

Inspection of Norton College

Langton Road, Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 9PT

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2023

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Following a period of turbulence since the previous inspection, school leaders have established a good quality of education at the school. They have raised the expectations of teaching and behaviour in the school.

Pupils are prepared well for life after school. They go on to a wide range of destinations. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders are aware that there is more to do to ensure that pupils who do not yet read fluently receive expert support in school.

Leaders have broadened the range of extra-curricular clubs available at the school. An increasing number of pupils are participating in one or more of the activities on offer. Pupils are justifiably proud of their musical theatre performances and sporting endeavours. Pupils also have opportunities to develop their environmental skills as members of the 'green team' and by getting involved with the school's farm.

Pupils value the pastoral support offered by the school and are confident that support is offered when life is challenging. Pupils report hearing occasional disrespectful behaviour towards staff and other pupils. They feel this happens much less than it used to.

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

Over the last two years, there have been extensive changes to the leadership team at the school. New systems of monitoring and accountability have been established. Leaders are honest about the next steps for the school and have clear improvement plans. Recently, the governors made the decision to join a new multi-academy trust.

Newly appointed leaders have taken rapid steps to improve the curriculum at the school. The range of subjects on offer to all pupils now matches the ambition of the national curriculum. Leaders have re-established the full range of science options and strengthened the school's modern foreign languages provision. Alongside these changes, leaders have introduced a range of vocational courses and invested in the school farm.

Improvements to the quality of education were partly reflected in the outcomes achieved by pupils in 2022. Leaders have introduced a programme of staff training linked to curriculum planning and delivery. In most subjects, clear curriculum plans and effective questioning strategies support teachers to check that pupils remember the important knowledge from previous lessons. At times, some pupils need further support to remember what they have learned.

Leaders have also introduced a new programme of support for pupils who are not fluent readers. This support is not established fully. Not all pupils who need support have received it.

Leaders have updated the provision for pupils with SEND. Strengthened systems in school allow leaders to share information about pupil needs with staff. Teachers use this information when planning lessons. Leaders rigorously monitor the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.

Leaders have raised their expectations of behaviour and attendance. The majority of pupils meet these expectations and value the school's support to make changes to their attitudes where needed. A small number of pupils do not consistently show respect for their teachers or peers. At times, not all staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. This is a cause of concern for some pupils and their parents.

The sixth form is small but plays an important part in the life of the school. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum offer to ensure expectations are high and course choices are appropriate. Students benefit from expert teaching and are exceptionally positive about life in the sixth form. They enjoy the range of enrichment opportunities and the high-quality careers guidance they receive. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to improve attendance in the sixth form.

Leaders have revised the school's approach to the design and delivery of the personal development curriculum. Pupils follow a comprehensive programme covering protected characteristics, health and well-being, careers education and life in the wider world.

Governors have been mindful of staff's workload as they have guided the school through the recent period of change. Although the school's membership of the multi-academy trust is a recent development, both governors and trustees understand their respective roles. They have a clear evaluation of the strengths and areas for development in the school. They are supporting leaders with their implementation of raised expectations. They are also working with leaders to extend the range of opportunities for communication and engagement with parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff receive timely and relevant training in all aspects of safeguarding. As a result, there is an effective culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders keep clear records when concerns arise and are vigilant in their approach to monitoring pupils' well-being. Work with external agencies is well documented and leaders have expanded the range of support available for pupils.

Pupils develop an age-appropriate knowledge of healthy relationships and are confident in their knowledge about online safety. They know who they can speak to in school if they have concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils do not remember important information from their previous lessons. This slows their new learning. Leaders should ensure that all staff are using effective approaches to check that important knowledge is secure before moving on to new content.
- Some pupils who leaders have identified as needing help to read fluently are not receiving support soon enough. This limits their engagement with the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all pupils who need help learning to read receive timely and appropriate support.
- A small number of pupils do not consistently show respect for their peers or their teachers. This causes some pupils and their parents to feel concerned about behaviour around school. Leaders should ensure that all staff consistently apply the behaviour policy and provide support for pupils affected by poor behaviour.

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	136728
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10241934
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	781
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Dangerfield
Headteacher	Tim Johnson
Website	www.nortoncollege-rlt.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the leadership of the school. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2020. Several new senior leaders have also been appointed to the school.
- The school joined The Ryedale Learning Trust on 1 January 2023.
- The school uses three alternative providers of education for a small number of pupils. One of these is a registered provider and is subject to inspection by Ofsted. Two others are unregistered providers.
- 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.

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the school's senior leadership team. The lead inspector held discussions with representatives from the local school committee, the chair of the trust board and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- To evaluate the quality of education, deep dives were conducted in mathematics, English, physical education and history. These involved meeting subject leaders, reviewing curriculum plans, visiting lessons, speaking to teachers, talking to pupils about their learning and looking at samples of their work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's provision for pupils with SEND and the strategy to support pupils to learn to read. The school's curriculum for personal, health and social education was reviewed.
- As part of the evaluation of the effectiveness of safeguarding, the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and other records were reviewed. The checks made and recorded when appointing new staff were scrutinised.
- An inspector visited one of the unregistered alternative providers of education used by the school. Inspectors spoke by telephone to the other settings used by the school and spoke to pupils attending the provisions.
- The views of parents and carers, staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered by inspectors.

Inspection team

Gabrielle Reddington, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Garry Stout	Ofsted Inspector
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