

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Frederick Nattrass Primary Academy

Darlington Lane, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees TS20 1BZ

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 2025

Outcome

Frederick Nattrass Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Carolyn Minto. This school is part of Northern Education 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), Jane Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Sanders. There is also a senior executive principal, Debra Murphy, who is responsible for this school and two others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Frederick Nattrass Academy is a school with a palpable warmth. Pupils are full of life. They are happy, safe and love to welcome visitors to their school. One pupil summed up the views of many, saying, 'When we get to school, our worries disappear.' Pupils receive exceptional pastoral care. This helps everyone get along in this tight-knit community.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Overall, pupils achieve well, as shown by the school's published outcomes. They also behave well, displaying respect for others. In the early years, children quickly learn the routines of the setting. This helps them grow in confidence and independence. Children enjoy completing 'rainbow challenges'. They explain how they can collect colours for their rainbow by achieving tasks. This motivates them to concentrate and succeed.

Pupils have fun at this inclusive school. This includes taking part in clubs such as yoga and cooking. Pupils perform at a well-known music venue during the trust-wide 'NET Fest'. Pupils get to try new activities that develop their talents and interests. For example, several have been inspired to take up judo. The school broadens pupils' horizons.

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

Together with the trust, the school has put in place a well-designed, ambitious curriculum. High expectations for the delivery of this curriculum are evident throughout the school. Teachers ensure that they break learning down into appropriate steps. They also provide clear explanations for pupils. Pupils listen attentively and try to do their best. They are proud to show off their work. For example, pupils' art sketchbooks stay with them throughout school. Pupils enjoy sharing how their art has improved over time.

Pupils achieve well over time. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school knows pupils exceptionally well. It identifies and addresses pupils' needs effectively. Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. The school provides exceptional pastoral care for all pupils. This includes a wide range of skilful support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. For instance, some children in Reception enjoy circle time with an adult. They learn to show empathy for others through sensory activities. Children also learn to express their feelings by sharing kind thoughts. Across the school, effective support and guidance help pupils to engage fully in school life.

Overall, pupils recall prior learning well. They are keen to share what they know and apply this learning in lessons. However, teaching does not consistently check what pupils have learned and remembered. This means that gaps in some pupils' understanding are not addressed well enough. It also limits opportunities to deepen some pupils' learning. As a result, occasionally, pupils do not build on or make connections to their previous learning as well as they could.

The school prioritises reading well. There is an effective phonics programme in place. Preparation for this begins in the Nursery. Here, staff teach children to shape their mouth correctly to make letter sounds. If children do not reach national standards in phonics by the end of Year 1, the school helps them catch up. Most pupils leave the school as competent, fluent readers. A love of reading spreads through the school. Families enjoy weekly 'starbooks' events. During these events, parents and carers come into school to read with their children. The school identifies innovative ways to engage pupils in stories. This includes the whole school taking part in a dance linked to 'Alice in Wonderland' for World Book Day.

Over recent time, pupils' behaviour in school has notably improved. Most pupils behave sensibly, the school is calm and learning is rarely interrupted. Pupils support one another. They enjoy being play leaders and managing equipment for social times. This happy, calm culture makes the school a welcoming place. The school is also rightly proud of pupils' high rates of attendance. This is all underpinned by the impressive, high-quality care the school provides. Every detail of pupils' experience is carefully mapped out. This helps build pupils' character throughout their school journey. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps when they leave the school.

Trust and school leaders work productively together. There is a shared sense of purpose. Trustees hold executive and school leaders to account well. This helps the school improve

and strive for high standards. Staff love working at the school. They are as happy as the pupils. They appreciate the trust's careful management of their workload. They also know leaders have their well-being at heart.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not check what pupils know, remember and can do as effectively as they could. When this is the case, some pupils lack opportunities to demonstrate, explore and deepen their thinking. The school should ensure that it further develops the implementation of the curriculum, focusing on how teachers check, consolidate and extend pupils' understanding in the subjects they study.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2016.

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	140072
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10346514
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Geder of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Sanders
CEO of the trust	Jane Wilson
Principal	Carolyn Minto
Website	www.fna.northerneducationtrust.org
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The principal and vice-principal took up post in September 2023.
- The school is part of Northern Education Trust.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the principal, vice-principal and executive principal over the course of the inspection. They also met with the CEO of the trust.

- The inspector spoke with the vice-chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the local academy council. They reviewed documentation relating to governance, including minutes from governor meetings.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with leaders responsible for pupils with SEND and reviewed a sample of pupils' support plans and education, health and care plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector met with groups of pupils and staff formally throughout the inspection and spoke with them at social times and during visits to lessons.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents, including the school improvement plan.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Hannah Millett, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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 2025