

Inspection of Northallerton School & Sixth Form College

Brompton Road, Northallerton DL6 1ED

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite and respectful. They feel proud to be part of the school. One pupil commented to an inspector that 'this school makes people feel welcome'. There is a community feel in the school. Pupils arrive at school wanting to learn and they appreciate the support that staff give them.

Pupils are motivated by the rewards system in school which supports the school motto of 'being the best we can be'. They can describe what they have learned in different subjects and how teachers have helped them when they find things difficult. Teachers pass on the passion they have for their subjects to the pupils.

Expectations are high in terms of behaviour and learning. There is a support network for those pupils who need more help to manage their behaviour. Pupils told us that staff will deal with any bullying that might occur effectively. They also said that they feel that if they are worried about anything they can approach staff for help.

In the 'life curriculum', pupils have the opportunity to learn about a wide variety of topics that include themes such as staying safe, values, beliefs and responsibilities. Pupils appreciate the careers advice and guidance that they receive.

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

Leaders have developed curriculum plans that are understood by staff. There is a broad and balanced offer for all pupils that is maintained consistently throughout the school. Sixth-form pupils have a wide variety of courses to choose from. This is intentional and is planned by leaders to prepare pupils for the next stages of education. Knowledge forms the central core of curriculum plans. Leaders review the curriculum content and delivery. When appropriate, leaders have been proactive and have refined and changed the curriculum quickly to better meet the needs of pupils. In a small number of subjects, the process of enhancing the curriculum is ongoing.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use resources and activities in lessons that stimulate and engage pupils. Pupils are willing participants in their learning. They answer questions and contribute to class discussions without fear of failure. This confidence to learn and contribute is nurtured by staff.

Teachers are effective in delivering the intended curriculum in all year groups, including the sixth form. In discussions with pupils, it was clear to inspectors that the concepts and topics covered in a range of subjects are remembered. Pupils can describe how teachers helped them to know and remember more over time.

Assessment takes on different forms and, in some cases, it is used effectively. Where this is the case, leaders and class teachers use the information to address misconceptions and refine the curriculum. Leaders recognise that reducing variability

in the effective use of assessment will help deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. The needs of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are shared with all staff so that they can be supported in lessons. However, the use of this information and the support they consequently get is not as effective as it could be. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as highly as they could.

Leaders have adapted and refined the school's behaviour system. There is a focus on rewards and restorative practice. This has led to a reduction in the number of pupils who are suspended. There remain some pockets of low-level disruption.

Leaders and the attendance team work hard to promote the importance of being in school. Although some progress has been made, the persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is higher than their peers.

The school provides a range of different clubs and activities for pupils. Pupils said that they enjoy the sports clubs and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Leaders are fully aware of the benefits of the additional opportunities and plan to develop the offer further to all pupils.

Pupils in all years, including the sixth form, benefit from a well-planned personal, social and health education programme. This is delivered through the life curriculum, tutor groups and assemblies. Pupils enjoy this aspect of their learning. Pupils in the sixth form said it is helping them with their career choices and learning different skills such as driving.

Governors play a full role in supporting the school and providing challenge. They receive regular information and visit the school to meet with leaders, staff and pupils. Governors' minutes show that they ask challenging questions of leaders. Leaders are keen to engage with staff and listen to any concerns they have. Most staff appreciate the steps leaders at all levels take to support their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are fully aware of the potential risks that pupils face. Leaders work with external agencies to gather information that informs curriculum plans and the information that is shared with pupils.

Staff receive regular training and updates. All staff know how to report any concerns they have. Leaders work with different outside agencies to ensure pupils get the support they need in a timely manner.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not use the detailed information provided by the SEND team to plan the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND more effectively. On occasions, some of these pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. Leaders should provide ongoing training and support which builds on the positive progress in some areas so that all staff use the information shared to support pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Leaders and staff have raised the focus on good attendance across the school. However, the persistent absence rates for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are higher than they should be. Leaders should continue their work to tackle this area to ensure that pupils attend school more regularly.

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	146969
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10215955
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	1,064
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mrs C M Brooker
Headteacher	Vicki Rahn (Head of School)
Website	www.northallertonschool.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is one of three schools in the Areté Learning Trust
- The school currently uses two alternative providers, Principal Teachers Hub and The Sunbeck Centre.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the chief executive, the head of school and other members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also held meetings with leaders responsible for attendance, behaviour, personal development and careers and the designated safeguarding lead.
- Meetings were held with the chair of the board of trustees and members of the local governing body. Inspectors also reviewed a sample of minutes from local governing body meetings.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. They met with subject leaders, carried out lesson visits, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. The single central record was also scrutinised. Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding records.
- A range of documentation provided by the school was reviewed. This included the school improvement plan, curriculum documentation and school policies.
- Inspectors considered the views given in Ofsted's online surveys from 147 pupils and 62 members of staff. The 148 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey were also considered. An inspector also met with one parent.

Inspection team

Richard Jones, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Featherstone	Ofsted Inspector
Lee Elliott	Her Majesty's Inspector
Katie Spurr	Her Majesty's Inspector

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