

Inspection of David Nieper Academy

Grange Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7JA

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend this school. The school's ethos of 'aspire, endeavour, succeed' shines through in all corners of the school. It is a warm, welcoming and professional community. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. Everyone can be themselves.

Pupils study an ambitious curriculum designed to equip them to thrive in work and life. Most pupils work hard. They value the commitment of staff. Students in the sixth form choose from a growing range of qualifications. Pupils benefit from strong careers education.

Pupils follow the 'DNA way' that sets high expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils are glad that staff know them well and support them if things go wrong. Some pupils need help to improve their behaviour. They get high-quality support that is right for them as individuals.

Pupils can discover their talents and skills through lessons and extra-curricular activities. They have enterprise lessons and learn 'employability attributes'. They can choose from over fifty clubs, including archaeology club, samba band and sports clubs. Leaders make sure that all pupils can go to London. Pupils learn to celebrate their home community and to take advantage of the possibilities that lie beyond.

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

Leaders have high ambition for every pupil. They are also ambitious for the community they serve. Leaders and staff work with passion and determination. They have focused on getting the curriculum right for their pupils. They have created conditions for effective learning through strong pastoral care and clear routines.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils in the school. They have created a culture of positive behaviour by teaching pupils the routines and behaviours expected of them. Interactions between staff and pupils are positive and encouraging. Classrooms and corridors are calm and orderly. When pupils do not meet expectations, teachers deal with the behaviour and support the pupil. Some pupils do not attend school as often as they should. Leaders provide effective support for pupils and their families to improve attendance.

The curriculum reflects leaders' ambitions for pupils. Pupils study a broad range of subjects at key stage 3. Leaders encourage pupils to study a wide range of subjects, including humanities and languages, at key stage 4.

Subject leaders have identified clear learning aims. They have identified gaps in pupils' prior learning and designed the curriculum to make sure that pupils can catch up quickly. The curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to revisit what

they have learned before. In some subjects, the curriculum is not taught consistently well. Leaders have clear plans to develop these subjects.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Most present subject matter clearly. Most teachers adapt their teaching to make sure that all pupils can achieve the aims of the curriculum. They use assessment well to identify and address learning gaps and misconceptions. In some cases, teachers move on too quickly before pupils have secured their understanding.

The provision for vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is a strength. Leaders make sure that staff have the advice they need to support pupils in the classroom. Pupils receive high-quality support from a team of well-trained teaching assistants.

Reading is a priority in this school. Teachers use assessment well to identify pupils who need support to improve their reading. These pupils receive effective support from well-trained staff.

Pupils' learning goes beyond the formal curriculum. They have opportunities to be leaders and to contribute to the school. Careers education is a strength. Leaders focus on pupils having the knowledge and skills to thrive in their work lives. Pupils learn 'employability attributes.' They take part in 'enterprise week' and 'employer partner challenges'. There is a well-designed programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Pupils do not yet securely recall the important knowledge of this curriculum. Leaders have a clear plan to improve the delivery of PSHCE.

Leaders in the sixth form have made sure that the courses they offer match students' needs. Students benefit from good support when choosing their next steps. An increasing number of pupils go to university when they leave the sixth form. Leaders continue to improve the programme of PSHCE and relationships and sex education in the sixth form.

Staff training focuses on improving teaching and support for pupils. Staff value the training. Staff said that leaders, including trustees and governors, consider their workload and well-being. Governance is strong and has played a key role in the improvement of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of vigilance and care in this school. Safeguarding leaders know pupils and their families well. They are knowledgeable about local risks to pupils' welfare. Leaders have strong links with external agencies. They work tenaciously with them to secure the support that pupils need.

Staff have regular safeguarding training. They know what to look out for. They are alert to signs of a potential concern. They report concerns promptly.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. They learn about mental health and healthy relationships. The PSHCE curriculum is flexible and responsive to local need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all subject curriculums are implemented consistently well. Pupils do not learn as well as they should in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that the delivery of the curriculum in all subjects is of equally high quality, so that pupils learn as well as they should in all areas of the curriculum.
- The delivery of the PSHCE curriculum is not yet consistent. Some pupils do not securely learn all of the important knowledge in the PSHCE curriculum. Leaders should continue with their plan to improve the delivery of PSHCE, so that pupils consistently learn the important knowledge identified in the curriculum.

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.

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	142405
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10241505
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	777
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	60
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christopher Nieper
Headteacher	Kathryn Hobbs
Website	www.davidnieper.academy
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2019

Information about this school

- 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.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

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 senior leaders, other leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with trustees and governors.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, mathematics and science. As part of the deep dives, inspectors visited lessons, spoke with curriculum leaders, reviewed curriculum plans and reviewed pupils' work. They also spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors visited lessons and form time. They listened to pupils read.
- The lead inspector visited the school's behaviour-support provision.
- An inspector spoke to a representative from the alternative provider used by the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils at various times of the school day, including at break and lunchtime. They also visited clubs.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions during the inspection and the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Aoife Galletly, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Dave Gilkerson	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Sweeney	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector

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