

Inspection of The Nicholas Hamond Academy

Brandon Road, Swaffham, Norfolk PE37 7DZ

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 December 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy at school. As a result, they attend well and arrive promptly. It is a calm school because teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Pupils believe that teachers will deal consistently and fairly with anyone who does not do what they should. If bullying happens, pupils know who they can talk to and are confident that it will be dealt with. They love the fact that they get rewards and responsibilities for being good role models.

Pupils enjoy lessons. Pupils have the opportunity to recall things they have learned previously in that subject. This helps to fix important information in pupils' minds.

All pupils study a wide range of subjects in every year of the school. They know that teachers expect them to work hard. Pupils feel confident that the school is keeping its promise to help them become 'the best that they can be'.

Pupils get many opportunities to learn about the diversity of life in modern Britain. This is through their LOOL ('leaders of our lives') lessons, and other curriculum subjects. This helps build a strong, tolerant school community.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. For example, almost every pupil chooses to study a modern foreign language and either history or geography during key stage 4.

In most cases, subject leaders carefully plan to ensure that pupils know and remember more over time. They ensure that pupils understand connections within and between subjects. Teachers work together to identify important knowledge for pupils. This shared, detailed planning ensures that pupils benefit from well-considered teaching. In a small number of subjects, this planning is not as detailed. Consequently, teachers are occasionally less clear about the most important knowledge pupils should learn.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Teachers receive detailed information about strategies for each pupil with SEND. They use this well to plan lessons. As a result, pupils with SEND successfully access the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders have recently changed the school's approach to reading across the curriculum. This is to encourage all teachers to consider literacy more centrally in their planning. Teachers do not always do this as thoroughly as they should.

Personal development is planned and delivered effectively. Pupils participate in a well-planned range of clubs and trips. They are proud to undertake leadership roles in the school, including as form representatives. Pupils debate controversial issues

sensibly. They learn how to look after their physical and mental well-being. Teachers work well with pupils who feel anxious, for example following their return to school after lockdown.

Almost all pupils move successfully to the next stage of their education or employment. This is because all pupils receive effective careers advice from school staff. Pupils also get the information they are entitled to from the other colleges and training providers who visit the school.

It is unusual for poor behaviour to get in the way of learning. Teachers and pupils develop good relationships. This supports an industrious atmosphere in lessons.

Teachers are almost all experts in their subjects. However, they still develop their knowledge and skills further. Teachers enjoy a wide range of relevant training opportunities.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. Leaders listen carefully to what staff tell them about their workload. Leaders want teachers to put all their energy into teaching pupils well. For example, much of the school's assessment happens through questioning at the start and end of lessons.

Governors and trustees understand what the school does well, and what it still needs to improve. They have worked closely with leaders to identify a clear vision for the school. They check carefully that the school is supporting all its pupils.

Communication between the school and parents has not been as effective as it should be. Some parents feel frustrated because they believe that they do not receive helpful information about their children at the right time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a vigilant and transparent culture of safeguarding. Training is thorough. Staff know to report all concerns, however minor. There are clear systems for doing this. Safeguarding concerns are followed up promptly. This helps families access the support they need. The pastoral, behaviour and attendance team members work closely together to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Leaders know the local safeguarding risks, and they communicate well with external agencies.

Trustees and governors understand their responsibility for safeguarding, and they ensure that it is undertaken effectively. Leaders thoroughly check the off-site alternative provision they use.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always fully consider the difficulty some pupils have with some of the reading required to participate in their lessons. As a result, some pupils find it hard to access all activities and this has been a barrier to their progress. School leaders should ensure that all teachers understand the school's literacy strategy, and receive the support and guidance that they need to implement it effectively.
- In a small minority of subjects, curriculum planning is not as clearly understood as it is in all the others. This means that teachers in these subjects are not always clear about what knowledge to prioritise in their teaching, or what resources are available for them to use. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent level of clarity in the planning for every subject across the curriculum, to strengthen pupil progress even further.
- School leaders have not always communicated as effectively as they should with parents. This has led to some parents feeling frustrated that they have not received timely and relevant information about their children. School leaders should strengthen their practice in this area, to help them engage more positively with parents.

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	138918
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10200509
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	656
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patricia Beanland
Principal	Mark Woodhouse
Website	tnha.attrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November and 1 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is in the process of closing its sixth form. It currently does not have any sixth-form students on its roll.
- The school is part of the Academy Transformation Trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the principal and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the trust and another trustee. They also met with the chair of the local governing body and three other members of the local governing body.

- Inspectors met with the national education director and the director of institute from the Academy Transformation Trust.
- Deep dives were carried out in English, mathematics, science, physical education, personal, social and health education, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects. They spoke to the special educational needs coordinator and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to early career teachers and those who support their induction into the school.
- Inspectors evaluated the information available on the school's website, including school policies, curriculum plans and information available for parents.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the arrangements in place to safeguard all members of the school community. The checks leaders make on the suitability of staff were scrutinised, and records were checked.
- Inspectors reviewed records of behaviour, including incidents of bullying. They scrutinised information about attendance. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspectors reviewed 63 responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed the 37 free-text comments parents submitted during the inspection. The inspectors also considered 40 responses to the staff survey and 95 responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke with pupils to gather their views on the school.

Inspection team

Paul Lawrence, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Carole Herman	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn Herlock	Ofsted Inspector
Damian Loneragan	Her Majesty's Inspector

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