

Inspection of Dyke House Sports and Technology College

Mapleton Road, Hartlepool TS24 8NQ

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Success is celebrated every day in this school. The corridors echo with the sound of pupils applauding each other's achievements in lessons. Weekly 'Proud' events give pupils the chance to show off their work. Pupils are keen to tell visitors about what they have accomplished in school that day.

Leaders place no limits on what pupils can achieve. Pupils are encouraged to 'make your best, even better'. Pupils rise to this challenge. They take immense pride in their studies. The work in their books is of a consistently high standard. They behave exceptionally well and are a credit to themselves.

The school has a strong community spirit. Pupils are encouraged to become active citizens. The vast majority of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, attend an after-school club. Pupils support local charities. For example, sixth-form students coordinate donations for a local food bank.

There is a genuine warmth between staff and pupils. Pupils feel safe. Any rare incidents of bullying are swiftly dealt with. Peer mentors support Year 7 pupils to settle into school. Students in the sixth form are proud to help younger pupils with their reading.

As one parent put it, '[Dyke House is] much more than just a school. It's at the heart of the community.'

What does the school do well?

Leaders have established a curriculum that inspires pupils and students. There is high ambition for all. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Trustees pay close attention to the most vulnerable learners. They hold leaders to account. This supports leaders to remain sharply focused on ensuring that all pupils achieve their best.

The curriculum is exceptionally well designed. It enables pupils to build their knowledge over time, and to link their knowledge from different subjects. Pupils are adept at using subject-specific language when they talk about their learning. Teachers plan opportunities to include authentic texts in lessons. For example, sixth-form students studying psychology read carefully selected journal articles. Pupils studying languages read extracts of 'Harry Potter' in Spanish. This helps pupils deepen their understanding of the subjects that they study.

Pupils with SEND are carefully considered by leaders when designing the curriculum. Individual pupils' needs are accurately identified. The right support is then put in place. Teachers make skilful adaptations to lessons depending on the needs of individual pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve remarkably well in all key stages.

Teachers use a range of methods, such as short quizzes, to routinely check pupils' knowledge. Teachers address any knowledge gaps before moving on. Leaders use assessment information effectively to adapt and improve the curriculum.

Reading has a central importance in school. There is a breadth of reading programmes for pupils. Pupils who need help with reading are swiftly identified. Pupils get the right support to catch-up quickly. Pupils who are more confident readers are nurtured to develop a love of reading. Teachers can see the difference that these programmes make to pupils. Pupils are more engaged in their lessons because their reading ability has been strengthened by this work.

Pupils' conduct is superb. The impact of their strong relationships with staff is tangible. The very small minority of younger pupils who occasionally fall short of the school's high behaviour expectations are well supported to turn things around. As a result, the school is calm and orderly.

The curriculum significantly broadens pupils' cultural horizons. For example, Year 7 pupils benefited from a recent visit to Durham Cathedral. This helped them to link their religious education to what they have learned in history about Henry VIII. School elections for 'Student President' give pupils a lived experience of democracy. The 'Life' programme provides pupils and students with the vital knowledge that they need to be prepared for life in modern Britain.

The work to develop pupils' character is exceptional. 'Love to Learn' projects inspire pupils to work independently and read around topics that interest them. Pupils with leadership responsibilities are working with leaders to develop a sensory room to support pupils with their mental well-being. Careers education begins in Year 7. Local colleges visit to talk about what options pupils have at post-16. Pupils and students learn about apprenticeships and university pathways.

Students are exceptionally passionate about their experience in sixth form. They feel that the school goes above and beyond to provide bespoke support. Students benefit greatly from work placements and visits to university masterclasses. A high proportion of sixth-form students progress to Russell Group universities.

Leadership is strong at all levels. Staff universally buy into leaders' vision. Everyone is pulling in the same direction. Staff consistently report high levels of consideration from leaders about their workload and well-being. They value the high-quality training that they receive. This professional development has a material impact on the quality of education in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a clear understanding of the local risks that may affect pupils. Regular training from safeguarding leaders means that all staff know the signs that might indicate that a pupil is at risk at harm. Adults in school recognise the additional

vulnerabilities around pupils with SEND. Pupils are well supported to disclose concerns so that leaders can get all pupils help when they need it. Leaders work well with external agencies that provide support for pupils.

The 'Life' programme teaches pupils how to stay safe and to understand what is right or wrong in a relationship. Pupils are also taught age-appropriate knowledge about sexual harassment.

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	139405
Local authority	Hartlepool Borough
Inspection number	10210944
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1284
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	78
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Sanders
Executive Principal	Andrew Jordon
Principal	Adam Palmer
Website	https://dha.northerneducationtrust.org
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The academy offers and uses an off-site provision called 'ACE'. This provision provides for vulnerable students who need behaviour support and includes pupils from other schools within the multi-academy trust.
- There is a 0 to 4years old early years provision on the academy site, which is managed by the governing body but registered separately with Ofsted.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative education provider: Belle Vue Sports and Community Youth Centre.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider: Keys Tees Valley College.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This requires schools to allow other education and training providers to offer pupils in Year 8 to 13

information about apprenticeships and approved technical education qualifications.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the principal, the senior leadership team, middle leaders, teachers and non-teaching staff.
- The lead inspector held a virtual meeting with the deputy chair of the board of trustees and met in person with the interim chair of the local academy council. A meeting was also held with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, history, science, modern foreign languages and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to other subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans and reviewed a range of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and inclusion manager. He also reviewed the school's safeguarding records, relevant policies and scrutinised the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally. This included pupils with SEND, pupils with leadership roles in school and students in the sixth form.
- Inspectors observed breaktime and lunchtime arrangements. Inspectors also visited registration periods and some enrichment events that were taking place in school.
- An inspector visited the school's 'ACE' inclusion centre and spoke to staff and pupils.
- An inspector visited the unregistered alternative provision used by the school and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the registered alternative provision used by the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and minutes from the board of trustees meetings.
- Inspectors also considered the views of staff, parents and pupils from Ofsted's questionnaires.

Inspection team

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