

Inspection of Notre Dame High School

Fulwood Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S10 3BT

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Sixth-form provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005
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Ofsted has not previously inspected Notre Dame High School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Notre Dame High School is a caring community where pupils feel safe, valued and supported. The school's Christian ethos is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Leaders have a clear vision for the school. Staff are on board. Both ensure that all pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum and enjoy wider opportunities.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Little learning time is lost. The few pupils who misbehave receive support to help them to make better choices. On the rare occasions that bullying does occur, leaders deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils trust adults to listen to their concerns and to sort out any issues.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They take an active part in developing and promoting an inclusive culture across the school. Pupils say that everyone usually gets along. Nearly all parents and carers are complimentary about the school. They value the aspirations and care that staff have for their pupils. Staff are proud to work here.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. Subject leaders have clearly identified the important subject-specific knowledge that they want pupils to learn. In individual subjects, knowledge is carefully organised to build on what pupils have learned before. This includes in the sixth form. Teachers ensure that they plan opportunities for pupils to regularly revisit what has been taught. This helps pupils to remember the most important subject knowledge.

Pupils who need help to read fluently are quickly identified. Skilled staff help pupils to catch up quickly with reading. Some sixth-form students read with younger pupils to help them with their comprehension. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENCo) works closely with the local authority and the local partnership of schools. Many parents of pupils with SEND value the support their child receives.

Leaders routinely gather information on the progress that pupils make. This is so that subject leaders can check how well pupils learn important knowledge and gain understanding and skills. However, some subject leaders do not analyse data from assessments sufficiently. They do not use this information to make improvements to their curriculum.

Most pupils behave well at school. Lessons are calm and purposeful. At lunchtimes and other social times, pupils enjoy talking with their friends. Sometimes, a few pupils are disruptive. They are not always respectful towards others. Leaders know that there is work to do to ensure that all pupils behave consistently well. Leaders have recently reviewed their behaviour system. Behaviour information is closely monitored. Leaders are working hard to help pupils to make better choices. Pupils

say that the sanctions that they receive are fair. However, not all teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour.

There is a strong personal development curriculum in place. Enrichment days give wider opportunities for pupils to explore themes in more depth. Leaders ensure that the wider curriculum reflects the increasing diversity of the school. Pupils are well prepared to be responsible British citizens. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, speak with maturity about a range of issues. However, leaders have not ensured that there is an effective system to check that pupils have learned the important personal development knowledge that leaders have identified.

Pupils learn about different careers throughout their time at school. This includes during enrichment days, through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum and in discussions with their form tutor. 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. Students in the sixth form receive clear guidance about their next steps. They say that they are supported by caring staff who help them to realise their ambitions. Some students work alongside senior school leaders to develop the wider culture of the school. This has helped develop a strong, inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated. The cross-community partnership between staff and pupils is a real strength of the school.

Leaders are supportive of staff well-being and workload. Staff who are new to teaching benefit from the training that they receive. School leaders have an accurate understanding of their school. They provide governors with detailed information and analysis about a range of issues, including behaviour and attendance. This helps governors to understand the school. Governors have confidence in the school's leadership. They support leaders' decisions. However, governors do not consistently provide robust challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are robust and appropriate systems in place for safeguarding. All staff receive high-quality training that includes regular updates on key safeguarding messages. Staff know the signs that might suggest that a child might be at risk of harm. Adults report concerns promptly. Leaders take action to ensure that pupils who need help get the support that they need. Safeguarding concerns are dealt with thoroughly.

School leaders understand the local safeguarding risks and adapt the personal development curriculum in response to this. The curriculum helps pupils to understand the risks they face in society, including online. Pupils know what to do if there is something that is worrying them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The assessment system provides leaders with information about how well pupils are learning the curriculum. However, not all subject leaders are clear about how to use the data. There is not a consistent approach to using the information to review departmental priorities and refine the curriculum. Leaders should make sure that middle leaders have the knowledge and support to effectively quality assure the impact of the curriculum.
- Leaders have not considered how they can check that pupils are learning the important knowledge set out in the PSHE education curriculum. This limits leaders' understanding of the effectiveness of this curriculum. Leaders should ensure that there is a system to check that pupils have learned the important knowledge that leaders have identified.
- Some teachers and support staff do not consistently implement the behaviour policy. As a consequence, some misbehaviour is not tackled as promptly and effectively as it could be. Leaders should ensure that all staff have clarity about their role in managing and recording behaviour.

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	138361
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10211906
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	1,553
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Martin Colclough
Headteacher	Deirdre Cleary
Website	www.notredame-high.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Notre Dame High School opened as an academy in August 2012.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. It was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in May 2019.
- Notre Dame High School is the base for Hallam Teaching School Alliance, which operates Sheffield School-Centred Initial Teacher Training, South Yorkshire Maths Hub and the regional Science Training Hub for South and East Yorkshire.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. The lead inspector met with some members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. A telephone conversation was held with the local authority’s school improvement partner.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, science, history and modern foreign languages. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders and groups of teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for the school’s wider curriculum offer. Inspectors observed form time, reviewed the school’s reading curriculum and listened to pupils reading to staff. Inspectors met sixth-form leaders and held discussions with sixth-form students.
- Inspectors met with the school’s SENCo to review the support provided to vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs.
- Inspectors reviewed the systems that the school has in place to keep pupils safe. Inspectors spoke to several groups of pupils, including some in single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding records and policies, to ensure that appropriate actions are being taken to keep children safe.
- Inspectors considered the views of 56 members of staff and 139 pupils who had responded to Ofsted’s surveys. The lead inspector met with a further two members of staff. The views of parents were considered from the 244 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and through two telephone discussions.

Inspection team

Eleanor Belfield, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector
David Pridding	Ofsted Inspector
Pritiben Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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