

Inspection of Gosforth Junior High Academy

Regent Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE3 1EE

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Denise Waugh. This school is part of The Gosforth Federated Academies Limited, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Hugh Robinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by George Snaith.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. However, the academy received a monitoring inspection under section 8 of the Act on 13 and 14 May 2015. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Gosforth Junior High Academy is a welcoming, friendly and inclusive school. Strong relationships between all members of the school community benefit everyone, creating a supportive and aspirational environment. Pupils feel safe. They feel listened to and know that adults take any concerns seriously.

The school has high expectations for what pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve academically. This includes pupils who attend the additionally resourced provision for pupils with a visual impairment. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, particularly reading. As a result, they achieve well.

The school also has high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and these expectations are realised. Pupils are polite and courteous. There is a purposeful and calm atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils are engaged in their learning and curious to learn more. They are attentive and keen to contribute.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to extend their interests and talents after school, such as choir, debate and chess clubs. Pupils participate in numerous residential trips as well as visiting local sites, such as the nearby nature reserve and church. These activities strengthen pupils' personal development and confidence while also building on their learning in different subjects.

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

The school has high ambitions and expectations of all pupils. They have considered the crucial knowledge that pupils must learn and sequenced this logically throughout the curriculum. This means pupils deepen their knowledge over time and are well prepared for their next steps in learning.

Teachers use strong subject knowledge to plan activities that help pupils learn the intended knowledge. Over the last 12 months, the school has been developing its approach to assessment. Teachers use questioning and retrieval quizzes to check whether pupils have gained the specific knowledge that is set out in the curriculum. However, this is not yet consistent across the school. This hinders teachers' ability to effectively plan for pupils' future learning.

The school is quick to identify pupils with SEND. Teachers are provided with concise and relevant information about the individual needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers use this information to provide targeted and precise support. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Reading is a priority at Gosforth Junior High Academy. Pupils enjoy reading a range of novels, poetry and non-fiction texts during form time. Pupils who struggle with reading receive additional support matched to their needs. A love of reading is fostered through events, such as 'read a book in a day' and reading ambassadors.

Older pupils offer encouragement and reassurance in the role as reading buddies for younger pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. Pupils know what is expected of them. Consequently, disruption to learning by the behaviour of others is rare. Pupils take pleasure in receiving 'PRAISE' stamps for positivity, resilience, aspiration, inclusion, success and empathy. They value the 'PRAISE' code and use it to guide their behaviour and actions.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and school are positive. For the majority of pupils, attendance is high. However, some vulnerable groups of pupils do not attend school as often as their peers do. As a result, they miss important learning and experiences.

Pupils' broader personal development is well catered for. Leaders have designed a curriculum in which pupils learn the skills and knowledge they need to live in modern Britain. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy, ways to stay physically and mentally healthy and how to keep themselves safe online.

Pupils also have many opportunities to develop their leadership skills through being elected to roles of responsibility. Pupils are proud to take up these roles, striving to help other pupils and school leaders to make the school even better. Equality and respect are at the centre of school life. As one pupil commented, they had learned that 'At this school, it is okay to be myself.'

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel valued by leaders and well supported. Trustees and academy advisors know the school and the community well. They offer both challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's approach to checking what pupils know and remember is still relatively new. Sometimes, assessment is not used consistently well to identify whether pupils have learned what was intended. The school should continue to develop the checks that are made on pupils' understanding to inform future planning for pupils' learning.
- Some vulnerable groups of pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means pupils miss important learning and school experience. The school should

ensure that it strengthens its work to ensure that they improve these pupils' rates of attendance. This is so that these pupils can benefit from the good quality of education that the school provides.

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	136348
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10290164
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	752
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	George Snaith
Principal	Denise Waugh
Website	https://www.juniorhighacademy.org.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Gosforth Federated Academies Limited.
- The school has a local authority additionally resourced provision for pupils with a visual impairment. At the time of the inspection, there were five pupils attending the resourced provision.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school does not use any unregistered alternative provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.
- 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.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector met with members of the academy advisory group and board of trustees, including the chair of trustees. She also met with the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed behaviour as pupils moved around the school, during lessons, in the outdoor play areas and in the dining hall.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, leaders' behaviour and attendance records and minutes of meetings held by those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kate Morris, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Downs	Ofsted Inspector
Geoff Lumsdon	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Gammack	Ofsted Inspector

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