

Inspection of Co-op Academy Priesthorpe

Priesthorpe Lane, Farsley, Pudsey, West Yorkshire LS28 5SG

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The joint principals of this school are Martin Blacoe and Louise Pratt. This school is part of Co-op 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, Chris Tomlinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Russell Gill. There is also an executive headteacher, Brian Kelly, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Co-op Priesthorpe Academy are proud to be part of an inclusive community. All pupils are members of small coaching groups where they can maturely consider current affairs and develop strong bonds of friendship. These groups also help to foster the strong relationships between pupils and staff that inspectors saw throughout the inspection.

Sixth-form students know that they are an integral part of the Priesthorpe community. They receive targeted help and advice which means they are well prepared for the steps they want to take as they leave the sixth-form provision.

Behaviour across the school is calm and orderly. Pupils know that bullying and derogatory language will be dealt with quickly but it is rare for such incidents to occur. Teachers' consistent application of high expectations means that pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils treat each other with respect and feel safe.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are effectively supported. Teachers receive clear information about the needs of all pupils. They use this information well, for example, by considering how they might help pupils to take advantage of the extensive extra-curricular clubs and activities that are offered.

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

The development of a strong Priesthorpe community is at the heart of leaders' vision for this school. This is evident in all aspects of the school's work. For example, subject leaders work together to create links across subjects for the benefit of pupils. In science, for example, the work pupils cover on 'healthy living' in Year 7 is explicitly linked to other learning about health and well-being in 'personal, social and health education' (PSHE) lessons. This learning is then revisited and built on in lessons about cancer cells in key stage 4.

Across all subjects, teachers use precise vocabulary connected to important ideas. In Religious Studies, for example, pupils use and understand ideas around relativism and utilitarianism. This helps them to discuss and express themselves maturely. Students in the sixth form can understand and process complex ideas quickly due to the design of a curriculum which makes clear the important knowledge needed to be ready for every stage of education. The development of the curriculum in recent years means that pupils have access to a wide and ambitious programme, including in the subjects of the English Baccalaureate.

Leaders quickly and systematically identify pupils who need support with reading. Interventions to develop phonics, reading fluency and comprehension are targeted and carefully designed. Inspectors saw some pupils reading with expression and enthusiasm in interventions that took place during the inspection.

Staff have a strong understanding of pupils' needs. For example, in lessons, teachers use the information they receive about disadvantaged pupils to organise their classrooms, adapt activities and ensure that all pupils are involved in lessons. Where pupils may feel anxious about trips and visits, teachers run virtual sessions so pupils understand what will happen to help them prepare for these opportunities. This means that all pupils can access the school's detailed programme of wider development opportunities.

In lessons, pupils focus on their learning. They want to do well. Leaders take steps to support the small number of pupils that need help to make the right choices in lessons. For example, pastoral managers have nurtured positive relationships with pupils. When visiting lessons, they use this to encourage pupils to focus and always do their best. This is part of wider strategy to ensure that all pupils are supported to become highly motivated. Leaders have a range of systems to encourage good attendance at school. One striking example is the use of pupil mentors. Pupils with improving attendance mentor their peers to encourage them to come to school. This helps pupils to develop their leadership skills and adds to the sense of a supportive environment. Leaders know that they need to maintain their focus to continue to raise attendance.

A particular strength of the school is the personal development offer. There are a huge range of clubs, trips and activities for pupils. These range from small clubs such as 'computer coding' to entry into national competitions and opportunities to experience high quality art installations. Leaders' work to ensure that all pupils can take advantage of this contributes strongly to the sense of community and cohesion. Sixth-form students learn Makaton and first-aid to help prepare them for life after school. The strong careers provision ensures that all pupils experience the world of work. For many pupils, this means going on work experience. Subject leaders' curriculum design enhances this personal development offer. In English, for example, lessons develop pupils' cultural knowledge through consistent exposure to high-quality literary texts.

Governance is a strength of the school. Governors provide robust challenge. Teachers and adults in the school are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school. 'Community circles' for staff mean that staff have a strong voice and feel listened to. Training is woven into the school day so that staff understand what is expected of them. Many staff are proud members of what they describe as the 'Priesthorpe family'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some cases, a small number of pupils need support from teachers and adults to regulate their behaviour at social times. A small number of pupils do not demonstrate the thirst for knowledge that leaders expect in lessons. This means that some pupils are not able to take full advantage of the curriculum offer. Leaders should continue to develop strategies and actions to build high levels of motivation and engagement from all pupils.

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	144588
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10313566
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1091
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	51
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Russell Gill
Joint Principals	Martin Blacoe and Louise Pratt
Website	www.priesthorpe.coopacademies.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 and 4 March 2020

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Co-operative Academies Trust.
- The school is partnered with the West Leeds Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC). Some of the pupils attending the West Leeds SILC receive some of their education on the site of Co-op Priesthorpe with pupils that attend Co-op Priesthorpe full time. West Leeds SILC is a community special school (URN 134884) and was most recently inspected by Ofsted in June 2022.
- The school uses six providers of alternative education for a small number of pupils. Two of these providers are unregistered provisions.
- The sixth-form provision at Co-op Priesthorpe is due to under go significant change. The school has partnered with other local schools to open a provision which to serve the needs of pupils attending schools. This new provision is due to open in September 2025. This means that the current on-site sixth-form provision

at Co-op Priesthorpe will close and all provision will move to the new site when it opens.

- The school meets the requirements of the provide 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the joint principals of the school as well as other members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also met with members of the academy governing council, including the chair of this body, and members of the board of trustees. Inspectors met with the chief executive officer of the Co-op Academies Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, religious studies, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussion 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 met with curriculum leaders in a range of other subjects and spoke with leaders for the sixth-form provision.
- 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 considered a range of documentation provided by the school including around behaviour and attendance. Inspectors visited the school's restorative hub.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs co-ordinator for the school.
- Inspectors observed social times and spoke with pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils and sixth-form students.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the survey returns completed by staff, pupils and students.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Greenough	Ofsted Inspector
Tony Guise	Ofsted Inspector
Jayne Gaunt	Ofsted Inspector

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