

Inspection of Turning Point Academy

Hants Lane, Ormskirk, West Lancashire L39 1PX

Inspection dates: 20 to 22 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Turning Point Academy. They are respectful and kind to others. They benefit from the extremely positive relationships that they enjoy with staff. Pupils settle in quickly at the school because of the high degree of care that they receive. Pupils are happy.

All the pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school empowers pupils to succeed in aspects of the curriculum where they may have found learning difficult in the past. They respond positively to the high aspirations that the school has of their achievement and conduct. Pupils achieve well.

The school provides an impressive range of activities that helps pupils to develop their talents and interests. For example, it offers movie, computer gaming and sports clubs. Pupils are extremely well prepared for adulthood. For instance, they learn skills in household maintenance.

Pupils enjoy trips that help them to deepen their understanding of the subjects that they study. These include visits to the local leisure centre, a safari park and a residential trip to take part in outdoor pursuits.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the life of the school. They relish the leadership opportunities available to them, such as sports and enterprise leaders, reading buddies and as mentors for new arrivals. Pupils are proud to be ambassadors for their school. They become resilient and independent young people.

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

The school has established an ambitious suite of subject curriculums. Since the previous inspection, the school has expanded the range of subjects that it provides. The key information that pupils should learn is set out in detail. Pupils are well prepared for each stage of their education. They gain qualifications in a broad range of academic and vocational subjects. Pupils move on successfully to further education, apprenticeships or employment with training.

Staff use their subject expertise well to create activities that help most pupils to learn the curriculums that the school has designed. Typically, pupils build their knowledge and skills securely over time. They relish the opportunities that they have to study subjects that are new to them. Pupils quickly become confident learners.

Staff make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. However, some of the assessment strategies that the school has put in place are at the early stages of development. At times, the gaps and misconceptions that some pupils have in their learning are not addressed in a timely manner. As a result, some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready.

The school accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils. It has a precise understanding of the areas that each pupil needs to improve. For example, highly personalised programmes of support help pupils to acquire the coordination, compassion and creativity that they need to become successful learners.

Pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read receive the support that they need to catch up quickly with their phonics knowledge. They read from books that are accurately matched to the sounds that they know. This helps them to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils accurately recall the themes from the books that they read. These include relationships, different types of families and periods of history such as the Victorians.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes towards their learning. Lessons proceed without interruption. Staff skilfully provide support to a small number of pupils that need help to improve their behaviour. This enables these pupils to better manage their emotions. Many pupils that join the school have missed significant periods of their education. The school works closely with these pupils, and their parents and carers, to ensure that they attend school regularly.

The school's personal development programme provides pupils with an impressive range of rich experiences. Pupils have a detailed understanding of fundamental British values. They are prepared exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. They know how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils value the differences that exist between people. This is seen in the amount of care that they show towards others. The school provides an impressive programme of careers education to all pupils. It ensures that they access meaningful work experience placements. As soon as they join the school, pupils receive guidance from the school's careers adviser. This helps them to pursue their ambitions at carefully matched destinations once they have left the school.

The proprietor has an accurate understanding of the school's performance. It holds leaders to account effectively for the quality of education that pupils receive. The proprietor has robust systems in place to ensure that the independent school standards ('the standards') are met consistently and securely. The school prioritises the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. It ensures that the safeguarding policy is made available to parents via the school's website. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with complaints. The proprietor has also ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff welcome the time and training that they receive. This has a positive impact on their well-being. The changes to leadership roles at the school have helped staff to better manage their workload.

Parents value the positive impact that the school has had on their child's achievements and their enjoyment of school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Some pupils have gaps and misconceptions in their learning. This hinders how well these pupils achieve. The school should ensure that staff implement the school's assessment strategies well to check on pupils' learning and use this information to inform teaching so that pupils achieve as well as they should.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	146569
DfE registration number	888/6128
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10307720
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Proprietor	Turning Point NW
Chair	Stefan Campbell
Headteacher	Mike Marshall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000
Telephone number	01695227690
Website	www.turningpointacad.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@turningpointacad.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 to 12 December 2019

Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection was 10 to 12 December 2019.
- A material change inspection was carried out on 30 September 2023.
- The school is located at Hants Lane, Ormskirk, West Lancashire L39 1PX.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers for pupils.
- All the pupils at the school have an education and health care plan.
- The school provides for pupils with autism spectrum disorder, coordination development conditions and a range of genetic disorders. Pupils are placed at the school by a range of local authorities.
- The school is registered to admit up to 80 pupils.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- This standard inspection was brought forward at the request of the Department for Education because of concerns raised with the Department for Education about the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English and reading, mathematics and computing. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss SEND, the curriculum, assessment, pupils' behaviour and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the proprietor body.
- The lead inspector held telephone conversations with representatives from local authorities which have pupils placed at the school.

- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.
- 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 spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life and their views of behaviour and bullying. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school and reviewed documentation to check the school's compliance with the standards.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tim Sherriff

Ofsted Inspector

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