

Inspection of Three Towers Alternative Provision Academy

Leyland Park House, Park Road, Hindley, Wigan, Greater Manchester WN2 3RX

Inspection dates:	13 and 14 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

There are warm and trusting relationships between staff and pupils at this school. Staff act swiftly to help pupils overcome the significant difficulties that many have experienced before they joined the school. The school makes sure that each pupil is heard, understood and supported to re-engage in learning. This helps pupils to settle in quickly.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve academically. There is a strong, shared commitment to making sure that pupils achieve everything of which they are capable. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 make positive progress through the thoughtfully designed curriculum and learn well. Older pupils take qualifications in subjects that match their aspirations and ambitions. Typically, pupils achieve well from their various starting points.

Promoting pupils' emotional well-being and supporting their social needs are priorities for the school. Pupils respond well to clear routines and the positive relationships that they build with adults. Over time, pupils learn to manage their behaviour effectively. They feel happy, valued and safe.

Pupils have many opportunities to take part in activities that go beyond the formal curriculum, for example by participating in outdoor education, bike mechanics and fishing. These experiences help pupils to develop their confidence, resilience and self-esteem.

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

The school has a clear vision for pupils' future success. The curriculum is constructed carefully to prepare pupils to return to mainstream education or move on to a specialist provision. Pupils in Year 11 who remain in the school achieve a suite of qualifications that help them to transition to meaningful post-16 destinations.

Across subjects, the school clearly identifies the key knowledge pupils need to learn. When pupils join the school, teachers use a range of strategies to establish their starting points and to shape future learning that is matched to individual needs and aptitudes. In lessons, teachers explain new ideas and concepts well by breaking them down into simple parts and checking that pupils understand. This helps pupils to deepen their learning.

Teachers routinely check what pupils have remembered and understood over time. However, on occasion, teachers do not use this information to reshape learning or address where pupils are less secure. At times, gaps in pupils' subject knowledge can go unaddressed, particularly for those pupils with lower rates of attendance. This hinders some aspects of pupils' achievement.

Many pupils arrive at the school as reluctant readers. The school works creatively to identify texts of interest and encourage reading at every opportunity. All staff are trained in the school's general reading strategies and use these well in lessons. In the primary phase, pupils follow a structured approach to phonics. Pupils read from books that are matched to the sounds that they already know. This helps them to become confident and

fluent readers. In the secondary phase, staff are swift to identify pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge. They put in place effective programmes of support to help these pupils to catch up with their peers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) experience a smooth transition into the school because this is carefully planned. The school quickly spots where pupils have unidentified needs and acts promptly to put plans and actions in place. Staff receive regular information on the additional learning needs of pupils. Pupils, including those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, receive support that is matched to their individual needs. The needs of these pupils are met well in the classroom.

Typically, pupils behave well. Staff are well equipped to help pupils manage their behaviours and emotions. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils are motivated to earn rewards, including 'points' to spend in the school shop.

Many pupils join the school with high levels of absence in education. The school works closely with families, carers and external agencies to encourage regular attendance. Some pupils' attendance quickly improves once they join the school. However, not enough pupils attend school regularly. This hampers their learning. The school is constantly seeking different ways to support this group of pupils to overcome the personal barriers that prevent them from attending school regularly.

The school promotes pupils' personal development through the thoughtfully designed personal, social and health education curriculum and dedicated well-being sessions. Pupils are helped to build emotional awareness, respect for others, and understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils also engage enthusiastically in 'Wednesday electives' that include trampolining, team sports and crafts. This enhances their social interaction and communication skills.

Pupils are well prepared for their next steps. From the outset in the primary phase, pupils learn about a range of careers and benefit from meeting with local employers. For example, younger pupils enjoy events such as 'TGI Tuesday', where they learn about the various roles in hospitality. In the secondary phase, pupils access impartial careers advice and can study an accredited employability course. This helps them to make informed choices about their future education, employment or training.

Trustees and members of the local governing body have the necessary skills and commitment to carry out their roles successfully. They offer highly effective support and challenge to the school. Leaders at all levels are open and reflective. Staff are proud to work at this school. Many speak highly of the school's efforts to ensure that their workload is purposeful and manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teachers' checks on pupils' learning are not as effective as they could be, particularly for those pupils with lower rates of attendance. As a result, some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready and gaps in their knowledge persist. The school should ensure that teachers have the necessary expertise to identify and address pupils' misconceptions or knowledge gaps before introducing new learning.
- Some pupils, including some who are disadvantaged, do not attend school regularly enough. This further exacerbates the gaps in these pupils' learning. The school should ensure that these pupils are supported to improve their rates of attendance.

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	140627
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10348300
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Wilson
CEO of the trust	Phil Rimmer
Headteacher	Anne Isherwood
Website	www.ttapa.net
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This academy school is part of the Rowan Learning Trust.
- The school continues to operate from two separate sites. The Hindley campus offers provision for key stages 3 and 4. It is located at Leyland Park House, Park Road, Wigan WN2 3RX. The Whelley campus caters for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. It is located at 28 Hieland Road, Wigan WN1 3UR.
- The school provides education for pupils from Years 1 to 11.
- A small number of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are dual registered with a mainstream school and attend on a part-time basis.
- Three Towers offers places for pupils in key stages 1 to 4 who have been permanently excluded, are at risk of permanent exclusion, have medical needs or are without a school place.
- The school provides education for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. A small number of pupils have an EHC plan or are going through the

statutory SEND assessment procedures. Some pupils with an EHC plan are awaiting placement in specialist provision.

- The school makes use of seven unregistered alternative provisions for some older 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and other members of staff. The lead inspector also spoke with the CEO of the trust, the chair of the board of trustees and members of the local governing body, including the chair. In addition, an inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading and English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors evaluated the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the SEND coordinators and reviewed samples of documentation relating to pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 took account of the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Kate Bowker, lead inspector

Christine Mitchell

His Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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