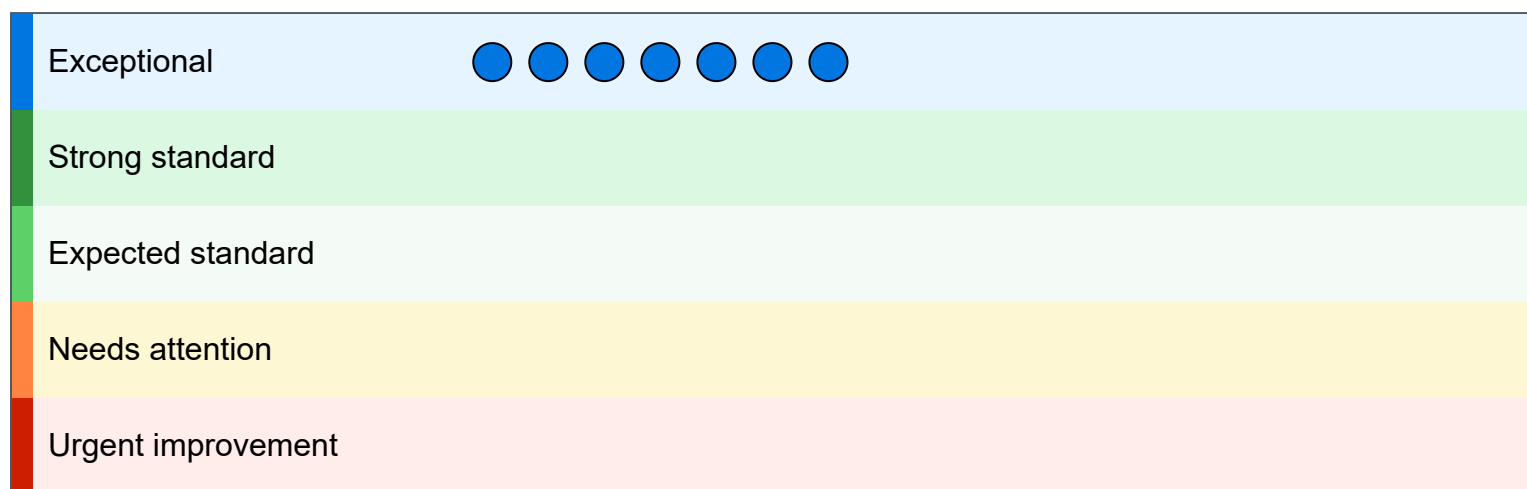


Oastlers School

Address: Flockton Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 7RH

Unique reference number (URN): 149519

Inspection report: 3 February 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Exceptional ●

Achievement

Exceptional ●

Pupils achieve exceptionally well from their starting points. They make impressive progress through the curriculum, including in how well they build knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics. For example, despite most pupils joining the school having previously achieved lower than age-related expectations, by the end of key stage 4 all pupils gain a suite of GCSEs and vocational qualifications. This prepares pupils exceptionally well for post-16 provision, college or training and employment. Over the previous 3 years, almost all pupils secured and sustained successful destinations. The school ensures that pupils are well equipped to overcome the multiple barriers to their learning and wellbeing. Pupils' achievements substantially transform their life chances.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop the skills needed to interact positively with others. This helps pupils to master the attributes of a successful learner and to be ready to make a positive contribution to society. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their learning and for independent adulthood.

Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional ●

Pupils develop a strong sense of belonging during their time at the school. Most pupils attend regularly and enjoy learning. Nonetheless, leaders are not complacent. They have established a rigorous approach to monitoring pupils' attendance. Leaders are determined in their ambition for all pupils to attend school regularly. They diligently support pupils and their families to remove barriers to regular attendance. Over time, pupils' attendance improves dramatically despite any difficulties they have previously faced.

Pupils' positive conduct in classrooms and around the school is praiseworthy. They consistently demonstrate high levels of self-discipline, increasing independence and dedication to their learning. They are excellent ambassadors for their school.

Staff have established strong relationships with pupils. This has created a climate built on trust and respect. Staff's expertise and extensive knowledge of pupils enable them to anticipate behaviours. They work proactively with pupils to support them to learn about, and recognise, the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. Consequently, poor behaviour hardly ever happens. This combination of factors fosters an extremely positive culture of behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them. They consistently live up to the school's high expectations. Collectively, this contributes to an environment in which pupils treat each other fairly, learn successfully and feel safe.

Curriculum and teaching

Exceptional ●

Leaders have meticulously designed and implemented a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum. Leaders are particularly astute in their thinking when it comes to adapting and evolving the curriculum to ensure that pupils experience success. For example, leaders have carefully considered how they can reduce pupils' significant barriers to learning and engagement with education. They have crafted a tailored and highly effective creative

curriculum that runs alongside the main curriculum offer. Leaders carefully refine the curriculum and teaching in response to the ever-changing needs and aptitudes of pupils new to the school. Over time, this curriculum has been very successful in re-engaging pupils in their learning while equipping them with detailed skills and knowledge across the wider curriculum and with skills for life.

Leaders rigorously check that pupils learn what they should. Extremely high standards in the quality of the curriculum and teaching have been sustained over a long period of time. Leaders make sure that all pupils gain secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics, regardless of any previous difficulties. Pupils benefit significantly from the curriculum offer and the highly effective way it is taught. Teachers are particularly adept in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. This includes identifying and precisely addressing gaps in pupils' prior knowledge before they joined the school, alongside teaching a curriculum that is age-appropriate. This sophisticated way of teaching pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who face other considerable difficulties in their lives, ensures that pupils' learning builds securely over time.

Inclusion

Exceptional ●

Leaders have established extremely successful and precisely tailored strategies that support pupils from the moment they join the school. These strategies are underpinned by highly positive partnerships with parents and carers, forged prior to pupils' arrival. Leaders work closely with pupils and their families to identify and address each individual's needs and barriers accurately. Staff are expert in personalising learning. They rigorously review the impact of steps taken to support pupils' learning and development. They take appropriate and timely action to respond to these findings. This enables pupils to access their learning successfully from the outset.

Leaders do all they can to ensure that pupils, most of whom are disadvantaged and some known to children's social care, receive the best care and opportunities. The school uses additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils very effectively. Leaders draw on a range of evidence to inform support for pupils' learning and therapeutic needs. Leaders work in partnership with a broad range of external professionals and organisations to inform staff training and inclusive practice. This ensures that pupils and families receive high-quality and accurate support that, for many, has a transformative impact on their daily lives. Leaders' relentless drive to identify and remove any disadvantage for pupils ensures that all pupils flourish educationally and personally.

Leaders make appropriate use of alternative provision to support pupils who need it. They routinely check that the quality of this provision meets this school's high standards and pupils' individual needs.

Leadership and governance

Exceptional ●

Leaders, including those with responsibility for governance, have collectively developed a school in which pupils successfully overcome their previous difficulties. The strength and stability of leadership over several years have enabled sophisticated and courageous decisions that have built on the school's previous accomplishments and sustained them further. Leaders have established a finely tuned approach that keeps pupils' needs and best

interests at the heart of their actions. They maintain a determined focus on supporting pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerabilities. No time is wasted in supporting the learning and pastoral needs of all pupils. Those responsible for governance bring a range of skills and expertise to their roles, equipping them to provide excellent support and challenge to leaders beyond their statutory duties.

Leaders work tirelessly with other schools, external agencies, professionals, network groups and local authorities to support further improvement and share best practice. Their experience, skill and expertise are highly valued in specialist and mainstream schools locally and beyond. Some of the projects that the school leads on or has significant influence in are helping to shape provision for pupils with SEND nationally. Some projects are pioneering, such as the work with local authorities and employers around local employment pathways for pupils and the community.

Leaders are excellent role models for staff and pupils. Leaders and governors ensure the staff's wellbeing and workload are supported appropriately. Staff benefit from high-quality, evidence-informed training and support. Leaders at all levels demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism, genuine passion and determination to transform pupils' lives. They ensure that all pupils can truly flourish at this school regardless of any disadvantage. Leaders have created a unique school community built on deep levels of trust, inclusivity and high expectations for all.

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional ●

Leaders have established a purposeful programme to support pupils' personal development. They have made deliberate choices about the opportunities that pupils will encounter during their time at the school. The school intentionally builds pupils' character and resilience through an impressive and well-considered range of experiences, including residential visits, sports events and competitions. These activities build pupils' confidence, talents and interests successfully. Pupils participate in a variety of clubs and activities at breaktimes. They mix well with pupils from different year groups who share similar interests. Leaders do everything they can to remove barriers so that all pupils benefit from taking part.

Leaders make sure that the school's curriculum progressively enables pupils to learn about relationships, sex and health education at an age-appropriate level. Teachers skilfully support pupils to discuss and debate topical and sensitive issues with maturity. They provide opportunities for pupils to consider topics, such as consent, from different people's viewpoints. Pupils demonstrate great empathy in their behaviour towards others. Visitors to school provide purposeful insight into their own lives. They enrich the school's curriculum and broaden pupils' perspectives. This helps pupils to learn about, appreciate and reflect on different cultures and beliefs. Pupils confidently discuss what they have learned from these visits. They value hearing about people's personal experiences and how they have overcome adversity.

The school provides impressive opportunities for pupils to learn about careers and experience the world of work. As pupils progress through the school, they speak with increasing confidence and ambition about their curriculum choices and future careers. Leaders have established frequent occasions for employers to work with pupils in every year group. This helps pupils to recognise the value of education and consider a variety of career

choices. It enables pupils to make well-informed decisions about the next stage in their education or training.

Post 16 provision

Exceptional 

The school is highly ambitious for its post-16 students. They benefit considerably from a curriculum of the highest quality. It is designed in a highly individualised way and tailored to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of each student. Each student has a carefully thought-out programme of study that equips them with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the next stage of education, training or employment. Teachers skilfully adapt learning to support students to gain confidence, independence and self-belief. They achieve exceptionally well from their starting points.

Alongside the opportunity to resit and improve English and mathematics GCSEs, students study a range of academic and vocational qualifications. This offer is highly responsive to students' changing needs and aspirations and deliberately aligns with local employment needs, ensuring that students can be successful in life after school. The school works closely with the local authority and employers in the locality to identify meaningful employment pathways and to tailor its careers offer in a highly personalised and unique way. Carefully designed work placements purposefully support students into choosing possible career opportunities.

Wider opportunities in post-16, including residential visits, targeted personal development programmes and independent living skills, contribute positively to students' preparation for adulthood and life. The post-16 provision in its entirety has a significant and transformational impact on students' experiences, outcomes and life chances.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

This school provides an exceptional standard of education. Pupils thrive because leaders are determined to reduce disadvantage and give pupils the best opportunities in preparation for adult life. Leaders have established and sustained a culture of high expectations and ambition for all pupils. This is underpinned by respectful and caring relationships. Leaders and staff are excellent role models. Pupils develop a deep sense of belonging at the school. They know their achievements will be celebrated. Pupils trust staff to help them when they have a concern. This helps pupils to feel safe and thrive.

From the moment pupils join the school, leaders build close partnerships with pupils and their parents and carers. This enables staff to work together to understand how to support pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities and remove barriers to their learning. Pupils recognise how the support they are given helps them to settle into the school. Through this, they develop the skills they need to be successful learners. This has a transformative impact on pupils' lives. Typically, pupils join the school having had low attendance in the past. Successful collaboration with pupils' families, coupled with the high-quality education and pastoral support the school provides, results in impressive gains in pupils' attendance. Pupils leave the school extremely well prepared for living independently and playing a full and active part in society. One pupil's view reflected that of many, telling

inspectors, 'I have learned to want more from life. This school has helped me believe that I can achieve it.'

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They consistently demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to their schoolwork. The school teaches pupils how to engage in conversations, discussions and debates. Pupils are thoughtful and respectful to staff, visitors and each other. Incidents of bullying or unkind behaviour are very rare.

Pupils benefit from, and enjoy participating in, the range of clubs and experiences provided by the school. The school council actively contributes to the development of the opportunities provided. These enrich the school's curriculum. Pupils value taking part in residential visits, sporting events and fundraising activities.

About this inspection

This school is part of Exceed 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, Duncan Jacques, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Hearl Lenton.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers and the head of centre from the Keighley site during the inspection.

Inspectors met with representatives from the local academy council, the board of trustees and the trust's governance professional.

Inspectors also spoke to a representative from Bradford local authority and the headteacher of the virtual school from Bradford local authority.

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.

The inspection started on 3 February 2026. Inspectors returned on 14 April 2026 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

It is a special school for pupils aged between 11 and 19 years. All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school makes use of 3 alternative provisions. All of these are unregistered.

The school is based on 2 sites. The second site is located at Oastlers at Keighley School, 82 Exley Road, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD21 1LT.

Lyndsey Brown: Headteacher

Lead inspector:

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Matthew Harrington, His Majesty's Inspector

David Penny, Ofsted Inspector

Berni Moorcroft, Ofsted Inspector

Sally Timmons, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 3 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

164

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

School capacity

144

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other

schools of this phase in England.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

70.63%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

100.00%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0.00%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school
2022 leavers (revised)	54%

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school
2024/25 (2 term)	20.5%
2023/24 (3 term)	15.8%

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school
2024/25 (2 term)	44.3%
2023/24 (3 term)	42.6%

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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