

Nunthorpe Academy

Guisborough Road, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS7 0LA

Inspection dates 25–26 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The vision and inspirational leadership of the principal and vice-principal have transformed the ambitions of this highly successful academy. Leadership at all levels is united in its commitment to improving performance constantly. Governance is outstanding in its challenge and support for the academy.
- Students' achievement has risen rapidly in recent years. The vast majority of students make significantly better progress than their peers nationally.
- The academy seeks to improve achievement continually. Priorities in the current development plan, to increase the proportion of students reaching the highest grades at the end of Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, and to improve progress in mathematics for lower-attaining students, are the right ones.
- Teachers and support staff work at a very high level to meet the needs of students. They set aspirational targets for progress and constantly check how well students are learning. Teachers are thorough professionals, keen to share their own good practice and learn from others.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. Students show consideration and respect for each other, creating a vibrant, friendly atmosphere in this very large academy. Students say they feel safe in the academy. Excellent pastoral care provides a warm, safe environment where strong relationships flourish.
- Provision in the sixth form is excellent because of high quality teaching and outstanding leadership. While students' achievement is rising year on year, the school recognises there is scope for a higher proportion of students to reach the highest levels in examinations in a wide range of subjects.
- The excellent curriculum abounds with opportunities so students have numerous pathways to success. They are encouraged to develop special interests and talents during Wednesday afternoon 'Option 4' creative curriculum time. These sessions are hugely popular with students and make a massive contribution to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 53 lessons or parts of lessons. Six of these were shared observations with senior staff. One inspector also listened to a group of Key Stage 3 students reading.
- Discussions were held with senior staff, subject leaders, members of the board of directors and an external consultant who works with the academy.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work and checked students’ books during lessons. They looked at a range of academy documents including: those relating to students’ progress over time, academy evaluation and improvement planning, and safeguarding procedures.
- Forty responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered, as well as 83 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Moira Fitzpatrick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Graeme Clarke

Additional Inspector

Irene Lavelle

Additional Inspector

Catherine Laing

Additional Inspector

Fiona Dixon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average sized secondary academy.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after) is average.
- The vast majority of students is of White British heritage; very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below average; an average proportion of students is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs.
- The academy has arrangements for collaborative sixth-form provision with two neighbouring schools: Gillbrook Academy and Eston Park Academy.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Nunthorpe Academy converted to become an academy on 12 October 2012. When its predecessor school, Nunthorpe School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further to ensure that all students make the best possible progress in a wider range of subjects by:
 - maximising the challenge to the most-able students in all subjects so that their attainment is of the highest grade at the end of Key Stage 4 and the sixth form
 - improving the progress of lower-attaining students in mathematics through more effective analysis of their weaknesses so that teachers can pinpoint precisely where they have not grasped a concept and give time to this before moving on to new learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- There has been a sharp rise in achievement in recent years across a wide range of indicators. For example, the proportion of students making or exceeding expected levels of progress in both mathematics and English in 2012 was significantly above the national average, as was the percentage achieving the English Baccalaureate (5+ A* to C grades including English, mathematics, science, humanities and a modern foreign language).
- Students' attainment is high and significantly above national averages. From above average starting points overall, students perform very well in a wide range of subjects. Performance in single sciences and humanities subjects is particularly noteworthy. The very high proportion reaching the highest grades in these subjects is significantly above the national average. There is still room for more students to reach the highest grades in a wider range of subjects than do so at present in GCSE examinations.
- The academy has an early entry policy in Year 10 in a number of subjects, including mathematics. While students achieve extremely well under this system, the academy has plans to review this, especially in the light of the performance of the most-able students at the highest levels.
- Learning and progress of all groups of students, particularly those who are disabled those with special educational needs and students who speak English as an additional language, and the majority of students eligible for the pupil premium, match those of their peers. The exception is in mathematics where lower-attaining students make slower progress than that of other groups.
- The academy is successfully narrowing the gap in achievement between students who are eligible for the pupil premium and other groups of students. This is because their progress is carefully tracked and they are given prompt support or individually tailored provision if they are at risk of falling behind.
- The drive to embed literacy skills across the curriculum is well-supported by all departments so that students are constantly reinforcing and developing these skills through constant well-planned use. Students read widely and well, which supports their good writing skills.
- The academy has recognised that some students arrive in Year 7 with relatively weak literacy and numeracy skills, which can slow their progress in other subjects. The appointment of a primary specialist teacher from September is designed to support students and staff in the rapid development and promotion of these skills. This example is typical of the academy's swift and well-targeted response to identified weaknesses.
- Students' performance in the sixth form has improved year on year since it was established five years ago, though there is scope for more higher-attaining students to reach the highest grades in a wider range of subjects. Students choose from a good breadth of subjects that interest and motivate them to study, both on the home site and at the schools with which it has shared provision. Students who attend alternative provision achieve well. They are encouraged to be ambitious and welcome the high levels of academic and pastoral support they receive.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because staff generally have high aspirations for students. Outstanding teaching over time has been highly effective in securing and sustaining improvements in students' achievement. Teachers understand what constitutes high quality teaching and learning, because they have been trained well to evaluate the impact of their teaching, and they habitually share good practice with each other. The current focus on improving outcomes for the most-able students demonstrates their commitment to continual improvement.
- Students learn at a rapid pace because, in the main, teachers have very accurate knowledge of their needs. They use this to skilfully challenge each individual to make the best progress they can during the lesson, although the academy recognises there is still more to do to stretch the

most-able students in all subjects fully.

- High quality marking, with advice on how to improve is increasingly used to help students reach challenging targets. In the very best examples, marking is frequent and generates a dialogue with students about how they might improve and gives positive feedback to acknowledge when students have moved up a step. This kind of high quality marking is seen in the majority of mathematics books and is one of the reasons students' performance in the subject has risen so rapidly.
- In a few mathematics classes, notably those of lower-attaining students, teachers do not take enough heed of students' misconceptions and move on too quickly to new work. This slows students' progress because new learning is not built on strong foundations of understanding.
- Teachers use a good range of strategies in all phases of the school to develop students' capacity for learning. They expect students to work hard, and they do, so that time is used very well for learning. Teachers plan activities that allow students to develop independence in both their thinking and in how they solve problems, which increases their confidence and self-esteem. For example, sixth-form students made excellent progress in an outstandingly well-organised biology lesson, because the diverse range of activities motivated them extremely well.
- Teachers develop students' thought processes very well by skilful questioning which probes their thinking and deepens their understanding. They carefully select students for specific questions to check their understanding and progress in lessons and are quick to respond when they identify the need for more challenge or additional support.
- Students hold their teachers in high esteem and parents agree that their children are taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students' outstanding behaviour makes a significant contribution to the calm, happy atmosphere found all around the academy. Students showed good resilience to adverse weather and conducted themselves admirably at rainy breaks during the inspection. Academy records confirm that behaviour over time is excellent and that exclusions are below the national average and decreasing.
- Students' excellent attitudes to learning ensure that many lessons move at a blistering pace. Students respect themselves, are tolerant and respectful of others and their excellent relationships support both their learning and first rate personal development. Their attendance is above average. They relish the many opportunities they have to support and improve the academy through roles on Student Voice, or by acting as prefects.
- Students say they feel safe, and the academy goes to some lengths to ensure they are safe and secure on site. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in and out of school because they have been taught well to assess risks by learning about the potentially harmful effects of drugs and alcohol. Students of all ages are able to explain the risks of Internet use and cyber-bullying.
- Students are adamant that bullying is not a problem and say that they are encouraged to report any behaviour that is potentially harmful or deliberately hurtful.
- There are good links with centres that provide off-site courses for small numbers of students in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Frequent liaison with these centres ensures that the care and welfare of students off site matches that provided by the academy.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership at all levels, including governance, is ambitious and determined in its drive to improve the academy continually. Rapid improvement to all aspects of the academy's work demonstrate an excellent capacity for improvement.

- Outstanding leadership by the principal and vice-principal has transformed staffing and established a strong, highly skilled senior leadership team. This team is accelerating improvements by very effective implementation of their individual roles and responsibilities. Together with senior leaders, they have created a culture of striving for excellence at every level in the academy. Staff and parents agree that the academy is led and managed well and staff morale is high.
 - The leadership and management of the quality of teaching have been relentless in the drive for excellence. Teachers are keen to improve their performance through sharing good practice and undertaking professional development and rightly have raising the achievement of the most-able even further firmly in their sights. Rigorous procedures for managing teachers' performance ensure that staff are accountable for the progress their students make. The academy robustly links this to salary progression.
 - Meticulous review of progress against targets underpins sustained improvement in all aspects of the academy's work. Excellent systems for tracking students' progress play a key part in helping teachers meet the challenging targets set for students, so that achievement continues to rise. They have also enabled the academy to pinpoint the needs of lower-attaining students in mathematics and devise programmes to improve their understanding and accelerate their progress.
 - The curriculum is broad and balanced leading directly to outstanding outcomes for students. Students value all the opportunities for extra-curricular activities that the academy provides, and especially the extended provision on Wednesday afternoon, where there is a huge range of options available such as horse-riding, baking, writing, sport and arts subjects.
 - The number of students who do not go on to further education, training or employment is very low.
 - The academy effectively deploys resources to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all students. The achievement of students who are eligible for the pupil premium is improving rapidly; academy data indicate that the gap between their achievement and that of other students is on track to close within two years.
 - Procedures for safeguarding meet requirements; record keeping is exemplary. The academy challenges prejudice of any description very effectively.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The board of directors is highly effective, proud of the academy and ambitious for students. Together, directors bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the service of the academy and are well-placed to challenge it to do better through their detailed knowledge of its work. They have successfully established thriving sixth-form provision on the site and managed a significant project to do this. They manage finances well, including the pupil premium funding and ensure that salary progression is closely linked to teachers' performance.
-

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138845
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	409884

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1482
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	190
Appropriate authority	Board of directors
Chair	Brian Whitfield
Principal	Debbie Clinton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01642 310561
Fax number	01642 325672
Email address	dclinton@nunthorpe.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

