

Inspection of Great Park Academy

Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE3 2JH

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Katherine Billingsley. 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 (CEO), Hugh Robinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by George Snaith.

What is it like to attend this school?

Despite the challenges of operating from temporary accommodation for longer than expected, leaders have established a school where pupils thrive, personally and academically.

Great Park is a calm and purposeful school. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other and adults. They behave well in lessons and act maturely around school, including at social times. They have pride in their school and are excited about how the school will develop as it grows in size and moves to its permanent home. Pupils value the many opportunities they have to develop their leadership, including the active school council. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is very high.

Adults know how to get the best out of each individual pupil. Pupils who need it receive highly effective support. Pupils who find new learning easier are suitably challenged to deepen their understanding. Pupils achieve very highly, including in the end of Year 6 national curriculum tests.

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

Leaders have worked successfully to initially develop, and then maintain, a clear school identity. They have successfully overcome the barriers presented from operating in temporary accommodation. Pupils benefit from practical science focus days by using laboratory facilities at a nearby school within the trust. The school plans these deeper learning days and educational visits carefully.

Leaders, including members of the academy advisory group and trustees, plan strategically for how the school's systems and structures will need to adapt as the school grows.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. The school identifies barriers to pupils' regular attendance quickly. Leaders work with pupils and their families well to overcome these barriers. Attendance is very high.

Pupils benefit greatly from an exceptional personal development programme. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn, and when, in personal development lessons. Pupils have exceptional knowledge of issues including the role that religion plays in people's lives, and the similarities between the moral codes of different faiths.

Pupils are explicitly taught how to debate respectfully with others. The approaches taught are not reserved for 'set piece' debates. Pupils model these approaches in their interactions with each other throughout the school day.

Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary. Lessons are free from disruption. Pupils get along well with each other. Bullying is rare. When bullying

happens, it is dealt with very effectively. Pupils, who need it, receive additional behaviour support including through an enhanced 'PD+' programme.

Leaders have designed curriculums that build on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding on entry to Year 5. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need to achieve well.

In mathematics and English, pupils, including those with SEND, achieve highly in their end of Year 6 national curriculum tests. As the school has grown in size, it has appointed staff to lead individual subjects. These leaders evaluate the effectiveness of provision effectively and make any adaptations necessary. Some subjects do not have a substantive leader. In these subjects, pupils' learning of the more complicated ideas and concepts is not as strong. These gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are not always identified and addressed. Leaders have identified this as a priority as new subject leaders take up post in September.

Reading is prioritised across school. The '50 book challenge' ensures that pupils read a range of different texts. Adults listen to pupils read in registration time. Pupils who need extra help with reading benefit from carefully tailored support. Pupils' reading quickly reaches the level required to be successful in their wider studies.

The pupil council meets frequently and plays an active part in the life of the school. Councillors identify where improvements can be made, for example the introduction of a 'band club'. Currently, the councillors are planning how social spaces in the new school buildings should be arranged. Leaders take the views of the council seriously. When suggestions cannot be implemented, they explain why.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the absence of a substantive subject leader has delayed the development of systems to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. This limits the ability to identify gaps in pupils' learning and make any necessary changes to the curriculum or its implementation. Leaders should ensure that there are effective systems in all subjects to check pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

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	143923
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10297438
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	9 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	George Snaith
Principal	Katherine Billingsley
Website	www.greatparkacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Gosforth Federated Academies Limited, a multi-academy trust.
- The school opened in September 2021 and will eventually educate pupils from Year 5 to Year 11.
- At the time of inspection, the school only educated pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7.
- The school has been operating on a temporary site, located at another school in the trust, since opening. It is planned for the school to move to its own premises, three miles from the current site, in September 2025.
- The principal was appointed in April 2024. The principal was previously the assistant principal of the school.
- The school uses one alternative and registered provider. The school does not use any unregistered alternative providers.

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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance, and leaders in charge of personal development and careers.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and looked at samples of pupils' support plans. Inspectors looked at the provision that pupils with SEND receive across all aspects of school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about reading across school and observed some pupils reading to adults.
- Inspectors met with members of the academy advisory group, trustees and the CEO of the trust.
- 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 spoke to teachers and other staff over the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and spoke to others informally during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and surveys of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of documentary information, including the school's policies, its self-evaluation, records of behaviour and documentation related to safeguarding

Inspection team

Steve Wren, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Ferstenberg

Ofsted Inspector

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