

Inspection of Carre's Grammar School

Northgate, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7DD

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 December 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

Inadequate

The executive headteacher of this school is Nick Law. This school is part of the Robert Carre Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jon McAdam.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a good school. Safeguarding is well led. The school has acted to secure the school site. The arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and welfare are effective. The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils value this change. Many feel privileged to attend Carre's Grammar School.

Staff set high expectations of pupils. Pupils' behaviour is often exemplary. In lessons, there is a positive climate of debate and discussion that enriches the learning. Pupils are respectful, articulate and polite.

The school does not tolerate bullying. Pupils know that they have adults they can turn to if they have concerns, and that these will be quickly resolved. The school's well-being ambassadors are well-trained members of the sixth form. They provide individualised guidance, care and support to younger peers. Their work is impressive.

The school offers an extensive wider-development programme. The extra-curricular offer is rich and diverse. Many pupils achieve sporting excellence. The school is rightly proud of the programme of visits, events and trips. The school has taken action to ensure that activities are inclusive so that all pupils, including the most disadvantaged, can take part should they wish.

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

This school is ambitious for pupils. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced in most subjects. Pupils revisit key knowledge so that it is secure. Staff have carefully considered the local context of the school and used this to make learning meaningful for pupils. In geography, for example, fieldwork is locally based: pupils visit Sleaford, Skegness, Lincoln and the Lincolnshire Wolds. Work with the local community includes the regeneration project in Sleaford and visits to the local council offices.

In a minority of subjects, there is still work to do to ensure that the well-planned curriculum is effectively and consistently implemented.

Teachers are experts. They have strong subject knowledge. Many have a passionate interest in the subjects that they teach. Some staff share their expertise with other schools and with those new to the profession.

Teachers benefit from high-quality professional development. There are weekly opportunities for staff to hone their skills.

Teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' understanding, to challenge thinking and to address misconceptions. Pupils value the retrieval elements of lessons. They said this aids their examination preparation and helps them to remember.

The new and skilled special educational needs coordinator is well trained. Pupils with SEND receive expert guidance, including from the newly formed support team. Their needs are quickly identified. Staff take prompt action to make sure that pupils receive the support needed. In lessons, teachers have a rich source of information to draw upon to skilfully adapt learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils with SEND; consequently they achieve well.

This is a selective school. Most pupils enter the school with the ability to read. However, some do not have the reading comprehension knowledge needed to read with understanding. Leaders have ensured a strong programme of support to make certain that pupils receive the help they need to fully comprehend texts and to access the curriculum at an appropriate level.

The school promotes the love of reading. Staff model good reading habits. Pupils receive regular opportunities to read in school. In the sixth form, for example, the reading group encourages wider reading of a variety of books to enhance students' understanding of the texts that they are studying. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, use the library frequently.

Behaviour and attitudes are excellent. Attendance is high. Students in the sixth form are incredibly positive role models for the rest of the school. Staff are embracing the 'behaviour is communication' methodology. They reward pupils in many ways. Pupils greatly value these rewards. There is a culture in school of care and mutual respect. Learning is rarely disrupted.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum. Ethics and philosophy lessons ensure that pupils have a clear understanding and appreciation of different faiths, cultures and beliefs. Pupils embrace leadership roles in which they help others. The school council plays an active role representing its peers. Its work has made a difference. For example, pupils now have access to water fountains throughout school, and the school uniform is now gender-neutral.

Pupils are aspirational. They receive effective careers advice and guidance. They are well informed. Students in the sixth form particularly appreciate the wider careers opportunities that staff introduce them to, including apprenticeships. Pupils are prepared well for their next stage.

Changes to governance have had a positive impact, and this has aided an acceleration of the school's improvement.

Leadership is now better distributed. There are many talented new leaders in the school. They have had a significant impact. There is an ambition and commitment to ensure that the school continues its improvement journey. Staff feel well supported. They describe the school as a family. There is great pride in being part of the Carre's Grammar School community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not yet fully embedded or consistently well implemented. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could across all subjects studied. The school must make sure that a well-planned and ambitious curriculum is consistently and effectively implemented across all subjects so that pupils, including students in the sixth form, achieve at the levels they are capable of.

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

Unique reference number	137213
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10302547
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	788
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	227
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jon McAdam
Executive headteacher	Nick Law
Website	www.carres.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Carre's Grammar School is a part of the Robert Carre Trust.
- The school's sixth-form curriculum is delivered as part of a partnership arrangement with two other local schools. These schools are Kesteven and Sleaford High School and St George's Academy. This partnership is known as the Sleaford Joint Sixth Form.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and members of the Robert Carre Trust. She spoke with members of the LGT (local governance tier).
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in geography, modern foreign languages, ethics and philosophy and physical education. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders to review the curriculum, visited lessons and considered pupils' and sixth-form students' work. They spoke with pupils, sixth-form students and teachers.
- An inspector spoke with the subject leader for design and technology and reviewed curriculum planning.
- 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. They scrutinised a range of records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at different times of the school day, including the start and end of the day and at lunchtime and breaktime.
- Inspectors walked the school site to check site security at different points throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through discussions and Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
April Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Keval Thakrar	Ofsted Inspector

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