

# Inspection of City Academy Norwich

299 Bluebell Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 7LP

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5  
of the Education Act 2005

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

Many pupils are polite and friendly. However, the poor conduct of a significant minority of pupils makes their peers feel uncomfortable. This is a particular problem during social time and at lesson changeover, when pupils push and shove each other. While some lessons are calm and orderly, many are disrupted by pupils' behaviour. This frustrates pupils because it prevents them from learning.

Most pupils say that bullying is not an issue at the school, and that staff would intervene effectively if it happened. A small minority of younger pupils disagree. They do not always report bullying because they are not confident that staff could help.

The trust and new senior leaders have high expectations for all pupils. However, these expectations are not always realised. This is due to variation in the quality of the curriculum, how it is delivered and frequent incidents of poor conduct. In the most established curriculum areas, pupils benefit from inspirational teachers who ensure that pupils achieve academic success.

Pupils have the opportunity to participate in different clubs. Sports clubs, such as for football, are particularly popular and enjoyed by many pupils.

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

The new trust is rapidly improving the school's curriculum. This has started to have a positive impact. In the areas of the curriculum that are more developed, pupils learn well. This is because the plans in these subjects are clearly organised and help pupils to know more and achieve more over time. These curriculum areas are well respected by pupils. As a result, the working atmosphere is purposeful, and pupils achieve well.

In other areas of the curriculum, pupils do not achieve as highly. The key stage 3 curriculum is not sufficiently ambitious to help pupils achieve their best. Expectations about what pupils can achieve are too low. Too often, teachers do not check whether pupils have a secure understanding of what is being taught. Teachers do not address gaps in pupils' knowledge as well as they should. This means that pupils are not prepared well for key stage 4.

Leaders are not supporting pupils who have fallen behind in reading to improve quickly. This includes pupils who struggle to understand key vocabulary and need help to read fluently. Many pupils lack confidence when reading. This impacts on their progress through the curriculum, where activities to support their education depend on their reading.

Leaders have deployed trust staff to identify accurately the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have access to plans that outline how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Some teachers are skilled in

meeting individual pupils' needs well. They break down complex ideas carefully and help pupils to understand difficult concepts. However, some teachers do not support pupils with SEND sufficiently well to make good progress. Staff training is not of a high enough quality to ensure that teachers are able to make appropriate adaptations to teaching.

Teachers are inconsistent in how they use the behaviour policy. Many teachers do not feel supported by leaders in managing behaviour. As a result, poor behaviour significantly disrupts learning. Too many pupils are regularly removed from lessons due to substantial incidents of poor conduct. The use of offensive language and pushing and play-fighting outside lessons are common. This leaves some pupils feeling unsafe.

A programme to teach personal, social and health education is in place. Pupils understand how to stay safe and healthy. Some staff are not well trained to deliver this curriculum. This leads to variation in pupils' understanding of important concepts.

There is a range of clubs on offer that contribute positively to pupils' personal development. Pupils speak confidently about the quality of the careers information, education, advice and guidance they receive.

The new leadership team has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has made some positive changes. Owing to many recent changes, some staff and parents and carers would appreciate better communication and support from leaders in the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding records are well maintained. These records are detailed, and leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support that they need. This includes help from external agencies where appropriate. Staff have had effective training and know the signs that indicate pupils may be at risk of harm. They report concerns about pupils appropriately. Leaders act on these concerns in a timely manner.

Leaders ensure that all adults are checked for their suitability to work with children. Trust staff ensure that leaders and other staff carry out safeguarding duties effectively.

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

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

- A significant minority of pupils display poor behaviour in lessons and at social times. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning and sense of well-being.

Leaders need to establish a behaviour system that ensures that pupils behave well and do not negatively affect the experiences of others.

- Some younger pupils do not feel confident in reporting behaviours that make them feel unsafe or unhappy. This means that these behaviours go unchecked. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils feel confident and know how to share their worries.
- Teachers do not check well enough whether pupils know and remember the taught curriculum. Some pupils fall behind, and teachers do not help them catch up. Leaders need to ensure that an effective assessment system is established and used across all subjects to ensure that pupils learn what leaders intend.
- Teachers do not all have secure expertise to adapt learning to meet the specific needs of pupils, including those pupils with SEND. This means that too many pupils do not achieve well. Leaders should ensure that all staff provide the support that pupils need in order to succeed.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135904
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10243881
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	697
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Peter Rout
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanna Franklin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.canorwich.org">www.canorwich.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school joined Sapiientia Education Trust in September 2022.
- A new headteacher and new deputy headteacher started in September 2022.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement 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.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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 carried out deep dives in English, history, science, art and design, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the early reading curriculum and visited reading support sessions.
- As part of work to inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, the school's safeguarding policy and the single central record of pre-employment checks. Inspectors spoke with leaders of safeguarding and with pupils. They spent time checking the school's on-call duty system and scrutinised procedures for when pupils leave lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, and safeguarding and behaviour records.
- Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in the school. The behaviour of pupils was observed across the school site.
- Inspectors met with governors and trust leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed the 33 responses that were submitted by parents and carers to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and 30 free-text comments submitted during the inspection. Inspectors also considered the 49 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Bessie Owen, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Lawrence	Ofsted Inspector
Carol Dallas	Ofsted Inspector
Garry Trott	Ofsted Inspector

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