

# Shire Oak Academy

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

Unique reference number (URN): 136620

## **Monitoring inspection report:**

14 July 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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 is of the opinion that the school may appoint early career teachers.**

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

- Leadership and governance
- Inclusion
- Curriculum and teaching
- Attendance

## **Leadership and governance**

Since the last monitoring inspection, the approach of school and trust leaders to securing improvement has become well established. The systems and processes introduced are now firmly embedded. There is stability across the school leadership team, with growing expertise and an accurate understanding of the work undertaken to date and its impact. This is ensuring that the school's efforts are strategic, prioritised and building a strong foundation for improvement over time.

Leaders describe an improvement programme built on a pupil-centred approach. Pupils have noticed this and point to increasingly strong and trusting relationships with staff. Moreover, the improvements in pupil behaviour noted at the last visit, have been maintained and this has extended to their attitudes to learning, which are notably more consistent.

Importantly, the trust is providing the support, challenge and investment to underpin the school's work. It recognises that the next priority is to strengthen leadership capacity and impact at other levels to secure further improvement of teaching and learning.

Leaders appreciate that parents and the community are vital and valuable partners in the push to improve outcomes for all pupils. The notable increase in positive parental feedback during this visit demonstrates the impact of leaders' work to rebuild relationships following historic fractures. It also highlights the importance of maintaining this momentum.

## **Safeguarding**

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

## **Inclusion**

Leaders have continued their work to build a school that is inclusive of all. They have taken an approach that is broad in identifying barriers to learning and/or wellbeing, but precise in the support provided. There is a recognition that pupils with needs in one area may well have needs in another. As a result, an inclusion 'panel' considers pupils, who may need support for a wide range of different reasons, then identifies the provision available within the school, or brings in external expertise. This multi-disciplinary system provides leaders

with an overview of each pupil's support and interventions. As a result, pupils receive increasingly holistic, wraparound care and support.

Pupils who have received support are overwhelmingly positive about its impact on their wellbeing. There are increasing examples of parents, who appreciate the way in which their children's needs have been met so that they can thrive at the school.

## **Attendance and behaviour**

Rightly, attendance has been a significant priority for the school. At my last visit, attendance was beginning to improve because suitable systems and processes had been established. However, these were not fully embedded, and capacity to oversee their implementation was limited. Leaders have taken action to ensure that the attendance team now has that capacity.

Attendance for key groups has continued to gradually improve as a result of this increased capacity. This is supporting collaborative working across the school so that attendance issues are identified and addressed much more quickly. Nonetheless, leaders know that there is more to do. They are keenly aware that there is more to do and have a suitable plan in place based on a very clear understanding of the barriers to attendance that pupils are facing.

## **Curriculum and teaching**

Leaders are fully aware that this aspect of the school's provision is a high priority. They have a clear and accurate understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching and have taken appropriate action to secure improvement, which is now beginning to evolve into more consistent practice in the classroom. Leaders recognised that strengthening assessment would enable teachers to identify pupils' needs more accurately and adapt learning accordingly. Consequently, since my last visit, a new approach to assessment has been trialled. This has been successful, with pupils reporting that they have a better understanding of what they are learning and why. Based on this success, leaders are confident that full implementation across all subjects in the new academic year will enhance all pupils' understanding and improve learning outcomes.

Nonetheless, leaders are clear that, while important, assessment is just one aspect of teaching and learning and that there is still variability in the quality of learning. This is echoed by pupils, who report inconsistent experiences across subjects and staff. As such, leaders have developed a well-designed programme of skills development for all staff. This aims to consolidate the improvements already secured and to expedite the refinement of whole-school initiatives developed with the support of suitable external partners. Leaders have a comprehensive monitoring programme in place to check impact and identify any further support that staff may need.

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 second 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 and the first and second monitoring inspections were 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 have 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 of the trust, the executive director of education, trustees, including the chair of the trust, the chair of the interim executive board, teachers and pupils to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

### Lead inspector

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| Mel Ford | His Majesty's Inspector |
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### Team inspector

|                         |                  |
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| Melanie Callaghan-Lewis | Ofsted Inspector |
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## About this school

|                        |      |
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| <b>School capacity</b> | 1491 |
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|---------------------------------|------|
| <b>Number of pupils on roll</b> | 1151 |
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The school uses 10 alternative providers. Six of these are unregistered.

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