



Nunthorpe
Academy

5 September 2024

Dear Parent(s) / Carer(s)

I am writing to you to share the report of the section 5 Ofsted inspection of Nunthorpe Academy, undertaken between 18th and 19th June 2024.

I encourage all parents and carers to read the full report, as it highlights what the school does well, alongside the areas that need to be developed. Whilst we accept that there are areas for improvement, we are disappointed with the outcome. This report, I believe, demonstrates why the government has announced this week that one-word Ofsted grades are to be scrapped with immediate effect this term. The Department for Education recognise that single phrase grades 'fail to provide a fair and accurate assessment of overall school performance across a range of areas'.

Importantly, regarding the areas requiring development, Ofsted found that "Governors and Trust leaders know the school well. They are honest about the challenges that they face and know what is needed to improve the school. They ensure that all statutory duties are met." We, as a leadership team, know our school well. We are aware of the many strengths in our school and are actively addressing the areas for improvement. I am proud of our school, our staff and our young people.

As you may be aware the NMAT Executive Principal, Mr Brown made the decision to resign from his position in February 2024 and left at the end of the academic year. I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to Mrs Kell, Head of School, Ms Preston, Chief Operating Officer, the staff at Nunthorpe Academy and the Local Governing Board for their efforts, not only during the Ofsted inspection, but over the last term.

I informed you in June, prior to the Ofsted inspection, that we have decided to join Areté Learning Trust (ALT), a Multi-Academy Trust of nine schools (five secondary and four primary schools), as we believe this will bring significant benefits to the staff and students at Nunthorpe Academy. Though a date has not yet been confirmed, we are optimistic that Nunthorpe Academy will be part of Areté Learning Trust by January 2025. Whilst we go through the necessary processes this term to officially join ALT, ALT will be providing school improvement support and leadership capacity to Mrs Kell and the senior team to quickly address the areas identified within the report for improvement. Being part of a larger and stronger trust will maximise our resources, increase our school improvement capacity, enable greater collaboration and partnership working and most importantly support the delivery of high quality and inclusive educational provision.

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Ready, Respectful, Safe





Nunthorpe
Academy

We are confident that under Mrs Kell's leadership, and now with the support of Areté Learning Trust, the areas identified for improvement will be rapidly addressed. Whilst we do not yet know what the new report card for schools will look like, our expectation is that Nunthorpe Academy will receive a positive report when the school is reinspected.

If you would like to discuss any element of the report, or have any questions, please get in touch with me, the Chair of Trustees at Trustees@nunthorpe.co.uk

Yours sincerely

Andrew Tickle
Chair of Trustees

Inspection of Nunthorpe Academy

Guisborough Road, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS7 0LA

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

The executive principal of this school is Lee Brown. The school is part of the Nunthorpe Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Tickle.

What is it like to attend this school?

Nunthorpe Academy is a school where pupils and students feel safe. In many subjects, pupils enjoy their learning. They say that they learn most when their lessons are interesting. However, some lessons in key stages 3 and 4 are disrupted by poor behaviour, which means that suspensions are high. Students in the sixth form are positive about school and are benefiting from a structured, nurturing, and focused learning environment.

Pupils have access to a broad curriculum. The curriculum is designed to prepare pupils for the next stages of their education and employment. The careers programme is extensive and helps pupils to make informed choices.

The school has a wide range of clubs, particularly in key stage 3. There are many opportunities to access experiences both in and out of school, such as at darts club. Pupils are encouraged to develop their leadership skills by joining the school council. The school council recently arranged a vintage afternoon at a local care home on D-Day.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not consistently receive the support that they need in lessons. Teachers do not always use the strategies identified in 'pupil passports' to effectively identify and address the gaps in knowledge of pupils with SEND. The school is working to address the issue. Currently, the attendance of pupils with SEND is not as high as that of other children.

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

The school has created a broad curriculum. Curriculum plans identify the important knowledge that pupils need to know to succeed. Subjects are broken down into key concepts and themes and it is clear what teachers are expected to teach. Most teachers have the subject knowledge to confidently deliver their subjects well.

In lessons, teachers give thought to what knowledge pupils need to revisit, using recall tasks at the start of lessons to recap learning from previous lessons. However, in a number of subjects the gaps in pupils' knowledge are not effectively identified. This means that opportunities are missed to identify the knowledge that pupils need. It also delays pupils in building on what they have learned before. Some teachers have not received sufficient training to help them plan and deliver lessons that help to identify and fill the gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils cannot consistently recall key information.

The school has started to develop a reading programme for all pupils. This is still at an early stage. Pupils who need support to become fluent readers are receiving appropriate support. The school is aware that it needs to improve its offer to pupils to encourage them to read widely and more often.

Attendance is low. New systems to secure improvements in attendance have shown recent signs of improvement. However, pupils with SEND continue to attend less frequently than their peers.

Pupils say that there is a small amount of bullying in school. This often involves the use of discriminatory language and name-calling. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying incidents, but do not always feel confident that it will be taken seriously by staff.

Students in the sixth form benefit from study programmes that are ambitious and well developed. The school has ensured that students develop the independent skills they need to be successful. Ambition is high for students, and they are well supported through pastoral systems and effective teaching that helps them to make progress. In lessons, teachers have secure subject knowledge and check students' understanding regularly. The school is proactive and successful in its approach to sixth form attendance.

The personal, social and health education programme is extensive. Pupils learn about topics such as healthy relationships, diversity, and mental health awareness. The school delivers regular assemblies on a range of topics. The programme does not have enough content relating to different faiths. Pupils are less well informed about different cultures and about people who are different to them.

Staff say that they enjoy working at the school and that leaders take account of their well-being and workload. Most staff feel that they are supported by leaders and that they have their best interests at heart.

Governors and trust leaders know the school well. They are honest about the challenges that they face and know what is needed to improve the school. They ensure that all of their statutory duties are met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not designed or implemented to consistently identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge, or the next steps necessary to deepen their learning. As such, pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge they could across a range of subjects. The school should train and support staff to more effectively use assessment to identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge and misconceptions, and ensure that any follow-on strategies to address these matters are successful.
- The curriculum is not adapted sufficiently well in lessons to support pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not make as much progress from

their starting points as they could. The school should ensure that the strategies identified to support these pupils are implemented across all subjects.

- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly or are suspended. These pupils miss out on important learning. The school should continue to focus on reducing suspensions and pupil absences, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- Some pupils do not have confidence that staff will deal with bullying and the use of prejudicial language when they arise. As a result, some issues do not get reported and dealt with appropriately. The school should take action to ensure that staff consistently apply leaders' high expectations as outlined in the anti-bullying policy.
- Pupils' understanding of different faiths and of the protected characteristics is not as developed as it should be. As a result, pupils do not consistently demonstrate tolerance and understanding towards people who are different to themselves. The school should develop the curriculum offer so that pupils understand more about the different groups of people that make up modern Britain.

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	138845
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10320377
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
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	1,521
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	172
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Tickle
Head of School	Kate Kell
Website	www.nunthorpe.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is the single academy in the Nunthorpe Multi Academy Trust Limited.
- The school makes use of five unregistered alternative providers.
- 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.

- 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 spoke to the head of school, vice principal, assistant vice principals, the SEND coordinator, members of the local governing board, including the co-chairs and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, science, geography, art, and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to the leader responsible for the reading curriculum.
- Inspectors visited a range of lessons in other subjects, isolated learning and to the 'Bridge' provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspection team: 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 reviewed the work of the school to improve attendance and behaviour.
- The lead inspector considered the responses received during the inspection to Ofsted's parent survey, staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Marc Doyle, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Pali Dhesi	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Johnson	Ofsted Inspector
Penny McDermott	Ofsted Inspector

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