

K.T.S. Academy

Marshall Drive, Saltburn-by-the-Sea TS12 2UW

Inspection dates 14–15 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Early years provision	Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils progress exceptionally well because they are well cared for and their individual needs are very closely met. They are very well prepared for the next stage in school or in their life.
- Pupils make consistently good and often outstanding progress in literacy and numeracy. They are able to do this because they make outstanding progress in their communication and life skills.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. Teachers have excellent specialist skills in teaching pupils with complex needs. As a result, pupils are inspired by, and highly engaged in, their learning.
- Leaders' tracking pupils' progress is highly effective. It ensures that targets set always challenge each individual pupil. This is because the robust data collected are used to evaluate progress of each individual over time as well as the progress of different groups of pupils such as boys and girls.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are welcoming and keen to express their views. They say how, and show that, they feel safe in school.
- Extremely effective arrangements are in place to ensure all students are very safe and all safeguarding requirements are fully met.
- The school is expertly led and managed by the headteacher and senior leadership team. There is a highly successful shared vision and pride in the pursuit of very high standards in all of the school's work.
- Very occasionally less experienced middle leaders miss an opportunity for improvement. However, this is usually identified by the senior leaders because they know what is happening and they support and challenge very effectively.
- Procedures to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are very effective because they always pinpoint the progress of every pupil.
- The governors hold leaders to account firmly. They challenge rigorously as well as supporting the school. They evaluate the performance of the school, including teaching, achievement and care. They know what the school is doing to maintain excellent performance.
- Much to the appreciation of parents, the school provides pupils with many extra opportunities to discover art, music, sport and rich life experiences.
- The early years is outstanding because the school works very effectively with parents and other partners.
- The sixth form is outstanding. This is because top priority is given to preparing students for the next step in their life.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed several lessons, the vast majority of which were joint observations with the deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' individual learning and behaviour plans.
- Meetings were held with key staff, four members of the governing body which included the Chair of the Governing Body, a former student, three parents, a representative of the East Cleveland Co-operative Learning Trust and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account 60 questionnaires from staff and 18 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including pupils' work, plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.

Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Irene Lavelle

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kilton Thorpe School converted to become an academy in December 2012. When its predecessor school with the same name was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding.
- The academy became a partner of the East Cleveland Co-operative Learning Trust in January 2014.
- All pupils have moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties. Additionally, about half have autism or complex needs.
- All have a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan. The majority of pupils are boys and the vast majority of pupils are White British.
- There are a well above average proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged, those supported through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A new assistant headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Post-16 provision was added in an off-site building in September 2013.
- There were no children of nursery age in the school at the time of the inspection. Reception aged children attend full time.
- The school uses one alternative provider, Freeborough Academy.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of the less experienced middle leaders.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is a highly effective and respected leader. He is well supported by an effective governing body and very effective senior leadership team. One of the keys to success is that everyone is clear about the strong shared vision of high expectations in all of the school's work.
- Leaders use robust data extensively to analyse the steps of progress made by individuals towards their targets. Targets set are sharply informed by a comparison of the progress made by groups of pupils.
- Monitoring of teaching is very effective as it is focused on pupils' achievement. School leaders use the observations of every pupil's progress in lessons to set targets for teachers and continually improve the quality of teaching.
- School development planning is very effective because it is contributed to by everyone involved with the school. Arrangements for the delegation of tasks associated with development planning are highly successful and as a result the full age range and wide range of needs catered for by the school are taken into account. This exemplifies the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The work of the middle leaders is very effective overall. However, the headteacher knows that less experienced members of this team still need the support and challenge of the senior leaders in order to maintain and develop the work of the school even further. The work of the middle leaders to enable pupils to transfer successfully to the next stage in their education or life is very effective.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils exceptionally well. It is very well planned with a sharp focus on communication and personal and life skills. It is extensively enriched by the wide range of opportunities sought and secured by the school to enrich the pupils' life and learning experiences. For example, participation in the Tall Ships Project where pupils spent a week on board a ship.
- Learning in the community and relationships with each other, with staff and with visitors in music, drama and sport form the basis for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders have secured a warm and caring ethos in the school in which pupils can learn and grow as individuals. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- All opportunities are grasped to promote an understanding of life in modern Britain. The election provided the focus for pupils to consider whether voting is a right or a responsibility and what the election outcome would mean for them and the country.
- Partnership with parents is exceptional and parents use phrases such as 'amazing school' and 'the progress of our child has surpassed expectations'. The vast majority of parents who expressed an opinion on Parent View would recommend the school to another parent.
- Partnerships, for example with the mental health team, are a strength of the school. The local authority is also a strong partner and contributes to the performance management of the headteacher.
- The primary school sports funding has been used to extend the range and time available for physical activity such as hydrotherapy and swimming.
- The pupil premium has been used to good effect to raise the achievement of eligible pupils through the employment of additional staff and for the purchase of tablet computers for eligible pupils. This has had a positive impact on their achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body meets the needs of the school closely and includes a representative of the Trust. Governors make a very positive contribution to the achievement of pupils and to the school's success. They are fully involved in the life of the school and regularly hear presentations given to them by members of staff leading projects or areas of the school. They support and challenge leaders to ensure that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed. They have up-to-date knowledge of pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching and provide robust challenge to the school so that it maintains and develops its work. The governing body ensures financial resources are well managed including the school's use of additional government funding to support pupils, such as the pupil premium, and are aware of their impact.
 - Governors are involved in setting targets for the headteacher and they are also fully aware about how teachers' pay awards are linked to the progress that pupils make.
 - They ensure that all safeguarding procedures are fully met and, as a result, pupils are safe at school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils answer visitors' questions enthusiastically or extend a hand or smile of welcome.
- The atmosphere is characterised by the respect everyone extends to each other at all times. One pupil commented that she thought this was 'more than a school'.
- Pupils are exceptionally well engaged and motivated. They behave very well in lessons and rise to the high expectations set by staff. For example, they will persevere when learning to read even when they really want to get on to the snack time.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons and throughout school is exceptional overall. Outstanding behaviour characterises many lessons. Pupils listen carefully to each other and want their classmates to succeed and do well.
- Pupils learn to make increasing sense of what is happening around them and to take control of their own behaviour. Staff are well trained in how to manage behaviour and strong relationships with pupils mean that pupils are confident that there is always someone to look after them or to talk to if necessary.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to learn about safe and unsafe situations. For example, pupils are aware of the different risks posed when they take part in learning to surf ride in the local leisure centre. They learn and know that they must brace their shoulders if they begin to lose their balance to take account of the nature of the surface.
- They understand the different forms that bullying can take and are clear about the risks posed when using the internet. They are taught about this with increasing depth in older classes so as to ensure that they will know how to keep themselves safe when using computers or other forms of technology such as phones.
- Records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are very rare. The rare incidents which involve physical intervention are dealt with effectively and quickly by staff. Any incidents are recorded in detail and monitored meticulously and action is taken as a result.
- All policies and procedures meet statutory requirements and go beyond.
- The school ensures that safeguarding requirements are fully met in any alternative provision and work experience placements.
- Governors are vigilant in ensuring that full checks on the safety of premises are regularly undertaken and acted upon.
- Pupils enjoy school and they attend whenever they can. Sometimes they want to come to school in the holidays!

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding; it helps pupils learn and achieve exceptionally well during their time at school. Teachers have expert knowledge in the teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and complex needs. As a result, expectations of the amount of work to be covered are always high.
- Teachers and all staff take great pride in the achievement of their pupils which they always communicate to the pupils and, as such, have excellent relationships with their pupils. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and say that coming to school is fun.
- Teaching happens at all times during the school day. For example, at lunchtime staff and pupils often hold conversations which develop pupils' ideas.
- A particular strength of the teaching in the school is teachers' knowledge of the needs of each individual pupil. They use this information expertly to ensure that what they plan for pupils to do has a very effective impact on learning.
- Teachers select and make high quality resources for pupils to use. For example, pupils with the most profound learning difficulties benefit from highly attractive soft animals made in different shapes from multi-coloured textiles to enable them to understand and enjoy a musical story.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are offered natural and manufactured resources to select from to complete a collage, for example. The range of colours, media and natural resources ensure that the finished products

are very attractive and stimulate discussion.

- Staff make suggestions to individual pupils about the improvement that would occur if they changed the way they were doing their work. This is based on a clear understanding of how well they are learning. These on-going, well-judged verbal assessments help to move pupils' learning on at a good rate.
- Teachers are very skilled in a wide range of communication techniques for example, through objects, symbols or photographs or signed communication. They observe pupils and listen carefully to ensure that they have understood exactly what the pupil is asking or saying so that they always give a thoughtful response.
- All staff are well trained in the teaching of reading which means that opportunities for teaching reading or pre-reading vocalisation is always based on this expertise. Pupils with a visual impairment benefit from appropriate specialist resources, made exactly right by staff, so that they can learn to read through touch at the same time as their peers.
- The teaching of mathematics is very effective because new resources to enable the pupils to understand the number system have had a significant impact on achievement.
- The teaching of writing is closely tailored to individual needs and as such teachers give a balance of attention to developing skills in punctuation and grammar to those of developing creativity and fluency.
- Marking ensures that all pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve and so it is very effective in accelerating progress. Often marking gives additional information such as how much support the pupil needed to achieve the outcome so that this can be taken into account.
- The most able pupils are usually challenged to reach the highest levels or to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Opportunities for learning in a mainstream school or on work experience enable the most able pupils to apply their knowledge and skills very successfully.
- Staff frequently reflect on the quality and impact of their teaching alongside other staff. As a result, teaching is improving continuously and pupils learn and achieve outstandingly well during their time at school.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils may enter the school at any age and with a wide range of starting points though the number of pupils with complex needs has increased each year since the last inspection. The majority of pupils are working well below the levels expected nationally when they enter the school as a result of their special educational needs. Most pupils make outstanding progress overall throughout the school when compared to pupils with similar starting points.
- The majority of pupils make outstanding progress in literacy and numeracy. They are able to do this because they make outstanding progress in communication and the development of personal and life skills. This is as a result of an excellent teaching and very effective curriculum which is in place.
- At the end of Key Stage 4 pupils are on track to achieve a good range of qualifications according to their needs talents and choices. By the end of Key Stage 5, all pupils achieve either AQA Entry Level qualifications in English and maths or ASDAN Personal Progress or ASDAN Diploma in Life Skills. The vast majority of pupils stay on at school after Year 11 and make a successful transition into the school's sixth form.
- The nature of the pupils' needs means that data should be treated with caution. However, over the last three years more than half of the pupils made consistently outstanding progress.
- In 2015 school data shows that three quarters of the school achieved outstanding progress in English at the end of Key Stage 3 and in mathematics well over three quarters of pupils achieved outstanding progress by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Pupils achieve well in reading because the foundations of all learning and especially reading are prioritised in Key Stage 2. This sets the foundations for rapid progress in Key Stage 3 especially for pupils with severe learning difficulties.
- In 2015 data show that girls achieved slightly less well than boys. The school is aware of this and can attribute it to the severity of girls' medical conditions. However, plans are in place to ensure that this does not become a trend.
- Overall, the majority of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium make the same excellent rate of progress as their peers. There is no difference in achievement between subjects or in the achievement of any groups of pupils.
- The most able pupils achieve high levels of attainment relative to their individual needs. Occasionally pupils achieve jobs or qualifications which only pupils with higher starting points would be expected to

achieve.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Almost all children enter early years with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those typical for their age. Some children are already supported by a wide range of other agencies. The school continues the work with these agencies very well. This has a very positive impact on achievement.
- Teaching is outstanding in the early years and children make excellent progress and, as such, they are well prepared for Key Stage 1. The outdoor area is well developed in promoting children's learning which means that children's learning develops as well outside as it does inside. The development of language and communication, physical development and personal skills, especially independence is promoted well.
- The leadership and management in early years is outstanding. The leader ensures high quality teamwork and the provision of an effective curriculum tailored to individual needs for both early years and through Key Stage 1.
- Children show they feel safe and they behave as well as they can because staff ensure that children's welfare is always given top priority.
- Partnership with parents is very strong because communication with parents is excellent. This means that parents are pleased to be involved in the assessment and progress their children make. This contributes very well to the achievement of their children.

The sixth form provision

is outstanding

- For the last two years students have been able to continue their studies into the sixth form which is located on a separate site from the school. Students are very pleased with the 'college feel' of this arrangement and this makes a significant contribution to the development of their independence and maturity.
- Students achieve a good range of qualifications before they leave school and all have the opportunity for work experience.
- Teaching is outstanding in the sixth form because it enables pupils to apply the skills they have learned in adult situations. Excellent use is made of photographs which staff prepare swiftly after trips and visits to reinforce this learning. Students also run a community café once a week.
- What is planned for students to do is based on the choices students have made for themselves for their life after school. Students make their choices after experiencing the options available to them. Transition to destinations is carefully planned and as a result are usually successful when students eventually move on.
- Students continue to behave exceptionally well. They say they feel very safe and respected. They have a clear understanding of human rights, for example they readily accept that there are times when some students need more of the teacher's time to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Leadership of the sixth form is outstanding. Leaders have built extremely useful partnerships that provide many valuable opportunities for students. They focus relentlessly on what will enable students to lead a happy and successful life.

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	139110
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	449791

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Bowman
Headteacher	Kevin Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01287 677265
Fax number	01287 201201
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