

Inspection of a good school: Archway Academy

Learning Lane, The Avenue, Teesville, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS6 0DD

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

Outcome

Archway Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Leigh Beaumont. This school is part of Horizons Specialist 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, Elizabeth Horne, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Walker. There is also an executive principal, David Penny, who is responsible for this school and six others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Archway Academy benefit from a positive ethos built on respectful relationships. Pupils and staff treat each other with courtesy. Pupils appreciate the calm approach. They quickly learn to trust the adults around them. Pupils are safe. Close working relationships exist between the school and local community. This enhances the quality of care for pupils further.

Pupils learn an ambitious curriculum. Their learning is effectively matched to mainstream education. Pupils leave Archway with qualifications in English, mathematics and other subjects. Pupils are also supported to develop aspirations for future employment or training. This blending of learning and careers education helps pupils take successful next steps.

Pupils' behaviour improves during their time at the school. Pupils enjoy support that helps them understand the reasons for things going wrong. This includes a range of interventions. For example, pupils value weekly opportunities to work with the school counsellor.

Archway Academy helps expand pupils' horizons. The trust strapline of 'providing infinite opportunities' underpins this aim. Pupils are enthusiastic about the trips the school provides. They enjoy theatre visits and trips to museums to enhance the curriculum. They also relish rewards trips, such as go-karting and white-water rafting.

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

The school has carefully planned an ambitious curriculum for its pupils. It matches the national curriculum expectations. It also considers what pupils should know in each subject by the end of Year 11. This helps pupils achieve success in a range of qualifications. It also ensures they can move back into mainstream education if it is appropriate to do so. In lessons, staff help pupils learn the intended curriculum well. They provide clear explanations. Staff also assess pupils' knowledge using targeted questions. For example, in food technology, pupils enjoy making a range of dishes. While cooking, the teacher skilfully checks their understanding of important safety points. Pupils also demonstrate their learning about healthy eating. However, the quality of education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is too variable. In some lessons, learning is not adapted well enough to meet pupils' specific needs. This makes it harder for pupils to progress through the curriculum as well as they should.

The school increasingly places reading at the centre of the curriculum. They are implementing a strategic plan with many aspects already in place. Pupils read high-quality texts in English lessons. Some of these texts are brought to life through workshops and visits to the theatre. For example, pupils enjoy seeing 'The Woman in Black' live on stage. Pupils who lack fluency and confidence in reading receive extra support. Trained staff put in place well-chosen interventions. Pupils value these sessions.

The school makes improving pupils' attendance a high priority. They know pupils' attendance to school is too variable. Persistent absence rates are high. However, for many pupils, this is from a low starting point. Many pupils have become disengaged from education before joining the school. Leaders have a detailed understanding about pupils' barriers to positive attendance. This analysis has led to a clear improvement strategy. The school's actions are starting to have an impact. Furthermore, the school is working with the local authority to find more solutions. The school knows what it needs to do next to ensure pupils' attendance continues to improve.

The school's approach to pupils' wider development builds on the 'arches' framework. This sets out the qualities the school wants pupils to develop. It includes aspirations, resilience, citizenship, being healthy, employability and success. Subject leaders ensure this framework links to the curriculum areas they oversee. Staff take every opportunity to promote 'arches' in the classroom. Staff also give out weekly 'arches' awards. Pupils can choose to spend their 'arches' immediately or save them up. This helps pupils learn about budgeting. It also teaches an important lesson about prioritising long-term goals over instant reward.

Trust leaders and governors provide effective support and challenge to the school. Trust networks help ease school leaders' workload. This, in turn, helps leaders focus on the pupils. Staff at Archway Academy are proud to work at the school. They feel valued. Staff know that the school will listen to them if they have any concerns.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The use of strategies to support pupils with SEND is not embedded consistently across the school. This limits the progress some pupils with SEND can make through the curriculum. The school should continue its work to implement the strategic plan for SEND and ensure staff are equipped to support the most vulnerable pupils to achieve strong outcomes.

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 predecessor school, Archway, to be good in October 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

Unique reference number	148694
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10323140
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Walker
Principal	Leigh Beaumont
Website	https://archway.horizonstrust.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Archway Academy is an alternative provision that caters for pupils aged 11 to 16 who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. It also offers four commissioned places for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion.
- The school is part of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust.
- The school educates pupils who live within Redcar and Cleveland local authority.
- The school uses six alternative providers of education for its pupils. These providers are all unregistered.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships. This information is tailored to the context of the school.
- Archway Academy converted to become an academy in September 2022. When its predecessor school, Archway, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

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.
- Inspectors met with the principal, vice-principals and other senior or trust leaders over the course of the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the deputy chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust board and the chair of the academy council. They reviewed documentation relating to governance, including minutes from governor meetings.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following curriculum areas: English, mathematics and food technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with leaders responsible for personal development.
- The lead inspector made two telephone calls to alternative providers of education.
- 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.
- The inspectors met with groups of pupils formally throughout the inspection and spoke with them informally at social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors met with two groups of staff formally during the inspection.
- A range of school documents was reviewed, including the school's self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered through Ofsted's questionnaires.

Inspection team

Hannah Millett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jill Bowe

Ofsted Inspector

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