

Inspection of The Skills Hub

Falling Lane, Yiewsley, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 8AB

Inspection dates:	4 and 5 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Paul Chambers. This school is part of the Orchard Hill College 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), John Prior and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ray Leclercq.

What is it like to attend this school?

Relationships between pupils and with staff are positive. Most pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. They feel safe because staff care for them and deal with any problems that they might have. The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Staff work hard to make these ambitions a reality. Staff are quick to notice when pupils experience distress. They are successful in helping pupils to manage their behaviour and their emotions.

In lessons, most pupils approach their learning with enthusiasm and strive to succeed. They sustain concentration on their tasks and achieve well. Pupils respect each other and understand people with different backgrounds and beliefs. They know the school's rules and how to behave well.

Pupils' personal development, including the skills needed for adulthood, is carefully planned through the curriculum. This includes pupils understanding how to keep themselves safe. Pupils develop leadership skills and positive character traits through roles such as being members of the student council and participating in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. They also participate in a range of trips, including residential stays, trips abroad and visits to museums. Pupils' aspirations and wider development are supported through well-thought-out careers education and advice which ensures that pupils are well prepared for the future.

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

This school promotes pupils' social and emotional well-being and helps them manage their own behaviour. Since the previous inspection, the school has joined Orchard Hill College Academy Trust. Trust and school leaders have accurately evaluated the curriculum to reflect the changing needs of the pupils. The curriculum is designed to give pupils the knowledge and understanding to be confident learners and to achieve success. The school has thought carefully about what pupils should learn and when they should learn it. The curriculum is in the process of being adapted to meet the changing needs of pupils, especially those with complex needs. However, some curriculum areas are less well developed than others. Some teachers lack the confidence and expertise to adapt their teaching effectively to meet pupils' needs. Some pupils, therefore, are not learning as well as they could be.

Reading is a priority for the school. Pupils who are ready to learn phonics develop their early reading skills well. They decode texts and read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they already know. Pupils who are increasingly confident readers have access to an appropriate range of more challenging books. Staff spot who is behind and work quickly to ensure these pupils can catch up. This means pupils can access the range of ambitious texts they encounter across the curriculum.

The school knows the pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), well. It modifies and tailors the curriculum skilfully so that the work is at the right level. Pupils' education, health and care plans are adapted to make them

clearer and rigorously reviewed. However, inconsistencies remain in the application of these improved processes in class. This means that for some pupils with SEND, their needs are not met as well as they could be, and they do not achieve as well as they could.

The school encourages pupils to follow their interests and develop their talents. As a result, many pupils achieve accredited awards in a range of academic, vocational and practical subjects. Most pupils leave the school for further education courses, training or work. Pupils mostly behave well in lessons and at social times. This is because of the school's extremely effective routines. Staff skilfully support pupils to manage their own behaviour. This helps them to learn effectively and gain independence. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school.

Improving attendance has been a priority for leaders. Many pupils join the school with fragmented attendance and learning records. Leaders have adapted their approach to monitoring and implementing strategies to reduce absence rates. These supportive actions have greatly improved attitudes regarding the importance of strong attendance for all. Most pupils attend school regularly.

Personal development is prioritised to support pupils' preparation for adulthood. Topics covering relationships education are sensitively adapted to match pupils' needs and understanding. Pupils' voices are heard and taken seriously in developing the school further. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to understand social, moral and cultural issues. Extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' experiences considerably. Consequently, pupils learn to be self-aware, are prepared well for the future and know how to keep themselves safe. Careers advice is woven carefully into the curriculum. Staff work relentlessly to explore possible career pathways. This includes identifying aspirational work placements and training opportunities for pupils. As a result, pupils have the information required to make well-considered decisions about their next steps.

Leaders, including governors, trustees and the trust's executive team, are extremely knowledgeable. They are driven to ensure the whole school community continues to thrive. Staff value the support that they receive for their well-being and workload. They are proud to work at the school and share a determination to make a real difference to the lives of pupils and their families.

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, the curriculum lacks sufficient adaptations to meet pupils' needs. On occasion, teachers' strategies to engage pupils in their learning are not as effective as they could be, including for pupils with SEND. When this happens, pupils do not consistently

develop deep understanding and achieve highly. The school should develop the curriculum and improve the effectiveness of teaching approaches further, including how pupils' learning is assessed, so that the standards pupils achieve continue to rise.

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	149033
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10361582
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ray Leclercq
CEO of the trust	John Prior
Headteacher	Paul Chambers
Website	https://theskillshub.org/
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has been part of the Orchard Hill College Academy Trust since September 2015, becoming a free school in January 2023 under the Orchard Hill College Academy Trust.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers, those who lead teacher development and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspectors spoke to representatives from the local governing body and the deputy CEO of the academy trust.
- 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 took account of responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including documents relating to governance, leaders' evaluations, the long-term strategy of the school and information about the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

Phil Garnham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Georgina Herry

Ofsted Inspector

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