

Inspection of an outstanding school: Greenacre School

Keresforth Hill Road, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 6RG

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 June 2023

Outcome

Greenacre School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The mission to 'nurture, empower and prepare' pupils for life is at the heart of this welcoming and inclusive school. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and nurturing. Leaders listen to pupils. They ensure pupils have a 'voice and choice' in their education. Staff very effectively support pupils to communicate their wishes and feelings. Learning and support is designed to meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils work towards achieving the outcomes stated in their education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Highly proficient staff support pupils to manage their behaviour very well. There is a strong ethos of respect for others. Incidents of behaviour and bullying are swiftly and effectively addressed. Pupils attend well. They have excellent attitudes to learning. They feel safe and are very well looked after. Those with complex needs receive skilled support and personal care to help them to be safe and develop independence.

There are high expectations. Leaders design the curriculum to help pupils to achieve their absolute best. Pupils learn skills that prepare them for adulthood. They enjoy community activities and work experience. They relish their roles of responsibility. These include as members of the school council and reading ambassadors.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have maintained the high standard of education. They have not been complacent. They have revised and strengthened the curriculum further. They work actively with external professionals to ensure that pupils are well supported and safe in school.

Leaders assess pupils' needs thoroughly when they start school. They seek specialist advice from health professionals to plan appropriate support for pupils. They use this range of information to create personalised learning maps (PLMs) for each pupil. The

maps detail precise targets for pupils to achieve. The targets link tightly to pupils' EHC plans. They are broken down into small steps. Teachers are highly adept at adapting learning and resources to help pupils to access education and meet their PLM targets.

The curriculum is aspirational. It is well designed and well sequenced from the early years to post-16. The 'access', 'build' and 'connect' curriculums are structured to develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Pupils accessing satellite provisions receive the same high-quality curriculum and support. Greenacre staff teach pupils in these provisions. They enjoy the mainstream school facilities and can socialise with their mainstream peers.

The curriculum meets the needs of the range of pupils very well. The 'access' curriculum strongly underpins learning across the whole curriculum. It is thoughtfully designed and planned. Pupils, particularly those with complex needs, can engage with learning and develop personally. Sensory learners benefit from a range of high-quality interventions and in class support. These help pupils to learn in a way that is both purposeful and meaningful to them. Those with communication needs learn to use a variety of resources. These include using symbols, signing, digital devices and pictures to help pupils to communicate effectively. Teachers are highly skilled. They know individual pupils very well. They check frequently the progress pupils make. They use this information to plan pupils' next steps effectively.

Leaders foster a love of reading. Reading ambassadors make reading a high priority. The joy of listening to and sharing stories starts in the early years. Teachers are very skilled at teaching phonics. There is a consistent approach to teaching phonics. The books pupils' read are accurately matched to the sounds they know. Speech and language therapists provide extra help to pupils. Teachers use their guidance to help pupils who struggle to read. They support them to develop their phonics knowledge and awareness. Pupils love reading books in the reading dens and sharing a book with friends in the school's library.

Curriculum content is designed so that pupils can practise their learning, when possible, in real-life situations. For example, pupils learn essential mathematical knowledge but they also learn about how to manage their finances. Older pupils take part in relevant work experience. These include working in retail and in the school office. Post-16 students learn to use their reading and mathematical skills when working in the school's 'Makery' café provision.

Provision to support pupils' wider development is threaded through the curriculum. It is inclusive and of exceptional quality. Pupils learn how to stay safe within their local community. They learn about gender identity and to celebrate diversity. They receive appropriate relationships, sex and health education. They learn the importance of positive relationships. There are many enrichment opportunities. These include singing in the Makaton choir, visits to places of worship and to the theatre. Pupils particularly enjoy participating in the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival. Members of the 'Speak Up' club and school council influence school events. They organise fundraising for local and national causes. They are rightly proud of their achievements such as the 'magic breakfast' initiative. Pupils enjoy taking part in external projects and competitions such as 'Lego makers' and the robotics project working with students from the universities of Sheffield and York.

Leaders provide pupils, including post-16 students, with independent careers guidance. There is a strong programme in place to promote further education, employment and training options for pupils. Preparation for independent living is promoted from the early years. When needed, leaders support pupils to transfer into adult social care services. They make sure that pupils know the services that can support them in the community.

Most staff enjoy working at the school. Most feel very well supported by leaders for their workload and welfare. They appreciate working with colleagues in other schools within the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders provide relevant training for staff. Staff understand the vulnerability of pupils. They know the signs to look out for that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders work tirelessly with external agencies to get pupils the help and support they need. Pupils learn about risks to their safety. They learn about healthy relationships and staying safe within the community. They learn about the risks and consequences of using social media. Leaders work closely with social workers, families and the local authority to keep pupils safe.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Greenacre School, to be outstanding in March 2013.

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	141704
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10255919
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	54
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Cheryl Hobson
Headteacher	Laura Flynn
Website	https://greenacre-school.co.uk/#greenacre
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There are currently no nursery-aged children attending the school.
- A new executive headteacher and headteacher and several staff have joined the school since the last inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school operates three satellite provisions located at Kexbrough Primary School, Outwood Academy Carlton and Oakhill Primary Academy.

Information about this inspection

- 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 held meetings with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, safeguarding and pastoral leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, three members of the local advisory board of governors, including the chair and some curriculum leaders. They met with some members of staff, including early career teachers and some parents and pupils. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer for the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into communications and English, mathematics and finance and the wider world. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teaching staff and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work and pupils' personalised learning maps. They listened to some pupils reading to an adult.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, including PSHE, and looked at how teaching and learning are planned through the 'access' curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff about the school's approach to safeguarding pupils in school. Inspectors checked the single central register and reviewed records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Checks were made on staff training and safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for parents and carers, pupils and staff. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the end of the school day.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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