

Inspection of The Grangefield Academy

Oxbridge Avenue, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 4LE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Education at The Grangefield Academy is underpinned by a strong sense of moral purpose. Leaders' vision of 'outcomes focused, child centred' is alive and well in this school. Pupils do exceptionally well here. Pupils arrive from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities. They are all individually valued and challenged to do their best. Pupils leave having achieved highly, both academically and socially. Staff expect only the very best from the pupils in their care.

Praise and recognition of success is at the heart of this school. Leaders celebrate any particularly impressive work with pupils every Thursday lunchtime at 'Proud'. Pupils frequently applaud each other in classrooms for their praiseworthy contributions. The culture of achievement and encouragement within the school is palpable.

Pupils have high expectations of each other's behaviour and attitudes. All are treated with respect. Leaders challenge pupils not to be bystanders to negative behaviour. Bullying is taken seriously. Even the hint of bullying is dealt with at speed. Pupils feel safe and happy here. They talk positively about their experiences and trust the adults in school.

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

Leaders have planned what pupils will learn at school with precision and expertise. The curriculum is wide and ambitious for all pupils. Leaders are ensuring that the number of pupils who study the full suite of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is strong and continues to rise. The EBacc is a suite of subjects that includes English, mathematics, science, a language and either history or geography. Across all subject areas, the curriculum is meticulously planned. Leaders are clear about exactly what they want pupils to learn; this goes beyond simply passing exams. Leaders value the power of knowledge. 'Need to know it' books support pupils across all of their subjects. But the 'tonne of knowledge' introduces pupils to information that leaders have decided is important to help pupils be intelligent and educated citizens, beyond their academic subjects.

Teachers deliver the curriculum extremely well. Leaders ensure that teachers have the expert subject knowledge that they need to deliver new content clearly. Teachers' explanations are logical and clear, which helps pupils to understand new ideas. This is particularly true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff ensure that pupils with SEND are exceptionally well supported to access the ambitious curriculum alongside their peers. Leaders ensure that staff regularly receive training about how best to support pupils with SEND. They then check the quality of this support frequently.

Teachers use recall activities effectively to make sure that pupils remember what they have learned. This helps them to build on what they already know. Teachers use questioning effectively to find gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers expect all pupils to engage actively in lessons. In English lessons, 'provocation' statements are used to encourage debate and help pupils develop their own opinions.

Leaders recognise the importance of reading in pupils' future success. The reading curriculum is extremely well developed. Leaders have considered carefully how to support pupils who find reading difficult, but also inspire a love of reading for all. The reading curriculum deliberately exposes pupils to texts that will challenge their views and allow them to experience new genres.

Pupils across school conduct themselves with maturity. Leaders have carefully cultivated a positive climate. Teachers engage pupils in conversation around site and role model positive interactions. There is clear evidence of respect and consideration between staff and pupils. Staff share the same high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Clear systems are followed if pupils do not meet these high standards.

Leaders' commitment to the wider development of pupils is evident. The 'Life' curriculum is given the same importance as other academic subjects. Leaders have ensured that this curriculum has been designed to suit pupils' likely community experiences. Pupils engage with ideas and concepts that will prepare them to be positive citizens. Pupils learn about the importance of community and their place in it. Pupils recently took part in a 'just say thanks' initiative, where they baked cakes and delivered them to a local hospital.

Pupils are well informed about their choices when they leave school. Leaders encourage pupils to be aspirational and aim high. If pupils leave without a secure destination, leaders continue to provide them with support to make the right choices.

Leaders have created a community that staff and pupils are proud to be part of. Staff feel valued and extremely well supported. Staff and pupils appreciate the visible presence of leaders. Leaders are closely involved in all aspects of school life. They have an exceptionally clear view of the school's priorities and strengths.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff understand the importance of keeping pupils safe. Regular training means that staff are absolutely clear about how to report any concerns that they might have about pupils' welfare. Pupils also understand the safeguarding systems in school well. They know what issues they should report to staff. They trust the adults to keep them safe.

Leaders are acutely aware of what risks their pupils might face in the community. They make sure those risks are addressed through their curriculum. Leaders closely monitor pupils who are vulnerable and ensure they receive the support that they need.

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	139673
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10240401
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,023
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Sanders
Principal	Kate Wright
Website	https://tga.northerneducationtrust.org/
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one alternative provision. This is situated within another secondary school within the Northern Education Trust.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with a wide range of school leaders, including the principal, the executive principal and the senior executive principal. They met with a trustee and the chief executive officer of the trust. They also met with representatives from the academy council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, physical education, geography, science and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They spoke to pupils with SEND and looked at how they are supported in lessons. Inspectors looked at documentation that staff use to help them meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for reading, numeracy and careers.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors checked logs of actions leaders take to keep pupils safe. An inspector checked the single central record and looked at documents related to safer recruitment.
- Inspectors spoke to a wide range of staff and pupils, formally and informally, during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and at social times. They spoke to pupils about behaviour in school.
- An inspector visited the personalised learning centre and the bridge within the school. These are spaces where additional support is provided for pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of data about behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for personal development. They checked the curriculum for what pupils learn in 'Life' lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan and minutes of academy council meetings.
- Inspectors considered the online responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff survey and to Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

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