

# Inspection of a good school: Nene Park Academy

Oundle Road, Orton Longueville, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE2 7EA

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Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2023

The principal of this school is Robin Grover. This school is part of Meridian Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mark Woods, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Shirley Jamieson. There is also an executive principal, Martin Campbell, who is responsible for this school and three others.

## Outcome

Nene Park Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The vast majority of pupils are happy at Nene Park Academy. Well-tailored support helps them succeed. For example, those pupils who need it benefit from 'SOCA' or 'ACE' provisions, where their specific needs are well met.

Pupils value the house system. This ensures they have regular points of contact in terms of their form tutor and student support assistant. This helps them to be confident they will be listened to if they have worries.

Pupils know there are high expectations for their achievement and attendance. They benefit from an interesting and engaging curriculum. They achieve well overall. Occasionally, the quality of pupils' work does not reflect this. Trips and visits help to bring the curriculum to life for pupils. They value comprehensive careers guidance that supports them to be well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils behave well. Pupils like the new approach to managing behaviour because their views are better heard. Pupils learn to treat each other with tolerance and respect. They value that this is celebrated and rewarded through the 'PLEDGES' system. Pupils typically feel bullying is not an issue. The vast majority feel the school's new anti-bullying alliance 'STOP' approach addresses this effectively, where it does ever happen.

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

The trust has devised high-quality curriculum plans. These clearly identify the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. School leaders have ensured that these plans are

taught effectively, so that pupils learn this intended knowledge well. The school has ensured that trips and wider experiences deepen pupils' knowledge of the curriculum. For example, pupils go on trips abroad, so they can experience languages in a native context. The curriculum is broad and balanced. For almost all subjects, the school has ensured that pupils develop the depth and breadth of knowledge they need. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

The trust has ensured that teachers have a high-quality programme of professional development. Teachers have the subject knowledge and skills they need. Teachers skilfully enable pupils to retain important knowledge, by tailoring their teaching to meet pupils' learning needs. However, teachers do not always ensure that this translates to pupils producing high-quality work. Consequently, some pupils' work does not reflect the depth of what they have learned within lessons.

Sixth-form students benefit from a suitable range of vocational and academic courses. They receive bespoke guidance and support. This helps them choose the most appropriate pathways to support their future plans. Teachers in the sixth form are subject experts and regularly assess what pupils know. They tailor and personalise support so that any gaps in students' understanding are quickly addressed. Students in the sixth form are tolerant and respectful.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is carefully personalised. The pupil, parent and teacher voice is heard and translated into clear, agreed strategies to support pupils. Staff use these strategies effectively, so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum and achieve well.

There is a sharp focus on pupils at the earlier stages of learning to read. Pupils' reading ability is accurately assessed and appropriate support put in place. The school checks that this help is making the difference intended and helps pupils to get better at reading.

The school has focused on raising behaviour and attendance expectations. Little learning time is lost. Pupils attend well. The school environment is calm and orderly. The school has recently introduced a more therapeutic approach to managing behaviour. It has done this to ensure that there is more support for pupils to address the causes of behaviour issues and to improve communication with parents. This has included reviewing anti-bullying procedures, to ensure that they work effectively. However, for a minority of parents, this has not had enough impact. They still have frustrations about how well concerns, including bullying, are resolved.

The school offers a rich range of personal development opportunities. These include Disney club, train club and cadets, which allow pupils to explore their interests. Pupils who have particular sporting talents benefit from a rich partnership with the local professional club. This involves undertaking the educational side of their scholarship on site. A well-planned programme of personal social and health education (PSHE) ensures that pupils are accepting of differences and have a well-developed understanding of different cultures and beliefs.

The trust has a well-developed system of school governance that works. The local academy council challenges and supports leaders effectively. Trust leaders work proactively with school leaders to provide additional guidance and expertise. Staff are positive about leaders' consideration for their workload and well-being, as this supports them to be able to focus on pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some teachers do not check the quality of work that pupils have produced well enough. As a result, the work some pupils produce does not reflect the depth of what they have learned within lessons and is inconsistent. The school needs to ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations for pupils' work and that they support pupils to produce work that reflects the depth of their learning within lessons.
- The school has not ensured that all parents understand how perceived issues of bullying are resolved. As a result, a minority of parents remain unhappy about how the school addresses and resolves these issues. The school needs to work to engage and communicate further with parents to ensure that parents have more confidence in how issues they raise are resolved.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2013.

## **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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137082
<b>Local authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288499
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,451
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	267
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Shirley Jamieson
<b>CEO of trust</b>	Mark Woods
<b>Principal</b>	Robin Grover
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.neneparkacademy.org">www.neneparkacademy.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in January 2019.
- The school has an autism centre of expertise called 'ACE'. This is funded by the local authority, but pupils are on roll at the school.
- The school runs a tailored provision within the school called 'SOCA'. This is for pupils on roll who need additional support with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers and one registered alternative provider to supplement the education it provides for a very small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To discuss governance, inspectors met with the local academy council, a trustee and the chief executive officer of the trust, who is also a trustee.
- Inspectors met with the trust executive director of SEND, executive principal, principal, senior leaders, special educational needs coordinator, designated safeguarding lead, trust curriculum leads, school subject leaders and staff.
- Inspectors met with senior tutors, student support assistants and assistant principals with responsibility for a house, to explore the quality of pastoral provision.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders at an alternative provision. They explored parental views and reasons why the pupils were accessing the provision.
- Inspectors visited and spoke to students from the 'ACE' and 'SOCA' provisions.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, art and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects, including PSHE, relationships and sex education and careers education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. They considered pupils' views about behaviour and bullying in school. They also spoke with staff about pupils' behaviour, their workload and well-being.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages. Inspectors met in person and online with a representative sample of parents. Inspectors also considered a wide range of case studies to explore how effectively the school had followed up incidences of perceived bullying.

## Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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