

Inspection of a school judged for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Carleton High School

Green Lane, Carleton, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 3NW

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Shaheen Shariff. This school is part of Pontefract Academies 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), Julian Appleyard OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Phi Jones OBE.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a tangible sense of 'family' at this school. The school's ethos of 'Team Carleton' is lived by staff and pupils. Members of the school community care greatly for each other. Pupils feel safe. They have very strong relationships with trusted adults. Pupils are happy and enjoy learning. The school has high ambition for all pupils. Pupils achieve highly.

Pupils are supported to be articulate, knowledgeable and mature. They talk confidently with adults. They smile, shake hands and hold doors open for visitors. They debate social issues and raise awareness of important themes. For example, pupils consider misogyny, healthy eating and religion through a termly 'Carleton Talks' podcast. Pupils actively lead initiatives to support the community. For example, they organise colour runs in support of motor neurone disease. They organise food donations in support of a local community kitchen.

Pupils enjoy a huge range of different clubs. For example, they participate in table tennis, volleyball, gymnastics, camera club, cookery and coding. Pupils broaden their horizons through an extensive range of trips and visits. Some pupils spoke enthusiastically about a recent performing arts visit to Los Angeles. Pupils experience guest speakers that provide thought-provoking talks. Pupils learn about transgender perspectives, life as a prisoner and the impact of knife crime.

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

The school has constructed a sophisticated curriculum that helps pupils connect important knowledge together. The curriculum ensures that all pupils can apply their knowledge and understand the relevance of what they have learned. The curriculum is filled with wider learning opportunities such as trips, visits and guest speakers. Pupils talk excitedly about learning. One pupil, representing the thoughts of many, said, 'Every day I'm excited thinking about what I'll be learning today.'

The school ensures that the curriculum is accessible to all learners. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive support that is precisely matched to their needs. The school prioritises reading. Weaker readers are quickly identified and provided with the support they need to make rapid improvements.

Pupils think that the best thing about lessons are the teachers. They say that teachers 'bring lessons to life' by telling stories that link learning to the real world. Teachers skilfully ask questions that help pupils develop their understanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They ensure that all pupils actively participate in lessons. Pupils respond to continual feedback in lessons and improve rapidly as a result.

Pupils make excellent progress through the curriculum. They confidently link their knowledge and skills together to perform complex tasks. For example, younger pupils in music lessons learn to play different instruments. They then play as an ensemble to perform popular songs. In history, pupils can describe in detail how world leaders rose to power. Pupils achieve highly in published examinations and assessments at the end of their time at the school.

Pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous. They are highly attentive in lessons. They have the confidence to ask questions of adults and visitors. Pupils have exceptionally warm relationships with teachers. Pupils care deeply for each other. For example, older pupils describe how they have helped younger pupils who have been distressed or upset. Older pupils mentor younger pupils to help them develop positive attitudes and good study habits. Most pupils attend school regularly. The school makes every possible effort to remove barriers to attendance for all pupils.

Pupils receive a rich programme of personal development. Pupils are taught how to 'talk the talk', 'be the best version' and about the importance of body language. Pupils are confident and articulate as a result. Pupils have in-depth knowledge of British values and protected characteristics. They debate current affairs and compare different world religions. Pupils experience comprehensive careers guidance. Pupils talk openly about their ambitions and how they might achieve these.

Leaders at all levels have a clear vision for the school. They have established a 'no excuses' culture, which continually strives for further improvement. Leaders prioritise training and encourage staff to develop themselves further. Staff are highly positive about their workload. The school supports all staff with various well-being initiatives. Governors

and trustees have a keen understanding of the school. They rigorously challenge leaders in a supportive way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

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

Unique reference number	139501
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10346490
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,020
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Phil Jones OBE
CEO of the trust	Julian Appleyard OBE
Headteacher	Shaheen Shariff
Website	www.carletonhigh.patrust.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 July 2019

Information about this school

- Carleton High School joined Pontefract Academies Trust in April 2013. The school is one of nine schools in the trust.
- The school currently uses three registered alternative provisions.
- 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

- The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school 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 principal, other leaders, staff and pupils. They met with governors and trustees. They met with the CEO.
- Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited the internal provision for pupils with additional needs. Inspectors visited lessons and considered how the needs of disadvantaged and pupils with SEND are met. They observed pupils at various times of the school day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the views of parents; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Chris Carr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lisa Allen

Ofsted Inspector

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