

Shire Oak Academy

Lichfield Road, Walsall Wood, Walsall, West Midlands WS9 9PA

Unique reference number (URN): 136620

Monitoring inspection report:

3–4 March 2026

At the school's graded inspection in January 2025, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

- Far too many pupils often miss school and too many pupils truant lessons. This means these pupils have an episodic experience of education and miss out on personal development opportunities. The school should put in place effective strategies that result in improved attendance, both at school and in lessons.
- Trustees, governors and trust leaders have not held the school to account effectively for key aspects of the school's work, and improvements have been implemented too slowly. As a result, weaknesses have been allowed to persist, and standards have dropped. Trustees, governors and trust leaders should ensure that there are clear systems of accountability and that their challenge and support for leaders is based on a secure understanding of the school's current weaknesses and needs.
- The school's behaviour policy is inconsistently implemented. As a result, poor or inappropriate behaviour is not dealt with effectively. The school should ensure that its behaviour policy is fit for purpose, that staff understand how to manage poor behaviour and receive support to implement the school's policy consistently.
- The school has not ensured that the curriculum is implemented to an effective standard, for example, in the selection of tasks or checking of understanding. This means that pupils are not receiving an adequate quality of education, so they do not make the progress they should. The school must ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum as leaders intend.
- The experience of more vulnerable pupils at the school, including pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND, is especially poor. As a result, their achievement, attendance and participation in the life of the school are weak. The school should ensure that the most vulnerable pupils in their community are prioritised through strategic developments, such as the pupil premium strategy and whole-school provision for pupils with SEND, such that their experience of school improves.

Leaders and trustees are taking effective action to improve the school, but continued work is needed to remove the special measures designation.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any further monitoring inspection we carry out.

During the monitoring inspection, inspectors focused on the following evaluation areas:

- *Leadership and governance*
- *Inclusion*
- *Attendance and behaviour*

Leadership and governance

There is a unified and collective effort to ensure the school improves so that pupils succeed and thrive. Trustees and executive leaders have taken the right steps to strengthen oversight, challenge and support for the new school leadership team. Sensibly, the initial focus from school leaders has been on the basics of getting pupils into school, into classrooms and learning. To that end, there is a highly visible presence around the school, encouraging and reminding pupils to do the best they can. They have established clear behaviour systems and expectations. These are well understood by staff and pupils and have helped create a calmer and more respectful culture across the school.

There are now clear, consistent expectations for teaching. For example, leaders have outlined how all lessons should be structured in 4 distinct parts to help pupils learn. They have identified strategies to check pupils' learning to greater effect. As a result, pupils are beginning to experience a more consistent approach to their learning.

Developing a more precise and accurate assessment process is the next priority. Leaders recognise that teachers need further support and training to better identify gaps and misconceptions in learning, in order for them to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Inclusion

Leaders have taken action to ensure that the school is increasingly inclusive. The welfare of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a priority and a wide range of pastoral support is available to them. Those with other barriers to learning are carefully considered and there is practical support and assistance available. Those who need help with their behaviour are provided with individual support and adult guidance to help them improve their conduct and manage their emotions.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive and inclusive. Pupils say they have many trusted adults they can go to if they have a problem. This is beginning to help improve attendance and pupils' more positive views of the school.

Attendance and behaviour

The priority that leaders have given to attendance is beginning to bear fruit. For example, expectations are reinforced through first-day calling, form tutor follow-up and incentives to promote regular attendance. Leaders have put in place suitable systems to record and monitor attendance. Attendance has improved compared to last year. Rates of persistent and severe absence show early signs of improvement. Nonetheless, all leaders know that there is more work to do to make sure that systems are used consistently and that they analyse information closely to inform timely interventions so that more pupils attend, more of the time.

Leaders have established clear systems for recording and monitoring behaviour. Leaders know which pupils need more support. They provide appropriate and effective interventions to help pupils improve their behaviour. As a result, behaviour incidents and suspensions have reduced. Furthermore, truancy from lessons has decreased significantly. These improvements have led to a calmer environment where pupils feel safe and cared for. Notably, classrooms are now places of learning with less low-level disruption. Where disruption does still occur, it is dealt with consistently by staff, which is seen and appreciated by pupils. Overall, the improvement in behaviour and attendance have enabled a secure foundation for learning for leaders to build on.

Additional next steps

Leaders and trustees should continue to work to address the priorities for improvement identified in the last graded inspection report.

About this inspection

The inspectors carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded inspection that took place in January 2025.

The school's previous inspection was carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection has been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust and the Executive Director of Education, , trustees, including the chair of the trust and the chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and three new senior leaders have been appointed.

Trustees adjusted their scheme of delegation shortly after the last inspection to establish an IEB for the school. The local governing body was disbanded.

Lead inspector

Mel Ford	His Majesty's Inspector
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Team inspectors

Darren Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
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Josie Leese	Ofsted Inspector
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About this school

School capacity	1491
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Number of pupils on roll	1297
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The school uses 12 alternative providers. Six of these are unregistered.

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