

# Inspection of a good school: North Liverpool Academy

120 Heyworth Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L5 0SQ

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2022

## **Outcome**

North Liverpool Academy continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

North Liverpool Academy is a school that sits at the heart of the local community.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. This is because leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Teachers know their pupils, and students in the sixth form, in detail. Pupils appreciate the respectful relationships that they forge with staff. They said that they feel valued as individuals and that they trust the staff.

Pupils are friendly, welcoming and polite. They respect and celebrate differences between people. Pupils said that they feel happy and safe. They are confident to report any concerns about bullying. Staff resolve bullying issues quickly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy their learning without distraction. They are punctual to lessons. Pupils behave sensibly and have fun during social times. Pupils and students enjoy positive relationships with one another at school.

Pupils and students experience a wide range of opportunities outside of lessons. These activities widen their horizons and deepen their understanding of the world. For example, they enjoy taking part in rowing and cipher clubs. Pupils also enjoy a range of interesting enrichment activities, such as visits to learn about the history of slavery in Liverpool.

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

Trustees and governors have high ambitions for the school. They maintain a relentless focus on improving the life chances of all pupils. They make decisions which are in the best interests of pupils and students. Most pupils and students, including those with SEND, achieve well in a broad range of subjects.

All pupils follow the same ambitious curriculum. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, study a wide range of courses. Increasingly, pupils are choosing to follow courses which lead to the English Baccalaureate.

Subject leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which to teach essential information. These curriculums are carefully organised. Teachers give pupils valuable opportunities to remember, practise and build on what they already know.

In most subjects, teachers focus on developing pupils' accurate use of vocabulary. This supports pupils' learning, as pupils have the knowledge that they need to explain their ideas and demonstrate their understanding. However, in a small number of subjects, the emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary is less successful. As a result, pupils are less able to connect some of their learning together. This leads to some pupils not progressing through the curriculum as well as they should.

Many teachers have a detailed knowledge of different curriculum subjects. They skilfully use their subject expertise to help pupils remember and apply their learning. Teachers in the sixth form have strong subject expertise.

Teachers also use assessment strategies adeptly. They spot and address pupils' misconceptions quickly and effectively, including for pupils with SEND. Teaching staff provide effective support to pupils in lessons. Pupils move on to new learning confidently and successfully.

Leaders focus successfully on developing pupils' reading. Pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning to read benefit from an effective programme that helps them to read more fluently. Their improved reading helps them to learn effectively in other curriculum subjects.

Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. Typically, pupils learn well in a calm environment with few interruptions. They conduct themselves positively around the school, including at break and lunchtime.

Trustees and leaders have a clear focus on pupils' readiness for life beyond the academic curriculum. There is a carefully considered programme in place to ensure that all pupils can develop their personal skills. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the life of the school. This is particularly evident in the work of the school council. Pupils are passionate about the environment. For example, they have an active eco-council. Teachers successfully prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, benefit from a well-designed careers programme. This helps to raise pupils' ambitions and improves their employability. A high proportion of pupils continue into further education and training. An increasing number of students from the sixth form continue their education at university.

Trustees and governors have a clear vision for the school and enact it capably. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Their actions have led to

improvements in the quality of education for all pupils, including for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff said that they are proud to work at North Liverpool Academy, describing the school as an extended family.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. Staff are clear about the dangers that pupils and students in the sixth form may face in or outside of school. They are vigilant and alert to any safeguarding concerns that pupils may have. This includes peer-on-peer abuse.

Leaders have effective arrangements in place to support pupils who need help. They work well with other agencies to provide timely help for pupils and their families. Pupils are confident about seeking support when they need it. They learn how to keep safe, including when online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a small number of subjects, pupils lack the secure knowledge of vocabulary that they need to make connections in their learning, so that they can learn more. This means they make less progress than they should in some aspects of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff across all subjects focus equally well on improving pupils' vocabulary, so that they can know and remember more.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131065
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226322
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1374
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	153
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Geoff Wainwright
<b>Principal</b>	Emily Vernon
<b>Website</b>	northliverpoolacademy.co.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- North Liverpool Academy is part of the Northern Schools Trust.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2020.
- A small proportion of pupils attend alternative provision at four local providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the chair of trustees and the chair of governors. Inspectors also met with the executive

headteacher, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, computer science, history and physical education. They visited a sample of lessons in these subjects, discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views of behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- An inspector looked at safeguarding policies and reviewed leaders' records of checks on the suitability of staff and governors. They met with the leaders who have overall responsibility for safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils about leaders' work to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included some free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

David Hampson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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David Woodhouse

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