

Endeavour Academy Durham

Willerby Grove, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 2RN

Inspection dates

25–26 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, staff and trustees have established an effective school that has a significant transformative impact on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Outcomes for pupils are good overall. Most pupils arrive with knowledge and skills that are lower than those expected for their age. This is often due to gaps in their learning linked to a history of negative experiences or disrupted education in mainstream schools. With help and support from skilled staff, well-designed induction programmes and excellent support for their social and emotional needs, they re-engage in learning and make good progress.
- Teachers are consistently encouraging, are skilled communicators and have high expectations. Pupils are quickly engrossed in learning. They become more confident and make good progress in English, mathematics and science from their different starting points.
- Pupils make strong progress in vocational courses in response to high-quality specialist teaching.
- Careers advice, information and guidance are excellent. As a result, pupils make informed decisions about their future.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training.
- A strong safeguarding culture is established in the school. Pupils say they feel safe while at school.
- Good communication with parents and carers is a strength of the school. Parents are highly supportive of the care and support the school provide to their children.
- The new headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She is ambitious for pupils to achieve the best they can. Her vision is shared by staff and trustees.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. Improvement plans are based on their accurate and sharp analysis, but do not include sufficiently precise measures and timescales against which trustees can check on progress.
- Assessment systems are developing quickly, but information is not used as well as it could be to identify gaps in learning so that teaching has a greater impact on outcomes in English, mathematics and science. Occasionally, the most able pupils, and those who are ready to move on in their learning, are not stretched and challenged by the work they are given.
- Programmes of staff training are in place, but are not focused sharply enough on developing expertise in some subjects taught.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on outcomes in English, mathematics and science, by ensuring that:
 - teachers challenge pupils with appropriately demanding work, especially most-able pupils
 - assessment practices accurately identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, and the information is used consistently to inform learning plans so that pupils make even more progress.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening school improvement planning so that it includes more precise measures for governors to check it is having the expected impact on pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy
 - ensuring that professional development programmes are more finely focused to enable staff to deepen their expertise in all the subjects they are required to teach.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is ambitious for pupils and supports her staff to do the best they can to improve pupils' life chances. Her clear vision for the future of the school is shared by staff and trustees. Staff morale is high, and pupils are hard-working and positive about their futures.
- Partnership working between the headteacher and deputy headteacher is highly effective. They set a welcoming tone to the school and ensure that staff are approachable, caring and friendly.
- Excellent provision for personal development, behaviour and welfare is finely tailored to individual needs and enables each pupil to regain their confidence in education and belief that they can be successful. Pupils settle quickly at school, benefit from good teaching and they make good progress.
- Strong leadership provides good planned support for vulnerable pupils and is underpinned by highly effective working systems to check attendance and behaviour. Additional practical support for disadvantaged pupils is aligned well to their needs.
- Changes to the school curriculum have increased the time for learning and place a sharp emphasis on English and mathematics. Teachers work hard to help pupils make up for lost learning in the past. Pupils' confidence and engagement in learning show a marked difference in the quantity and quality of work they now produce, compared with this time last term.
- Staff promote pupils' development and preparation for life in modern Britain well. Pupils know about diversity and equality in their local community and in society through the work they undertake in the curriculum. They participate in discussions and are tolerant of views that are different from their own. Pupils respect rules in school and laws in society.
- The school has established very close partnerships with parents. Leaders place great emphasis on their views of their children's development. During the inspection, parents were effusive in their praise for the school and the regular contact they have with staff. A common point in all discussions with inspectors was, 'I cannot speak too highly about the difference the school has made to my child.'
- Trustees' and senior leaders' reviews of learning have enabled them to sustain the quality of teaching despite the turbulence in staffing last year. Staff training has helped to build a consistent approach to knowing how to support pupils' mental health needs. Training and support for new subject leaders and to deepen staff subject knowledge and use of assessment continue to be areas for development.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need further work. Priorities for improvement are clearly identified in plans, but measures of success and timescales are not sufficiently precise indicators of what leaders hope to achieve.

Governance of the school

- The trust offers strong support to the school and trustees use their skills and experience to also act as governors. Trustees and leaders have worked hard to establish the school and improve the quality of provision for pupils.
- Trustees have not shied away from difficult decisions and have used the lessons they learned through re-designation to make sure that funding is used in practical ways to provide better specialist support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils.
- Decisions taken when establishing the school have ensured that strengths in vocational provision and high-quality careers education have been sustained. Current pupils derive great satisfaction and success from them.
- Oversight of the current school improvement plan is not as strong as it should be and does not fully support leaders in evaluating the school and holding leaders to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has high priority throughout the school and leaders and trustees have worked tirelessly to make sure that there is a safe culture in the school. Impeccable systems are in place to monitor and review all aspects of safeguarding and especially safer recruitment of staff.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities when working with vulnerable pupils and are well trained to identify signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect, child exploitation and extremism. The school's good links with external agencies ensure that pupils receive swift and timely support.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and confident to share their concerns with counsellors, teachers or support staff. Parents who spoke with inspectors all said that their children feel safe at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful. Typically, lessons are purposeful and calm and have well-established routines. Pupils take responsibility for their learning by arriving on time, with the appropriate equipment, and are ready to take a full and constructive part in the lesson.
- Teachers use their knowledge of subjects well to support the learning needs of the class. Teachers are consistently encouraging, use questioning effectively in lessons to reinforce key points and give pupils time to respond to questions or complete activities before giving support.
- Pupils have made much progress in English and are reading and writing more widely. However, some pupils are not keen to read aloud in class and the flow of lessons slows. Teachers find alternative approaches to support their understanding and comprehension.

- Pupils retain knowledge well in all lessons. Many pupils can use the information learned to give their own views and justify them, especially in mathematics. Teachers explain new learning and language well. For example, pupils correctly used specific terms about monetary circulation and denominations in a lesson focused on mathematics and financial capability.
- The work in books and folders and the practical skills demonstrated in vocational classes show that pupils, especially those in Year 11, are making strong progress in their learning.
- Teachers' high expectations and strong vocational knowledge ensure that pupils are engrossed in their learning, enjoy their work and make strong progress over time in hair and beauty, motor vehicle maintenance and sports and fitness lessons. Teachers' expertise in vocational subjects is highly respected by pupils.
- Pupils typically are engaged in all subjects and they concentrate and work hard. In English, mathematics and science, pupils persevere with tasks and demonstrate resilience in learning from mistakes. Occasionally, learning slows for some pupils because challenge is not fine-tuned to promote better learning for the most able pupils and those who are ready to move on.
- Pupils are given feedback in line with the school's policy. The involvement of some trustees, who carried out checks on teaching and learning, helped to establish these expectations last year during a period of much staffing change.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Not all pupils fully engage in their learning when they first arrive; however, the encouragement and support they receive from teachers and support staff enable almost all to do so. Pupils say that they feel listened to and respected at this school.
- Well-devised induction programmes are highly effective in enabling pupils to make decisions about their learning. A pupil explained, 'I thought I was just choosing an option for exams but it's now something I want to pursue as a job – I'm loving it here.'
- Careers advice and guidance are highly effective in ensuring that pupils make informed decisions about their learning programmes and their next steps. Parents testify to the significant difference the well-planned programme makes to their children. A parent said, 'My child had given up on education, but the difference now is amazing. Now he has a future.'
- The school encourages pupils to look after their emotional and mental health and excellent support is made available for this. Access to regular counselling services within school and referral to specialist visiting mental health professionals help to support and meet the needs of pupils and their families.
- Pupils are encouraged to look after their health and fitness. Pupils take part in activities organised within school and enjoy the excellent facilities and fitness suite on the site. However, access to facilities out of school, to embed health and fitness principles

learned in school, is limited for many pupils.

- Almost all pupils would recommend this school to a friend. Many have been at the school only a few months but already feel a strong connection. They explained that this was because, 'It's like a family here – I love it.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils make significant improvements in their behaviour and engagement in education from their starting points on entry to the school. They work in a well-resourced, structured environment where they feel safe and secure.
- Pupils progressively develop self-confidence and resilience and are fully aware of the difference the school has made to them. For example, one said, 'They treat me with respect and expect a lot from me. I want to make a go of this.'
- Behaviour in and around the school is calm and pupils socialise well at break- and lunchtimes. Transitions between classes are smooth. Pupils are polite and considerate to visitors, staff and each other. Pupils are keen to get to lessons on time, especially those taking place within the main college site.
- Behaviour in lessons is good most of the time. Any disruption to learning is dealt with in a calm manner and diffused skilfully by support staff or resolved by teachers changing or adapting their planned task.
- Pupils gain self-esteem and learn to respect others who are different from them. The school teaches pupils to be aware of their actions and how to resolve conflicts. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Bullying happens for some pupils but is very quickly dealt with.
- Attendance is improving year on year, but remains below the national average. All pupils have made significant improvement compared with their attendance at their previous schools. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the efforts they make to arrive on time each day. A parent summarised the change in their child as, 'He loves it there, and doesn't want to miss a day.'

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current information and the work in pupils' books show that progress over time, often from low starting points, is good.
- The vast majority of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities. The outstanding support they receive for their personal development and welfare keeps a focus on identifying their needs successfully and secures improvements in their attendance and behaviour. As each pupil re-engages in learning, they make strong progress across a range of subjects and courses.
- Pupils who are admitted late in their school careers, in Year 10, often after negative experiences in other schools, settle in quickly due to well-designed induction programmes and kind, understanding and tolerant staff. As a result, pupils develop very good attitudes towards learning that help them move forward quickly.

- Inspection evidence shows that current pupils make strong progress in vocational courses. For example, well-planned courses in motor vehicle maintenance enable pupils to know what checks to make, how to do them and how to interpret gauges and equipment.
- Pupils are developing confidence in writing and take pride in the presentation of their work. They are making strong progress in reading in response to a well-structured programme of work in English that progressively introduces them to a wider range of texts and authors. However, this approach has yet to embed fully and many pupils are not regular readers outside these lessons.
- Pupils in Year 10 and 11 are starting to gain a better understanding of mathematics and scientific terminology. They are keen in lessons, and many are quick to grasp new ideas and concepts. Pupils are making strong progress to develop financial capability.
- There are no differences overall in the progress from their starting points of different groups of pupils such as disadvantaged pupils.
- Historical results from Endeavour Academy and its predecessor school show a consistent pattern of good achievement in courses such as motor vehicle maintenance and hair and beauty. Success rates for pupils achieving vocational qualifications are consistently above average.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training and employment. They benefit from effective vocational education and excellent careers information and guidance. Consequently, the proportion of pupils continuing to apprenticeships, jobs or further education is higher than average and is a strength of this provision and the previous school.
- Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are at an early stage of development. Subject assessments, which take place on pupils' entry to school, are not checked by senior leaders to ensure that they are of good quality. Information is beginning to be used to set expectations for pupils, but is not used well enough to target additional support and challenge so that every pupil achieves highly.

School details

Unique reference number	141109
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10044710

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

Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	14 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Maggie Saxton
Headteacher	Kerrie Whelan
Telephone number	0191 518 5553
Website	www.endeavouracademy.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@endeavouracademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Endeavour Academy provides alternative education for pupils who are experiencing social and emotional issues in mainstream education.
- Most pupils come from a White British background, with few from different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- All pupils have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is significantly above average.
- The school is part of the Apollo Schools Trust. Trustees also act as a governing body.
- The school is a small provision based within East Durham College, a further education college. Pupils undertake some of their lessons on discrete courses at East Durham's Peterlee campus and Technical Academy.

- The school was previously known as Apollo Studio Academy from 1 September 2014 until August 2017, when the school was re-designated. Endeavour Academy admitted its first pupils in the spring term of 2018.
- The school has had temporary staffing and an interim headteacher during much of its first year. A permanent headteacher and three of the teaching staff are new to the school, joining on 1 September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes and year groups within Endeavour Academy and observed pupils undertaking a range of vocational courses in East Durham College and the Technical Academy. Most observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors carried out reviews of pupils' work to look at their progress over time. They also looked at samples of pupils' work in lessons and spoke with them about their work.
- Inspectors met with pupils in formal meetings and talked to them informally at break- and lunchtimes to discuss their learning and their views of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders and trustees to discuss their roles and the impact of their work. They talked to staff informally and observed the daily meeting between leaders and all staff to review pupils' progress, well-being and next steps.
- A range of documentation was considered, including the school development plan, minutes of trustees' meetings, and records of pupils' attainment and progress, attendance and behaviour. Inspectors examined school records relating to safeguarding.
- No responses were submitted to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, during the inspection. An inspector telephoned and spoke with five parents to gather their views about the school and received a written response from one parent.

Inspection team

Gina White, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tudor Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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