

Inspection of Esteem North Academy

The Green, Hasland, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 0LN

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Janine Dix. This school is part of Esteem Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Julian Scholefield, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Emly.

What is it like to attend this school?

All pupils join the Esteem North Academy partway through their education. The vast majority of pupils join the school because they have been permanently excluded from other schools.

Many pupils arrive here having had negative experiences of education. Nevertheless, staff take time to build warm and trusting relationships with pupils so that they feel safe and happy in school. Pupils feel listened to and respected. They know that they have staff whom they can talk to and share any worries with.

The school has high expectations for all pupils to achieve well. Staff support pupils to re-engage with learning and to get back on track with their education. Pupils value this opportunity. As a result, typically pupils learn well across the curriculum.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to reflect on their behaviour and to manage the impact of what they do on others. Typically, classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils' behaviour improves considerably over the time that they are present in the school.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities that they have to develop their interests and talents, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and through valuable work experience opportunities.

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

Many pupils have missed significant periods of learning before arriving at Esteem North Academy. This means that some pupils have considerable gaps in their knowledge of different national curriculum subjects. Staff work with parents and carers and the pupil's previous school to build a current and accurate understanding of their needs. The school uses well-designed assessment systems to establish pupils' starting points. All pupils at this school are on the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) register. The school also identifies any additional learning needs which pupils may have, quickly and accurately. Staff use these assessments to inform the bespoke curriculums that pupils receive.

Curriculum plans thoughtfully set out the knowledge that pupils should be taught and in what order. At key stage 3, and in the primary phase, the school has developed a curriculum to equip pupils with the essential knowledge and skills to return to mainstream education. At key stage 4, the curriculum has been carefully designed to enable pupils to gain qualifications that support them well in making choices for their future lives.

Staff successfully use a variety of strategies that help pupils to overcome any barriers to learning that they may have. This enables pupils to learn well across a range of subjects and close gaps in their learning. The school successfully uses a range of assessment strategies to check what pupils have learned and remembered.

However, in a few subjects, some staff are developing their subject knowledge expertise needed to present information clearly and address pupils' misconceptions at the point in which they arise. This impacts on how well pupils gain the knowledge they need.

Reading is a high priority. Staff check how well pupils can read and provide extra help for those who need it, including phonics. Pupils in the primary phase enjoy listening to stories and all pupils read regularly. As a result, pupils are developing into confident readers.

Before attending this school, many pupils did not attend their previous schools regularly. The school communicates its high expectations about attendance to pupils and their families or carers. Staff carefully monitor pupils' levels of attendance. The strategies in place are helping to increase the attendance of many pupils. Typically, the longer that pupils have been in school, the more their attendance improves. However, the absence rates for a few pupils are still too high. Consequently, these pupils miss out on important learning.

The school has developed a highly appropriate personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum. Staff teach pupils about key topics, such as healthy and respectful relationships and keeping safe online. The school is flexible in its approach to PSHE. This means it can respond rapidly to any emerging issues that arise in school and the wider community. Pupils enjoy and value these lessons.

The school's careers education and guidance are effective. Pupils have opportunities to be ready for their next steps. Older pupils benefit from work experience and vocational work with alternative providers, for instance in vehicle maintenance, construction and catering. Food and nutrition lessons encourage pupils to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Trust leaders and governors work effectively with school leaders to strengthen the work of the school. Leaders at all levels prioritise the workload and well-being of staff. This enables staff to put their focus on teaching and supporting pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, some staff are developing their subject knowledge and expertise needed to present information clearly and address pupils' misconceptions at the point at which they arise. This impacts on how well pupils gain the knowledge they need. The school should continue to enhance its

professional development package to enable staff to become experts across the curriculum, so that the teaching of the curriculum is consistently effective.

- While there is a demonstrable improvement in the attendance of most pupils who come to this school, some do not yet attend as well as they should. This means a small number of pupils are not benefiting from the full education that they need. Leaders should ensure that strategies to reduce absence can be sustained over a long enough period to change the culture of attendance for these pupils.

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	146057
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10298523
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Emly
CEO of the trust	Julian Scholefield
Headteacher	Janine Dix
Website	www.nedsc.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Esteem North Academy is part of Esteem Multi-Academy Trust.
- Esteem North Academy converted to become an academy on 1 August 2019. When its predecessor school, North East Derbyshire Learning Support Centre, was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2019, it was judged to require improvement.
- Significant changes in the leadership of this school have occurred in the last two years. The headteacher took up her post in April 2022 and the deputy headteacher took up his post in June 2022. The assistant headteachers have all started their roles since the employment of the headteacher.
- Esteem North Academy is commissioned by the Derbyshire Local Authority to educate pupils from day 6 after a permanent exclusion from a pupil's previous school.
- The academy provides education for pupils from Years 1 to 11. The vast majority of pupils attending this academy have been permanently excluded from their previous setting.

- The academy provides an education to a varied and complex range of needs. All pupils are on the SEN register. Some pupils have an education, health and care plan or are going through the statutory SEND assessment procedures.
- The academy currently operates from three separate sites. The Barrow Hill campus offers provision for key stages 1 and 2. It is located at Station Road, Barrow Hill, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S43 2PG. The Hasland campus caters for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. It is located at The Green, Hasland, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 0LN. The High Peak campus caters for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. It is located at 25 High Street, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire SK23 0HD.
- The academy currently makes use of seven unregistered alternative providers.
- Esteem North Academy 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PSHE, and food and nutrition. 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 explore the wider curriculum, the lead inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with curriculum leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including documents on the school's website.
- The lead inspector met with chief executive officer of the trust, some trust directors, and the chair of governors.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about their experiences in school.
- 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 staff involved in the induction of early career teachers.

- Inspectors reviewed responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, responses to the staff survey and responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Anne Maingay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Rooney

Ofsted Inspector

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