

Inspection of North Gosforth Academy

Dudley Lane, Seaton Burn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE13 6EJ

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff and pupils say that the school has improved dramatically in recent years. However, there is still more to do to ensure that pupils achieve well. Leaders have a clear vision for the school and are determined to continue its transformation.

Lessons are built around 'The NGA (North Gosforth Academy) Way' which provides a clear focus and structure for every lesson. Staff regularly praise pupils for their work. Lessons are beginning to 'come to life' in some subjects where the curriculum is well structured and delivered by knowledgeable and passionate teachers. However, this varies between subjects.

Leaders have high expectations linked to how pupils should behave. The lessons that inspectors visited were calm and orderly. Pupils were polite and respectful. However, there are still too many instances of poor behaviour over time. This is, in part, due to some staff not using the behaviour policy consistently. Pupils say that bullying is uncommon. If pupils do have a problem or a concern, they trust staff to resolve it quickly.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to learn Chinese, join the student leadership team and showcase their best work at 'proud' events. Here, pupils are congratulated by senior leaders on their achievements. Pupils speak warmly about the support they receive from staff.

Leaders are working hard to improve the attendance of all pupils. However, some groups of pupils have particularly poor attendance. These pupils are not fully benefiting from the education provided at the school.

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

Curriculum planning in curriculum areas, such as mathematics, English and languages is well developed. In these subjects, leaders have thought carefully about what pupils need to learn at each stage of their education. However, this is not the case in all curriculum subjects. What is more, the way that teachers check what pupils know and remember, is variable. Leaders do not have established systems in place for teachers to assess pupils understanding.

Planning to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is not sufficiently strong. Staff know the most vulnerable pupils well. Sometimes, teachers adapt their teaching well in order to deliver the curriculum to these pupils, however, this is variable across the school. In addition, the information that leaders provide to staff to support pupils with SEND is not consistently precise or useful.

Leaders have clear plans to develop pupils' reading and literacy. A range of strategies are in place, alongside regular staff training, to maintain a sharp focus on this area. Those responsible for planning, monitoring and delivering literacy strategies are skilled and passionate. As a result, pupils are beginning to read more widely and with greater confidence. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading are receiving targeted support by specially trained staff to improve their reading.

Many staff have high expectations for behaviour in and around lessons, although this is not consistent. Pupils and staff report that behaviour has improved significantly in recent years. However, there are still too many incidences of poor behaviour. The proportion of pupils suspended from school is too high. Leaders do not use the information that they collect about pupils' behaviour consistently well to secure further improvement.

Leaders have worked diligently to support and improve pupils' attendance. However, rates of attendance continue to be low, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils.

The curriculum for personal development is well planned and covers a wide range of important issues, however, much of the curriculum in this area is new. For example, in the past, pupils have not had the opportunity to develop a secure understanding and appreciation of other faiths. Careers provision is carefully mapped out across the school and meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Pupils have the opportunity to attend a number of clubs at lunchtime and after school. The number of activities on offer and the number of pupils taking part is growing steadily. For example, pupils can take part in boxing, art clubs and a reading group.

Leaders are clear about areas of development for the school. They have focused on improving the curriculum. However, they do not effectively monitor and manage information around behaviour and attendance to ensure it rapidly improves.

Those responsible for governance are passionate about helping the school to improve. They have a wide range of skills that support the school in its aims. Senior leaders have carefully considered staff workload. Staff speak positively about changes that have taken place to improve their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work closely with one another and external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. They keep detailed records of the cases they deal with. These records show that action has been taken to safeguard young people in the school. Staff feel confident to share their concerns with leaders.

Leaders have recently reviewed school policies and practices in relation to how members of staff report any possible concerns about pupils in a timely fashion. Staff

are aware of the local risks posed to pupils and leaders have clear plans for further training to develop staff expertise in this area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is inconsistency in the design and implementation of the curriculum. In some subjects, the knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn is not mapped out carefully. As a result, skills and knowledge do not build over time in these subjects. Leaders at all levels must continue to ensure that curriculum plans are logical and precise so that teachers can help pupils to learn more and remember more across the curriculum.
- Assessment is variable across the curriculum. Teachers do not consistently check pupils' understanding and identify what they need to learn next. Leaders should ensure that they develop a consistent approach to assessment across the curriculum so that teachers accurately check what pupils know and remember and identify their next steps in learning.
- Planning to support the needs of pupils with SEND is not strong enough. Sometimes, teachers do not adapt their teaching well enough in order to deliver the curriculum to these pupils. Leaders need to ensure that the information that leaders provide to staff to support pupils with SEND is precise or useful and that teachers use this information to help them adapt the curriculum for these pupils.
- Some staff do not apply the behaviour policy consistently. There are too many incidences of poor behaviour. The proportion of pupils suspended from school is too high. Current systems to record and monitor behaviour are not precise enough. Leaders need to tighten these systems and respond strategically to this information so that behaviour improves.
- Attendance is too low, including for the most vulnerable pupils. Too many pupils do not attend school regularly. These pupils miss important learning when away from school. Leaders need to further develop support and intervention for pupils who do not attend school regularly so that their attendance improves.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144279
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	10227634
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	550
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	George Snaith
Headteacher	Pete Fox
Website	www.northgosforthacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Gosforth Group multi-academy trust.
- The school is registered as an 11-18 provider. There are currently no students in the sixth form.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers and one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer, principal and senior leaders. They spoke to teaching and support staff. One inspector met with early career teachers and their mentors.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders responsible for SEND provision and literacy across the school. They listened to a selection of pupils read and spoke to leaders about the assessment process across the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body and other inspectors spoke with staff at alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors spoke with those staff responsible for safeguarding, checked records and procedures for keeping young people safe, as well as speaking to staff and pupils. One inspector checked the single central record to ensure all adults on site were subject to appropriate safeguarding checks.
- Inspectors considered responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including any free-text responses. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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