

Term 1 update: Response to Ofsted

As you are aware the academy was inspected by Ofsted on 18/19 June and the report was shared on our return in September.

One term into this academic year I felt it imperative to update you on progress made against the areas for development recommended within the report and have kept this separate from the usual end of term updates which will come to you directly from the Pastoral Team led by the the Arete Learning Trust Vice Principal, Jane Darbyshire, currently on secondment from Stokesley School to support our developmental journey and transition into the Trust on 1 January 2025.

What does the school need to do to improve?

Nunthorpe Academy Development Plan Targets for 2024-25	
Priority 1	Personal Development - embed a culture of understanding and positive relationships to ensure that all students are able to maximise their potential
Priority 2	Consistency of curriculum implementation to ensure progress and attainment are in line with/exceed national average
Priority 3	Improved accountability systems
Priority 4	SEND - Leaders embed a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all students, including students with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

The above Development Plan has been in place since September 2024 with three focused PD Day programmes and weekly calendared professional development sessions for staff, these are directly related to each of the above priorities which relate to each of the specific bullet points noted in our Ofsted report from June 2024 below.

Each of the points below (*in blue italics*) come directly from the Ofsted report and have very specific actions to ensure the progress required to benefit every member of the Nunthorpe community.

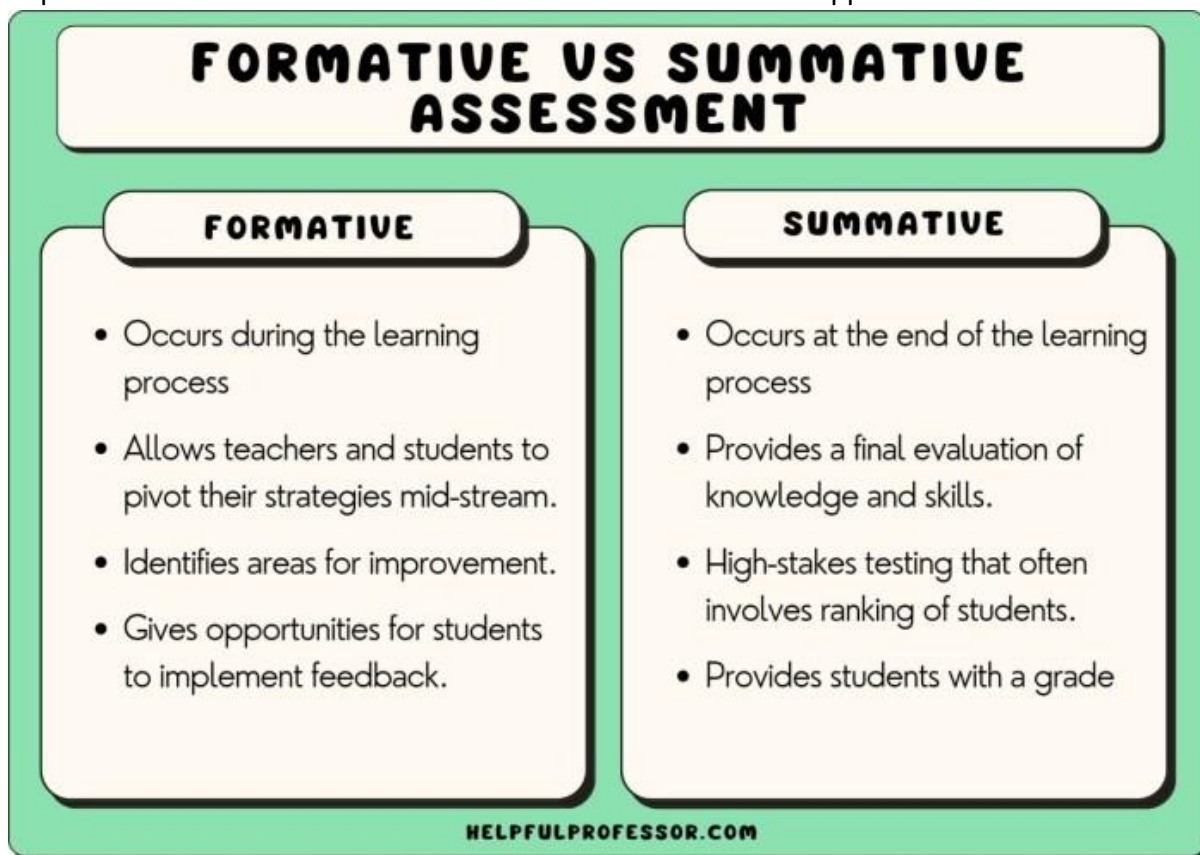
■ *The curriculum is not designed or implemented to consistently identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge, or the next steps necessary to deepen their learning. As such, pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge they could across a range of subjects. The school should train and support staff to more 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.*

Three non negotiables have been set for all student facing staff, for all lessons and interventions:

1. Improve consistency of implementation of the curriculum (what is taught and how it is taught across each subject)

Curriculum Maps for all subjects are available on the academy website

2. Improve formative assessment and its consistent application in class



3. Improve the checking of students learning

Significant work around 'checking learning' through a range of questioning techniques has been prioritised with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Heads of Department (HOD) conducting frequent learning walks of lessons to ensure consistent application of our trust teaching and learning policy is being actioned. All lessons have a non-negotiable list of expectations which are shared every week through my Head of School staff briefings to keep the momentum and expectation on everyone's radar for the benefit of all students.

In the recent student surveys, student's comments in relation to lessons were:

95% of students stated that lessons started with a recall task
 56% of students stated that all lessons provided Core, Develop and Extend tasks 'all of the time'
 a further 37% commented 'often'
 73% of students stated that they feel challenged to improve their learning in lessons
 100% of students stated that they feel challenged the most in their 'core' English, maths and science lessons
 84% of students state teachers show and explain what good examples of work look like
 90% of students stated they get regular feedback from their teacher either verbally or through class and assessment marking

■ 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.

Nunthorpe Academy - Head of School Update December 2024

SEND is an aspect we take very seriously and we now have a second member of staff who has completed her SENDCo qualification to enable her to support 1 day a week with student reviews and student voice in addition to her four day teaching week. This work will be developed further as we have also been working very closely with our new ALT Trust partners throughout the Autumn term. Colleagues have attended SEND focused sessions on:

The Five a day principle:

- Explicit instruction
- Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies
- Scaffolding
- Flexible Grouping
- Using technology
- Exam access arrangements
- Applying the regulation framework
- Restorative practice

DANCE approach- designed by the Arete Learning Trust EP

The ALT Inclusion Lead has spent five days in the academy working with our AVP Inclusion exploring finding consistency within approach. Specific student cases have been highlighted by the ALT Inclusion Lead for cohesive work and specific input. A number of families have referred for more intensive family work through Yes@Arete services. This has included two students who have benefitted from EP support.

Whilst also accessing the Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority WESEND project which is designed to improve the approach to SEND across all schools in the local area utilising national trainers. A specific focus of this work is shared good practice and provision mapping.

The recruitment of a new Inclusion Administrator is also adding capacity to this area of the academy to improve timely responses to communications and referrals where appropriate. An internal staff member, Mrs Grant, completed her SENDCo training in July 2024 and is now supporting our AVP Inclusion in her work on a 0.2 basis.

Parental review feedback from the Autumn Term:

On 4 December 2024 we held a transition event for our Year 7 Plus Programme (Nurture students.)

The evening was well attended - with 80% of parents/carers present. Most stayed behind after the event and took the opportunity to chat with staff. This resulted in less written feedback, but presented a lovely opportunity for informal discussion and building relationships with parents/carers.

Attendance was higher than last year and I feel that hosting it in Inclusion was more effective, giving a more personal feel and providing useful opportunities for us to share the children's learning within one of their learning spaces. One student who attended with her mum even had the chance to read a piece of her creative writing aloud to her mum.

Of those who provided written responses, 100% said they had found the event useful or very useful.

Nunthorpe Academy - Head of School Update December 2024

75% of attendees said it had greatly improved their understanding of the Plus Programme, with the remaining 25% saying it had improved understanding a little. In the case of one student's parents, they clarified that the improvement in understanding was only small because they had already received lots of information from Mrs Brosnan when their child had joined the Plus Programme.

Below are some points from written and verbal feedback:

- *"I think the programme is well designed to provide opportunities for all students and to create greater equality".*
- *"I find it extremely useful to know what my child will be doing between Year 7 and onwards".*
- *"It was useful understanding what happens after Year 8 and what options are available for children".*
- *"It was useful understanding the work the class is doing and how they are helping the class".*
- *"I know what my son is learning through the day, saw his class and where he spends half of his day and what is the plan for the future".*

2024/25 SEND reviews for the Autumn term have now all been held. SEND review appointments are initiated by the Inclusion admin lead via email - all parents/carers with a child with a SEND need were offered an appointment. The statistics below show the percentage of parents who chose to take up the offer of an appointment and the percentage of those who attended the appointments made.

Year 7

Appointments Made: 48%

Appointments Attended: 80%

Year 8

Appointments Made: 33%

Appointments Attended: 93%

Year 9

Appointments Made: 44%

Appointments Attended: 89%

Year 10

Appointments Made: 32.5%

Appointments Attended: 85%

Year 11

Appointments Made: 18%

Appointments Attended 100%

Please can I encourage all parents/carers to attend review appointments to ensure that communication is clear and the most appropriate plan in place representing student, parent/carers and staff voice in unison.

Every student who has a known SEND need (K) or EHCP has a Learning Passport in place.

Nunthorpe Academy - Head of School Update December 2024

The passport holds information in regards to the student and sets two targets per term for them to work towards. The passports hold tips and advice for staff supporting all students and are accessed via "lit tiles" to indicate that the student has need. Codes are shared with parents/carers to allow 24/7 access.

■ *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.*

The Behaviour Policy was rewritten for September 2024 <https://www.nunthorpe.co.uk/policies/> with the scale of sanction reviewed to ensure students could be supported at the earliest point and reduce escalation to suspension through a stepped process including pre BFL conversations including opportunities for regulation, behaviour modifications and external support.

The Isolated Learning provision which was praised during Ofsted has been enhanced further by being relocated to its own space with amenities, laptops for every student with access to all lessons to prevent any missed learning and increased staffing to support access to learning whilst also enabling reflection and restorative conversations to take place where appropriate.

Suspensions have reduced by 20% in comparison to the same time period in the last academic year.

In the recent student surveys, student's comments in relation to behaviour were:

87% of students state that they understand the Behaviour Policy
88% of students state that the Behaviour Policy is applied consistently

In September, we introduced our new rewards system. Class Charts is now set up to reward students who fulfil our expectations as well for those students who go above and beyond. The intention of this was to ensure that all students feel appreciated for their efforts. Student feedback now states that 70% of students feel they are consistently rewarded for their positive attitude - this is an improvement since our drive began and continues to be so for January 2025.

Our attendance policy and standard operating procedures were reviewed in September to ensure that we were fully compliant with the updated legislation and guidance. We are pleased student attendance has increased by 0.9% (in real terms this means 131 of our students have significantly improved their attendance since September) on the same time last year and is in line with national and better than local comparisons. As discussed in detail in our half termly pastoral updates, positive attendance is regularly rewarded. Statistically, any child with less than 90% attendance is likely to underachieve by at least two full GCSE grades. Additionally, students with more than 96% attendance purport to be happy in school and are more likely to be involved in the wider life of the community. Therefore, this continues to be a focus for us in order to support students achieving their full potential.

In the recent student surveys, student's comments in relation to attendance were:

82% of students stated that they are informed of, and understand their attendance data

Nunthorpe Academy - Head of School Update December 2024

■ *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.*

The Anti-Bullying Policy [anti-bullying policy](#) was rewritten in September 2024, with significant student voice being involved in the process. Students have presented their policy to the Local Governing Body and then launched to all year groups through assemblies. Students and staff have developed a flow chart of staged response to bullying for students at Nunthorpe which can be found on the website in addition to the confidential email address anti-bullying@nunthorpe.co.uk, 'Safe Space' supervision and increased advertising around the building and through the pastoral curriculum of the services to support on offer. Students wanting to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors or a member of the Student Council or Leadership groups are encouraged to report their interest to Miss Dixon or attend L2 on any Tuesday 3.00-4.00pm to get actively involved. Systems and structures are in place to work alongside the pastoral curriculum which promotes our culture of 'Ready. Respectful. Safe' – all students are able to report in a confidential manner and we urge any student to come forward for support should it be needed. We will tackle bullying together! Bullying is not acceptable and we encourage all students not to be a bystander!

To increase the opportunities for student service and to compliment our Sixth Form Ambassador scheme and our School Council, we have been delighted to introduce our Student Leader, Prefect and Senior Prefect roles. We were delighted with the standard and amount of applications. These students commence their peer mentoring and work with our partner primary schools in the new year.

In the recent student surveys, student's comments in relation to bullying were:

91% of students 'definitely agreed / agreed' that they are encouraged to respect others and treat everyone equally. 91% of students ranked their enjoyment of breaktime between 5-10 (10 being great - 30%). 91% of students ranked their enjoyment of lunchtime between 5-10 (10 being great - 36%).

■ *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.*

The creation of a new senior leadership position to lead on this vital area was addressed in July 2024 with the successful candidate starting immediately as Social Emotional Learning Lead (SEL) across the academy. The lead has restructured and rewritten the pastoral curriculum with support from other staff including the Head of Philosophy and Ethics and Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) Lead to address the above area for development. Weekly recorded sessions ensure consistency of delivery to ensure all students understand the content delivered in relation to faiths within the UK and the world and protected characteristics. These are supported by visual displays in the main social areas of the academy as an ever present reminder, alongside the anti-bullying visuals to promote a positive and safe environment.

In the recent student surveys, students commented that sessions were consistently delivered during tutor time:

78% of students 'definitely agreed / agreed' that they learned about different religions in tutor time

91% of students 'definitely agreed / agreed' that they are encouraged to respect others and treat everyone equally

'You said - We did'

Following a parental meeting I investigated other Trusts responses to the sharing of reports directly with parents rather than through the student's planner and Class Charts as previously completed. For DC1 we directly shared with both the student and parents/carers through their email accounts held on our MIS. If you did not receive this report please can you ensure that your child's tutor is provided with up to date email details so these can be added to the system.

Please watch this space for further developments as we receive, review and respond to parent/carer voice. We value your feedback and would like to be able to work closely together on key areas to develop our community to ensure it becomes 'stronger together' and provides the best opportunities for our students.

Further request for parental feedback

We were keen to glean a wide parent/carer view to inform our future planning. To support this, we shared a link for parent/carer voice several times over the Autumn term so that we can respond to views shared through formal channels. Unfortunately we have only had a response rate of 3.8% which is even lower than the 6.9% response to the Ofsted survey completed in June.

We will relaunch the parental survey in January 2025 and provide links through Class Charts. As one parent recently stated on the non-academy linked Facebook page 'people are 100 times more likely to make contact with a complaint than send positives', it is essential that the correct systems are used so that concerns can be addressed; staff do not have access to social media pages as we are not parents and cannot respond to generalised comments made. Please direct any initial question to the individual subject teacher or tutor in the first instance - all staff emails are available via <https://www.nunthorpe.co.uk/staff/>

A number of parents/carers have raised concerns about inflammatory comments shared on social media which they have drawn our attention to and reported. Please use the noted channels above for raising any questions, queries or to send thanks and praise. Everyone comes to the school to 'be the best version of themselves they can be' and to improve our local community.

I would like to draw your attention to two other communications which are being shared alongside my update this term.

- Pastoral update HT2
- Welcome to ALT from Mark McCandless the CEO

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best for the season and wish you a peaceful and safe Christmas and New Year with your families and friends.

Take care
Kate Kell
Head of School