

Inspection of North Ridge Community School

Tenter Balk Lane, Adwick-le-Street, Woodlands, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN6 7EF

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Sam MacDonald. This school is part of Nexus Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Warren Carratt, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rachel Potts.

What is it like to attend this school?

North Ridge Community School is a welcoming place. Pupils are happy. They value the positive relationships that they have with staff. This means that the school is full of laughter and positivity. Pupils feel safe and enjoy attending school.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. The curriculum is ambitious and is designed to help pupils build their knowledge across individual subjects and the wider world. The quality of education that pupils receive is a constant focus of leaders. However, sometimes teachers do not always choose the most appropriate activity to deliver the curriculum. Leaders are addressing this through the training that staff receive.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Staff know their pupils well and make sure that their sensory and communication needs are met. This begins in the early years and continues right through the sixth form. This means pupils are ready to learn. Pupils contribute to school life by working closely with school leaders to improve the school. For example, pupils have worked with leaders to design the new playground.

Pupils' wider personal development is a sharp focus for leaders. The school ensures that pupils have a rich and diverse set of experiences beyond the curriculum. This opens up the wider world and broadens their horizons. Pupils thrive through the opportunities that the school creates. This includes the school disco, the climbing wall, trips, visits and the pupil parliament.

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

The school is growing rapidly and the range of pupils' needs has become more diverse since COVID-19 pandemic. The school has an ambitious curriculum for all pupils that builds from their starting points. Lessons follow a consistent model across the school. This is well understood and followed by all staff and supports pupils to know what to expect. For some pupils with more complex needs, there are times when staff do not choose the right activities to deliver the curriculum. This means that for these pupils, their knowledge is not secure before they move on. Where teachers do this well, pupils develop their knowledge across the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils develop their understanding of twisting motions in physics through carefully thought-out activities that allow pupils to experience the difference between various types of movement.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. Children benefit from resources with visual cues and symbols that provide support for their communication and language development. The school uses specialist therapists to meet children's sensory needs. Staff teach children how to behave well for learning effectively and how to sustain concentration and focus. Children are well prepared for key stage 1.

The school places great importance on teaching pupils how to read. The school has put in place an effective approach to teaching pupils what they need to read fluently. Staff follow the school's chosen approach to the teaching of early reading consistently. They provide expert support to help pupils to read effectively. For pupils with communication needs,

staff make sure that learning is broken down into smaller steps. Teachers repeat these steps that helps to build pupils confidence.

The school helps pupils to know how to cope and behave in social situations. The impact of this school on many pupils' lives has been transformational. Pupils attend well because they want to be here and feel that they belong. They behave superbly well. Pupils open doors for others and shake the hands of visitors, keen to tell them about what they are learning. The school is a motivating, inclusive environment where everyone is welcome and friendships are made.

The school has developed a strong sixth form provision. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Staff are addressing this through the curriculum. In some instances, the curriculum does not build upon what pupils have learned in the past. The school has ensured that pupils have an important stepping stone to their next steps in education, training or employment. Pupils learn about how to live safe, independent lives. Students in the sixth form are well supported to consider the many career prospects they can pursue. They benefit from personal careers advice along with transition events to help pupils think about their potential next steps.

Staff morale is high and they fully support the headteacher's vision. They greatly value leaders consideration of their workload. There is a strong focus on their professional development. The board of trustees supports the school well. They keep a close eye on the improvements that the school is making.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not choose the most appropriate tasks to deliver the curriculum. When this is the case, pupils do not secure the knowledge and skills they need to learn. The school should ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge to adapt activities and lessons in a way that best supports pupils' learning.

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	147829
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10346747
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	149
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	18
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rachel Potts
CEO of the trust	Warren Carratt
Headteacher	Sam MacDonald
Website	www.northridgeschool.org
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- North Ridge Community School is one of 17 academies in the Nexus Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered provider of alternative education.
- The school's sixth form is located off-site and is a shared provision with other schools within the multi-academy trust.
- The school makes provision for pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes those with severe learning difficulties and autism. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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.
- 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 the headteacher and senior leaders responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, personal development, early years and the sixth form.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the board of trustees and the local academy council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, early reading and science. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered pupils' work in art and physical education.
- The team scrutinised the school's records of bullying and spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and reviewed the school's data on external suspensions. Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance and records of pupils who have joined or left the school roll.
- Inspectors visited the school's sixth form provision, known as 'The Bridge', which is located away from the main school site. The inspectors spoke to students about their experience and reviewed their work.

- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They spoke to a cross-section of staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Stuart Voyce, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Berni Moorcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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