

Inspection of Bluecoat Trent Academy

Aspley Lane, Nottingham NG8 5GY

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Claire McManus. This school is part of Archway Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sian Hampton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Malcolm Trobe.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at this inclusive school. They are courteous and polite. The 'CARE' ethos of citizenship, aspiration, respect and excellence underpins all that the school does.

Pupils demonstrate a sense of pride towards their school, which only opened in September 2021. The school is in temporary accommodation, but the environment is calm and purposeful. Staff and pupils are looking forward to moving into their new site on the other side of the city. Clear and consistent routines ensure that pupils behave well and focus on their learning. At social times, pupils show respect to staff and to each other. Incidents of bullying are rare, and pupils know that staff take any concerns seriously.

The curriculum demonstrates high ambition for everyone. The school has high expectations of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils benefit from frequent reading sessions that encourage a love for reading.

The school is committed to pupils' personal development, as well as their academic success. It organises a wide range of opportunities so that pupils can explore existing interests and talents, discover new ones, and take on responsibilities. A large number of pupils participate in these activities, including disadvantaged pupils.

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

The school has worked closely with the trust to share curriculum expertise. Leaders have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. They have planned the curriculum well to ensure that staff teach the knowledge pupils need to know in a logical order. Teachers use these curriculum plans consistently well so that pupils learn what they should. This helps pupils to remember knowledge over time. Strong subject expertise is now secure at the school. Consequently, the school can offer a wide range of options in preparation for Year 10, including subjects that form the English Baccalaureate.

Teachers provide pupils with lots of opportunities to review what they have studied previously. This helps them to develop their understanding and improve their work. Much thought has been given to how assessment is used to evaluate pupils' knowledge and skills. However, at times, in some lessons, teachers do not check carefully enough what pupils know before moving them on in their learning. As a result, some gaps in pupils' knowledge are not swiftly identified and addressed.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. Adults know pupils well as individuals. As a result, pupils get the help and support they need.

Pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning to read receive expert support that is precisely matched to their needs. Dedicated staff are well trained in a range of

strategies, such as phonics teaching. This ensures that pupils quickly learn the skills they need to read fluently and with confidence.

The school has a clearly understood behaviour policy that helps pupils to conduct themselves well. Within lessons, disruption is rare. If it happens, pupils respond well to the support they receive to manage their behaviour in the future. Staff are typically consistent at implementing the rules. This ensures that pupils feel a sense of fairness in how they are treated.

Pupils benefit from the school's excellent personal development programme. It is carefully mapped out for all year groups. Pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe, and to stay healthy, including online. They also learn about equality and explore a range of issues and opinions in tutor and assembly times. The school has very carefully considered how to develop pupils' characters and their skills and interests. There is a wide range of enrichment opportunities on offer that pupils benefit from. The school's careers programme is equally well designed, and pupils are being very well prepared for their next steps.

The trust fully supports the school's ambitious vision and its distinctive culture. Support and challenge for leaders are robust and effective. Staff feel valued and are extremely proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is a little variability in the implementation of the curriculum. In some lessons, pupils' understanding is not systematically checked. This means that some pupils are not able to benefit from the content being taught. The school should ensure that the checks made on pupils' learning are used consistently well in all lessons. This will help staff to make appropriate adaptations so that all pupils are able to access the curriculum in full.

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	148548
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10298555
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	660
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Trobe
CEO of the trust	Sian Hampton
Principal	Claire McManus
Website	www.bluecoattrent.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bluecoat Trent Academy is a free school that opened in September 2021.
- The school is part of Archway Learning Trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.
- 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 graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees and the local academy advisory board. They also met with the CEO and the deputy CEO of Archway Learning Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign language and art. 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.
- 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 met with pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with a range of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents.

Inspection team

Jamie Clarke, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Keval Thakrar	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024