

Inspection of Quarrydale Academy

Stoneyford Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire NG17 2DU

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto, 'Aspire, believe, achieve', sums up its ambitions for all pupils. The school provides a wide-ranging curriculum to pupils at all stages of learning. Pupils in key stage 4 and in the sixth form value the choice of courses available to them. However, pupils' experiences in lessons vary. This means they do not always learn as well as they could.

In general, pupils are polite, behave well and work hard. Most pupils feel safe. They have good relationships with staff. Most pupils report any concerns about bullying and say that staff deal with it seriously. However, not all staff have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Some pupils disrupt lessons and are boisterous in the corridors. This makes some other pupils feel uncomfortable.

In the sixth form, students value the academic and vocational curriculum. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students enjoy doing work experience, volunteering and taking part in the student government.

Pupils benefit from a strong careers programme. Pupils at all stages are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment. Many pupils take part in one of the school's many clubs, including sports, drama and chess, and in 'Ambassadors', the school's LGBT+ pupil group.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. The range of courses on offer gives pupils the opportunity to develop their interests. Most pupils in key stage 4 study a language and either history or geography. Leaders adapt the curriculum for a small number of pupils to meet their needs.

Leaders have prioritised curriculum design. Subject leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to achieve. They have considered what pupils will learn and when. They have designed a curriculum to help pupils to remember the key knowledge.

However, leaders have not ensured that staff teach the curriculum consistently well. Most teachers present information well. Many set tasks that help pupils to know more and remember more. However, many teachers do not make accurate checks on pupils' learning. They do not routinely identify and correct pupils' misconceptions. Many staff do not make effective use of assessment to provide feedback that helps pupils' learning. As a result, the quality of pupils' work varies.

In the sixth form, it is different. Students are well supported by expert teachers in academic and vocational courses. Most teachers choose resources skilfully. They guide students to become more independent in their work. Leaders have established a strong programme for students' personal development. Students get clear advice

and guidance to make confident choices for their next steps. Most students attend well. They contribute meaningfully to school life.

Leaders ensure that there is effective provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work in partnership with pupils and their families. Leaders provide relevant SEND training and information for teachers. Teachers make adaptations to meet pupils' needs. Leaders identify pupils who need help to improve their reading. Trained staff teach phonics to pupils who need it. They help other pupils to read more confidently and fluently.

Leaders recognised that behaviour needed to improve. They worked well with staff to set out a new behaviour policy. Staff and pupils said that behaviour has improved recently. However, leaders have not made their expectations sufficiently clear. Teachers do not use the policy consistently to challenge pupils who engage in low-level off-task behaviour. They allow negative attitudes to spread. Some pupils behave poorly around school and treat others with disrespect.

Pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral support. Pastoral staff provide personalised support for individual pupils to improve their attendance. They listen to pupils' concerns and help them to find solutions. Staff provide highly effective support for pupils who are at risk of suspension.

Leaders aim to broaden pupils' horizons. Careers education is of a high quality. Pupils learn how to access the wealth of pathways available to them. Staff provide a variety of extra-curricular activities. Leaders do not track participation in these. They cannot be sure that the pupils who need them the most are joining in. The programme for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is new. Pupils do not yet develop a secure understanding of the key knowledge.

Trustees know the school well. Along with school leaders, they are working to improve the school. They consider staff's well-being and workload when making changes. However, leaders have not set a clear vision for the aspects of provision that need to improve. As a result, the necessary improvements have not been fully realised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have increased the number of staff in the safeguarding team to meet the needs of the school community. Safeguarding staff work with determination to ensure that pupils get the right help. They have effective partnerships with the local police, the school nurse and social care. They communicate well with parents. They make sure that pupils who feel vulnerable have a safe space in school and a key worker they trust.

Pupils learn to keep themselves and others safe, including when online. They can turn to staff if they are worried.

Staff receive safeguarding training and updates. They know what to do when they are concerned about a pupil's welfare.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always make accurate checks on pupils' learning. They do not identify learning gaps and misconceptions. They do not have the information they need to give pupils useful feedback. Pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that teachers check learning effectively so that they address gaps in pupils' knowledge and provide pupils with feedback that helps improve their learning.
- Leaders have not communicated their expectations about behaviour clearly. As a result, behaviour is inconsistent in classrooms and around school, and staff do not make consistent use of the policy to reward or challenge behaviour. Leaders must ensure that they set high expectations that are understood by all. They must ensure that staff are supported to implement the behaviour policy effectively.
- The curriculum for PSHE is new. It is not yet implemented consistently. Pupils have gaps in their learning. Leaders must ensure that pupils gain a secure understanding of the key learning in PSHE so that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have not set a clear vision for how the school should be improved. Expectations are not clear to staff and pupils. The impact of leaders' work is inconsistent. Leaders must ensure that they communicate a clear vision for improving the school to all stakeholders so that their vision is realised in strong, shared policies and practice.

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	137857
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10211671
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
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	1,230
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	110
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jill Wildsmith
Headteacher	Tim Paling
Website	www.quarrydale.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses four registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- 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.

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.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in design and technology, English, history, languages, mathematics and physical education. 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, form time and an assembly. They listened to pupils read.
- An inspector spoke to representatives of the alternative providers 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 through the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Aoife Galletly, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Karen Hayes	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Mitchley	Ofsted Inspector
Mohamed Patel	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Keval Thakrar	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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