

Alsop High School

Address: Queens Drive, Liverpool, Merseyside, L4 6SH

Unique reference number (URN): 148226

Inspection report: 10 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

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.

This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Needs attention

Leadership and governance

Needs attention 

Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a significant period of turbulence in leadership and staffing. Many new leaders have been appointed over the last 18 months. They are beginning to take sensible steps to improve the school. This work has prioritised the most important deficiencies in the school's work. Leaders have already secured some improvements, albeit from a low baseline. For example, some elements of pupils' behaviour are better now than in the past. Improved staff training has begun to strengthen the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Fragile staffing has been stabilised.

Governance has been strengthened by the appointment of an interim executive council. This body is providing effective challenge and support to leaders. This support has helped leaders to put in place a suitable strategic plan to improve the school. Leaders have focused their quality assurance systems so that they can better evaluate the impact of their actions, including strategies for supporting vulnerable pupils. Most staff are generally positive about the support that they receive for their workload and wellbeing. They appreciate the approaches that leaders are taking. For instance, teachers reported that the professional development programme is helping them to develop their subject knowledge.

Personal development and wellbeing

Needs attention 

Despite leaders' understanding of pupils' backgrounds and needs, the implementation of the school's personal development programme hinders pupils' readiness for life in modern society. Many pupils' understanding of the fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law, is limited. Furthermore, pupils' misconceptions about equality, diversity and different religions and beliefs at times lead to ill-informed and hurtful comments. Some pupils' ability to learn about these topics is further compounded by their high rates of absence.

Leaders provide an array of extra-curricular activities and trips. These include trips to the zoo and a residential programme for older pupils. Pupils also value the range of clubs that are available to them, such as the sports and gym fitness club. Leaders are beginning to make adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils have greater access to activities. Pupils have a voice in the running of the school. Those with leadership responsibility have contributed to recent changes, for example by suggesting modifications to the school's uniform policy.

Leaders provide a structured pastoral support system. External agencies, for instance those that specialise in counselling and bereavement support, are used well to support those pupils who need it.

Pupils receive a helpful programme of careers advice and guidance. Pupils find out about the world of work through talks from a range of professions, including successful former pupils. Pupils' aspirations are further raised by visitors from colleges and universities. Leaders are in the process of developing work experience programmes for pupils. Leaders provide personalised careers guidance for vulnerable pupils. An increasing number of pupils and students remain in education, employment and training when they leave school.

Urgent improvement ●

Achievement

Urgent improvement ●

Pupils at this school have consistently attained well below the national averages in examinations at the end of key stage 4 over the last 3 years. The progress that pupils make from their starting points has declined over the same time period. This is especially the case for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not progress through the curriculum well enough. Students in the sixth form underachieve considerably across both academic and vocational subjects. This means that pupils and students are far less likely to succeed in the next stage of education, employment or training.

In many subjects, pupils often struggle to recall prior learning. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified quickly enough or remedied swiftly. This prevents pupils from accessing more-complex tasks. In addition, too many pupils lack fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a major contributory factor to the school's weak outcomes over time.

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement ●

Pupils experience discriminatory language, including racist, homophobic and misogynistic comments. Staff are often unaware that it is happening. This is because pupils often do not report it. They feel let down by experiences in the past when the school has not taken action. Other types of bullying are less frequent. When pupils report bullying it is usually dealt with. Pupils' behaviour around the school varies. While some pupils behave well, the boisterous conduct of a significant minority of pupils undermines the high expectations that leaders are establishing. That said, staff and many pupils recognise recent steps to improve behaviour. For instance, leaders have taken effective action to reduce truancy. Lessons are generally much calmer places for pupils to learn. Pupils who demonstrate more-challenging behaviour receive extra pastoral support, including in the 'rise and thrive' centre. This helps them to manage their emotions. Suspension rates for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, while high, are reducing at a faster rate than for other pupils.

Leaders have improved their analysis of trends in pupils' attendance. They use this information well to provide support for pupils who need it. However, too many pupils miss

school too often, with little sign of improvement. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent, including those who are disadvantaged, is high.

Curriculum and teaching

Urgent improvement ●

The curriculum is not taught effectively enough. Teachers often fail to check pupils' understanding of important knowledge. Pupils' misconceptions frequently go unaddressed. In many lessons, pupils lack sufficient knowledge to proceed confidently. In addition, support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is too often ineffective. Consequently, these pupils cannot reliably access the curriculum. They do not build knowledge securely over time.

Leaders have recognised these deficits. They are refining the content of many subject curriculums to better meet pupils' needs. Allied to this, leaders have very recently introduced new strategies to improve teaching, including a new professional development programme.

Pupils in Year 7 who struggle with reading get appropriate support. This helps them to catch up. Leaders have been slower to develop similar support for older year groups. This is also the case for pupils who struggle with mathematics. Support for these pupils is at an even earlier stage. As a result, many pupils lack the fundamental building blocks that they need to access the rest of the curriculum. In contrast, pupils new to the country, many of whom are in the early stages of speaking English, are supported well by staff. Many make rapid gains in their written and spoken English.

Inclusion

Urgent improvement ●

Staff lack the knowledge and skills needed to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Added to this, the strategies that leaders deploy to support pupils with other barriers to learning are generic. Too often, they are ill-suited to individuals' needs. Staff do not know these pupils' circumstances well enough to be able to provide effective support. Many vulnerable pupils receive little or no useful help with their learning. Over time, this has hindered their achievement.

Leaders' systems for accurately identifying pupils' needs, although appropriate, are newly introduced. Staff have begun to receive training on how to adapt learning for these pupils. However, leaders have not checked the impact of this work rigorously enough. Similarly, the ways in which the school uses additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils are in their infancy. It is too soon for these strategies to make a difference to these pupils' education.

The school works with a range of external agencies. For example, work with the virtual school helps to provide support for pupils in the care of the local authority. Leaders' use of alternative provision is appropriate. In addition, they have developed the 'rise and thrive' centre at the school which has successfully improved some pupils' engagement with their learning.

Students in the sixth form have underachieved considerably in both academic and vocational qualifications over several years. Despite leaders' efforts to improve the quality and consistency of teaching, there has been little or no discernible improvement to students' achievement over time. Leaders have provided suitable study programmes, including well-designed subject curriculums. However, leaders have not ensured that teaching is effective. Teachers do not use assessment well enough to check whether students remember their learning. Gaps appear in students' knowledge and understanding of their subject courses, which go unnoticed. This hinders them from achieving as well as they should.

Leaders have made some notable improvements to other aspects of the school's post-16 provision. For example, the array of opportunities on offer to students is now broader. Students' rates of attendance, including disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have increased markedly over time. Students behave well. They respect differences between people. They have positive relationships with each other and staff. Students profit from a vibrant and varied enrichment offer beyond their formal learning. They learn about healthy relationships and about mental health and well-being. Students enjoy participating in fundraising opportunities such as the 'bake off' and 'Santa dash'. Students also benefit from a well-established careers programme. They receive effective guidance and advice. This is supported by positive links with local providers, including work experience at a local hospital.

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

Pupils' experiences at this school vary widely. Some pupils enjoy coming to school, some do not. The curriculum is not taught well. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, have not achieved well over time. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not receive sufficient support. Consequently, they also underachieve in many subjects. Pupils are not as prepared for their next steps as they should be.

Recently, things have begun to change. Leaders have begun to address those aspects of the school that require significant improvement. However, much of this work remains in its infancy. Pupils are rising to meet leaders' higher expectations of behaviour. Many pupils follow clearer routines at the start of the day. This helps to ensure a calm start to school. Pupils are typically attentive in lessons. However, some occasions of disruption caused by a minority of pupils compromise their classmates' learning. Many pupils feel safer at school than they used to. This is helped by the positive relationships that they have with staff. At breaktimes, however, too many pupils do not behave well. Discriminatory and hurtful language is common. Pupils are confident to report issues to staff, but some stated they did not report this use of language, so it persists. Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means they miss essential learning and fall behind.

In the sixth form, students behave well and they respect differences between people. Their attendance has improved over time and they value the support that smaller classes offer.

Pupils and students benefit from a well-designed careers programme. They take part in a range of activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh's award and a range of trips, clubs and sports. These help them to develop their talents and interests. However, pupils do not develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values. This leaves them underprepared to take their place in society.

Next steps

- Leaders must ensure that teaching is of a suitable quality so that pupils and students learn and achieve more. In addition, leaders should ensure that teachers check pupils' knowledge and understanding systematically and adapt their teaching to address any deficits, including in pupils' knowledge of reading, writing or number.
 - Leaders must ensure that staff are suitably equipped to adapt their delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders should also sharpen systems for monitoring the impact of these adaptations on pupils' learning.
 - Leaders must urgently tackle the proliferation of discriminatory and prejudicial language used by pupils. Allied to this, leaders should strengthen the school's personal development programme to ensure that pupils develop a stronger understanding of matters relating to equalities.
 - Leaders should continue their efforts to improve pupils' attendance, especially for those who are disadvantaged or have SEND.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Omega Multi-Academy 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), Christian Wilcocks, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gavin Brown.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the executive principal, trust leaders, other senior leaders in the school and staff. The lead inspector spoke with the CEO, with trustees, including the chair of the trust board and also with members of the interim executive committee, including the chair. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority. An inspector spoke with representatives of the alternative providers that the school uses.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:
The school makes use of 4 registered and one unregistered alternative providers.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. Several senior school and trust leaders have been appointed since September 2024, including the executive principal and head of school. The trust also made changes to the school's governance arrangements in 2024. This included setting up an interim executive committee.

The trust has asked the Department for Education for approval to close the school's sixth form provision. At the time of this inspection, this had not been confirmed.

Executive Principal: James Kerfoot

Lead inspector:

Ahmed Marikar, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Will Smith, Ofsted Inspector

Joe Barker, Ofsted Inspector

David Bell Bell, Ofsted Inspector

Usman Kothia, His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Fowler, 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 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,442

Above average

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.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

1,800

Well above average

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.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

57.71%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

3.74%

Close to average

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.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

21.29%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	11.9%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	15.1%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	15.2%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	28.2	46.0	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	26.6	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	31.6	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.72	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.34	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	7.3%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	13.2%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	7.9%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	22.6	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	21.6	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	25.4	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-2.02	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.71	-0.57	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	7.3%	53.1%	-45.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	13.2%	53.1%	-39.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	7.9%	52.4%	-44.5 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	22.6	50.4	-27.8
2023/24 (final)	21.6	50.0	-28.4
2022/23 (final)	25.4	50.3	-24.9

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-2.02	0.16	-2.19
2022/23 (final)	-1.71	0.17	-1.87

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	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	82%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	91%	93%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	22.62	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	21.61	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	28.35	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.5	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.3	0.0	Below

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	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	16.8%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	19.4%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	16.8%	9.0%	Above

Persistent absence

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

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	46.2%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	54.8%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	51.5%	26.5%	Above

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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