

Inspection of Noel-Baker Academy

Bracknell Drive, Alvaston, Derby, Derbyshire DE24 0BR

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 February 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is transformed. Noel-Baker is a good school that pupils are proud to attend. They speak enthusiastically about the positive changes that have occurred. They value the impact of these changes. One pupil spoke for many when they said that now there is an 'excitement about learning'.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have changed and are much improved. Their conduct is exemplary. High expectations are set by staff and pupils live up to them. Pupils' learning is not disrupted. Pupils thrive. They look forward to their lessons. They feel safe and happy at break and lunchtime.

Pupils feel listened to. The school's philosophy of 'You matter – we care' is evident. Pupils say that if they have any worries, such as bullying, they can approach a member of staff. They trust that problems are dealt with quickly and effectively.

There has been a positive shift in the learning culture of the school. Teachers motivate pupils to achieve. Pupils are praised and valued. They love the rewards that they now receive. They are proud of the positive recognition that they so richly deserve.

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

Leaders have built a highly ambitious curriculum. They are driven by a clear, moral purpose. They have taken deliberate steps to address some of the disadvantage and inequality that some pupils face. Leaders and staff have thought carefully about what pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should know and be able to do. Leaders want all pupils to be well prepared for their adult lives. They want them, in the words of the trust's motto, to 'lead, empower, achieve, drive and excel'.

Many teachers are subject experts. They use their expertise well to deliver the planned curriculum. The curriculum in a few subjects is new. Leaders in these subjects have not assessed how well the curriculum fully supports all pupils' learning.

Leaders quickly identify the pupils who have fallen behind in reading. They ensure that pupils are helped to read with speed and fluency.

Teachers help pupils to make links between their learning. For example, pupils use their knowledge of Latin to help them understand other subjects, such as science and English. Teachers kindle a love of reading, for example by reading to pupils and encouraging them to use the school library. Pupils said they are ambitious about their futures. More are now studying academic subjects at key stage 4 than was previously the case.

Teachers help pupils to be ready for their adult lives. Careers guidance is effective. The number of pupils who continue into education, employment or training is high.

As they grow in confidence, pupils are starting to 'have a go' at new experiences. They play sport, sing, dance, learn chess and further their studies in their own time. Pupils are involved in the youth council. They are finding ways to improve the environment. They are making a positive contribution to their community.

Some pupils who are at risk of exclusion receive expert care and support in the school's ACE provision. They experience a high-quality bespoke curriculum. Exclusions have dramatically reduced.

Many more pupils attend school regularly than was previously the case. There are still some groups of pupils who do not attend as well as they could.

Leaders' actions have made a significantly positive difference to pupils and staff. This is a school of which the whole community can be proud.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have invested heavily in support for pupils' safety and welfare. The pastoral team is skilled and highly effective. Communication and information-sharing are strong. Every pupil has a trusted adult to whom they can turn if they need help. Staff are knowledgeable and respond swiftly when issues occur.

Pupils are clear that discrimination is not tolerated in school. Pupils said that they feel safe to be who they are without the risk of name-calling or intimidation.

Teachers are appropriately trained. The school's single central record of staff meets requirements. Recruitment processes are robust.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is inconsistently implemented. In a few subjects, it is not fully embedded. This means that pupils do not learn as well as they could in some of the subjects that they study. Leaders must ensure that the well-understood curriculum intent is consistently implemented.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. They are missing out on the rich opportunities that the school provides. Leaders must ensure that more pupils, particularly disadvantaged boys, attend school more regularly.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	143853
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10212265
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1075
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Andy Buck
Headteacher	Ann Donaghy
Website	www.noelbakeracademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision within Derby Pride Academy and Kingsmead School. These are registered providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 11 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors discussed the continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, members of the academy governing board, representatives of the trust, subject leaders and groups of staff.
- Inspectors undertook deep dives in science, mathematics, physical education and reading. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited lessons, considered pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers. They heard pupils read. They visited 'NBA reads' lessons to hear pupils being read to by their teachers.
- Inspectors held a series of meetings with leaders and pupils to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. They scrutinised a range of records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. They met with groups of pupils to discuss their wider personal development. They spoke with members of the pastoral team.
- Inspectors visited the ACE provision within school. They spoke with pupils and observed their learning.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from alternative providers used by the school and from the Derby Virtual School.
- Inspectors observed pupils at different times of the school day, including the start and end of day, and at lunchtime and breaktime.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, parents and pupils through discussions during the inspection, and through the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Roche

Ofsted Inspector

Dick Vasey

Ofsted Inspector

Roary Pownall

Her 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 2022