

# Inspection of a good school: Co-op Academy Delius

Barkerend Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD3 8QX

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

## Outcome

Co-op Academy Delius continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Emma Hardaker. 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, Dr Chris Tomlinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Russell Gill.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Co-op Academy Delius is a split site special school mainly for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. A very small number of pupils attend in the early years foundation stage. Each school site focuses on specific special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils attend the site that best meets their individual SEND. Leaders at all levels have designed a pathway curriculum that is ambitious. Pupils follow one of five pathways matched to their learning needs and abilities.

The school is well resourced with specialist equipment and facilities. Pupils access a wide range of sensory and therapeutic spaces to support their individual needs. These include a hydrotherapy pool and trampoline therapy. Well-trained staff are on hand to ensure that pupils get the right support and learn well. Staff are advocates for pupils with SEND. They have ambition for all pupils to progress well. Successful communication and preparation for next steps in education feature in all aspects of the school's work. Reading is woven into school life. Books play an important part in the school day. All pupils enjoy stories, singing and rhymes.

Pupils feel safe in school. Staff listen to them if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils behave well. Pupils say there is no bullying in the school. If bullying were to occur, they know the school would deal with it effectively.

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

Leaders at all levels ensure the curriculum is designed well to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. The ambitious curriculum clearly sets out the key knowledge and skills pupils will learn. Pupils' progress is planned for carefully based on their learning pathway. Staff

make adaptations to the curriculum to ensure learning meets pupils' needs. The different pathways share common themes, such as books and topics. This ensures pupils can seamlessly move between pathways depending on their progress.

The school has strengthened its approach to teaching phonics. All teaching staff have received training. This ensures the most able pupils are supported consistently to build their phonic knowledge. Many pupils learn pre-phonics to develop their listening and speaking skills. These lessons take place each day at dedicated times. Pupils engage well. Class routines are well understood. Pupils value the support they receive. Some pupils use assistive technology to communicate effectively. Pupils learn how to use communication boards, picture symbols and eye-driven communication devices to access learning well. However, there is an inconsistent approach to teaching pupils to write. Some most able pupils write illegibly. They have developed handwriting habits that are hard to correct.

The school manages behaviour well. Staff are swift to intervene if pupils need help to settle. The school uses support plans to manage pupils' behaviour. Leaders at all levels monitor behaviour patterns. This ensures that the school is calm and orderly. As a result, pupils behave well. The school is strengthening its processes for managing attendance. Pastoral staff visit homes to check on pupils' welfare and check absences. There is a demonstrable year-on-year increase in pupils' attendance.

The school has developed a rich personal development offer. Pupils' participation is closely tracked over a range of extra-curricular activities. There is something for all pupils to participate in each day. The school has adapted a local '50 things' project of activities to enhance pupils' wider experiences. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is woven through the curriculum. Leaders at all levels carefully consider ways to promote diversity and explore pupils' heritage.

Pupils are involved in recruiting staff. The school council members have a say in the running of the school. They meet governors and tell them what they would like to improve. Pupils learn about consent and how to indicate 'stop' and 'no' if they feel uncomfortable. Staff are trained to spot nonverbal signs of consent. Pupils debate important issues. These include environmental matters in 'eco club' or more immediate issues, like the weather and how it can affect playtime.

The school successfully engages parents and carers and addresses their concerns well. However, a very small minority of parents believe the school could work better with them to support their children's needs. Governors are kept informed about the school. They ask questions and check the school's work. Leaders at all levels ensure staff feel well supported. Staff feel equipped to support and teach pupils well. They say that their workload is manageable and that they have job fulfilment. Staff have a secure understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. The school ensures they are kept up to date with training. The school ensures SEND processes are well led. Early career teachers praise the support they receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The most able pupils' written work is underdeveloped. Pupils do not always form letters legibly and present their learning clearly. This is because the school does not consistently teach pupils to write legibly. The school should ensure staff provide pupils with opportunities to further develop their handwriting and presentation.
- A very small minority of parents believe that partnership between the school and home could be improved. They do not feel that the school works with them effectively to support their children's needs. The school should continue to strengthen their work with all parents to ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly and that they feel involved in their child's development.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Delius Special School, to be good in June 2013.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147117
<b>Local authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268484
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	171
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Russell Gill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Hardaker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.delius.coopacademies.co.uk">www.delius.coopacademies.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Co-op Academy Delius is a special school for pupils aged between two and 11 years.
- The school is based at two sites. One school site is co-located with Co-op Academy Princeville.
- The school makes provision for pupils with complex SEND. This includes those with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and autism. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, pathway leaders, curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff.

- The lead inspector met with the chief executive of the trust and a member of the board of trustees. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading and communication, mathematics, and personal, social and health 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.
- 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.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents. This included any free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

David Mills, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michael Wardle

Ofsted Inspector

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