. Bespoke strategies are then used to support pupils and their families to overcome any barriers to good attendance. Over time, pupils make significant improvements in their attendance.

The school supports some pupils to reintegrate back into mainstream education or to move to other specialist schools. Pupils in key stage 4 achieve nationally recognised qualifications, including vocational certificates and GCSEs. Year 11 pupils progress into further education, employment or training. Pupils are particularly proud of their personal achievements. For some pupils, they now have the confidence to read aloud in class or to take part in team sports. Other pupils spoke with pride about their improvements in subjects such as mathematics and science.

Pupils have many opportunities to expand their experiences. For example, pupils learn to ski at a local ski slope. Outdoor education activities, such as climbing and water sports, challenge pupils to work as a team. Pupils learn about democracy through elections for student leaders. They also visited the Houses of Parliament. Pupils develop their knowledge of different faiths through visits to places of worship. A range of after-school clubs are in place, including a workshop where pupils work together to build a racing car.

Staff workload and well-being are priorities for the trust and school leaders. Staff feel that leaders genuinely care about them. A range of strategies is in place to support staff. For example, out-of-hours emails and communication are not used in order to help ensure that staff have an effective work-life balance.

The trust and the school governing body have clear roles and responsibilities. While the trust has ultimate responsibility, the governing body provides challenge to the trust and school leaders. For example, governors visit the school and talk to staff and to parents and carers. This ensures that governors are well informed about the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Pupils do not have regular opportunities to read for pleasure and within subjects. This prevents pupils from broadening their skills and knowledge in a range of subjects. The school should ensure that reading across all subjects is embedded so that pupils can deepen their understanding.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

## 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 142054   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Lancashire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10290288   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Alternative provision  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy alternative provision                                  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11 to 16   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 137  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Ian Brown  |
| <b>CEO of trust</b>                        | Sharon Roscoe  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Holly Clarke   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.coalclough.org">www.coalclough.org</a>     |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 14 and 15 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

## Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision for pupils.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the CEO of the trust, the director of education, members of the local governing body and middle leaders. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- 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 reviewed a range of documents, including policies and data around behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents, pupils and staff about the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers expressed through Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mavis Smith

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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