

Inspection of a good school: Admiral Lord Nelson School

Dundas Lane, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO3 5XT

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 June 2022

Outcome

Admiral Lord Nelson School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Admiral Lord Nelson School is a growing and inclusive school. Leaders are determined to help pupils achieve their best. The curriculum is broad. There is a wide range of subjects available for pupils. Effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are safe in school. The environment is calm, with a tangible sense of togetherness. Pupils behave well. They are confident that if bullying happens, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively. Staff care about all pupils and look after their welfare. There is a strong family ethos that involves the whole school community. The safeguarding team keeps pupils safe.

Aspirations are high for everyone. Older pupils play an active role by supporting their younger peers, especially during tutor time. Parents and carers value how well staff support their child. Pupils' positive relationships with each other and staff help to build up self-esteem, encouraging academic success.

Leaders make sure that all pupils can take part in a wide range of experiences that inspire them. There are opportunities to play sports and music, as well as activities that develop pupils' leadership skills. The school has reinstated visits that did not take place because of COVID-19.

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

Leaders are very clear on what they want pupils to know and be able to do. They ensure that all pupils study a wide range of subjects. This gives pupils a positive foundation from which to make their choice of GCSE subjects. The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum, which ensures pupils know and remember more. Leaders pay acute attention to detail regarding the planning of the curriculum. As a result, teachers think carefully about the order in which they teach subject content so that pupils can build on previous knowledge. Teachers make checks on how well pupils learn the curriculum. They

use this information to support pupils who need extra help. Pupils achieve well, and are driven to aim high through choosing the right pathway for the next steps in their education.

Reading is a priority for the school. Leaders have taken proactive steps to make sure that anyone who has fallen behind during the pandemic is given support to help them catch up. To build on this, teachers use key words and phrases to help pupils to understand their work more readily.

Pupils with SEND are ambitious for their futures. They enjoy school and value their positive relationships with staff. These pupils receive effective support and, crucially, access the same curriculum as everyone else. This includes those who attend Broadside, the on-site support centre. Managing this alternative support is a strength of the school.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. There is an extensive programme of events running alongside the academic curriculum. Staff ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can be fully involved. An example of this is the recent residential expedition as a part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They receive very sound careers advice and guidance. Leaders have recognised that, since the national lockdowns, some pupils have found returning to daily routines difficult. In tutor time, there are regular occasions for pupils to discuss these difficulties. This builds on opportunities to explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

Governors, including trustees, know the school's strengths and development areas. Since the last inspection, they have grown the skills of the governing body through training and positive recruitment. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the school's work and use this to make appropriate improvement plans. For example, the increasing demands on key staff have been identified, however, some of the plans to address this are still in their infancy. These considerations are especially important with the planned growth of the school. Staff are happy and typically feel well supported by leaders, including with their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make the necessary checks on staff recruited to the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They complete additional online training in key areas, such as peer-on-peer abuse and radicalisation.

There are clear procedures for reporting concerns and all staff know how to use these. Safeguarding has a high profile in school. Leaders are reflective and review their practice to strengthen safeguarding arrangements as necessary. This includes the current process of increasing the size of the safeguarding team. They proactively engage with the school community to keep everyone safe.

Leaders quickly identify pupils who need support. They make timely referrals to outside agencies, rigorously following these up if required.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The need for pupil support has increased since the pandemic, as has the number of pupils at the school. This has resulted in key staff having more to deal with. Leaders and governors should continue to ensure that roles and responsibilities are shared out effectively, so that the high standards set can be maintained.

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 March 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

Unique reference number	140697
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10211557
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1096
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Cree
Headteacher	Nys Hardingham
Website	http://www.alns.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school joined the Salterns Academy Trust in 2014. The school uses one registered provider of alternative education.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector also met with members of the local governing body, including both co-chairs.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, and physical education. In each subject, inspectors visited lessons, scrutinised the work in pupils' books and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils around the school site. The lead inspector also met with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including policies and records of behaviour and exclusions.

- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a senior leader from the alternative provider of education used by the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school website and policies. Inspectors held meetings with safeguarding leaders, spoke to pupils and staff, scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks on adults working in the school and spoke to governors.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted’s staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Gary Tostevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Foster

Ofsted Inspector

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