

Inspection of The Elizabethan Academy

Hallcroft Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 7PY

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Christine Horrocks. This school is part of The Elizabethan Academy Trust which is a single-academy trust. The trust is run by the principal and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Derek Cheetham.

What is it like to attend this school?

The Elizabethan Academy is an inclusive school. The school has high expectations of how pupils should behave and what they can achieve. Pupils behave well. They think that staff are fair when dealing with any behaviour issues. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils know there are many staff they can speak to if they have any worries. At break and lunchtime, pupils conduct themselves well.

Pupils said that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff would sort out any issues if they did occur. Pupils feel safe in school. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Pupils benefit from many opportunities for their personal development. They have an enrichment lesson once a week. Pupils participate in various activities. For example, some do rock climbing, mountain biking, art and baking. These enrichment activities help to develop pupils' character and social skills. There is also a range of extra-curricular activities that pupils can take part in. Pupils enjoy taking part in school productions. Many pupils participate in cadets and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the school. Some run enrichment activities and others participate in the student council.

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

The school has designed a well-planned curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils have access to a broad curriculum, including the full range of the English baccalaureate subjects at key stage 4. The range of subjects that pupils study narrows in Year 9 when they start their key stage 4 courses. However, in enrichment lessons, pupils in key stage 4 can access activities linked to subjects they stopped studying in year 9.

The school has set out what pupils should learn and when in all subjects. This supports teachers in delivering the curriculum well. Teachers use the school's agreed approach of the 'learning ladder' in lessons to deliver the curriculum. Most teachers use this well. As a result, the way that teachers implement the curriculum is improving.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain new information clearly. Most teachers question pupils well to check their understanding. However, some teachers do not check carefully enough that pupils' understanding of prior learning is secure. This means that teachers do not always address gaps in learning. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils' work shows that most are progressing well through the curriculum. Some teachers do not always check that pupils use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. This means that some pupils' work contains repeated errors, and they do not always produce high-quality work.

Staff get clear information about how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Most teachers use this information well so that pupils with SEND get the help they need to access the curriculum. Some pupils with SEND get support from additional adults and some attend the 'nurture' group. Most pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points.

The school is committed to helping pupils to develop a love of reading. All pupils read regularly in tutor time. Some pupils have paired reading sessions to develop their confidence in reading. Pupils at the earlier stages of reading get the support they need to build their phonics knowledge.

Students in the sixth form benefit from an ambitious curriculum. Teachers in the sixth form have excellent subject knowledge. They support students well in lessons. Students are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils understand how they should conduct themselves in school. Pupils are polite. They treat each other and staff respectfully. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. The school works hard to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Attendance is improving.

The school places a high importance on pupils' broader development. The curriculum for pupils' personal development is well planned. Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They learn about different religions. They understand that they should treat others with respect. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents and interests through enrichment lessons and after-school clubs. Pupils take part in sporting clubs such as football, netball and trampolining. Pupils experience a range of career activities that prepare them well for their next steps. Some pupils do not understand fundamental British values or why they are important. This means that some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be.

Trustees know the school well. They provide effective challenge and support. Staff appreciate the opportunities they get for their professional development. They feel well supported by school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always check that pupils have a secure understanding of prior learning. This means that teachers do not always address gaps in learning. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should

ensure that teachers systematically check pupils' learning and address gaps in learning.

- Some pupils make punctuation, spelling and grammar errors. Teachers do not always address these or insist that pupils present their work well. As a result, they do not always produce high-quality work. Teachers should ensure that pupils are clear about the expectations for presenting work and use correct punctuation, grammar and spelling.
- Not all pupils have a secure understanding of the importance of fundamental British values. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. The school should ensure it prepares pupils for life in modern Britain effectively by developing their understanding of fundamental British values.

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	138076
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10313276
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1137
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	126
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Derek Cheetham
Principal	Christine Horrocks
Website	www.elizabethan.notts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Elizabethan Academy Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.
- The school runs an off-site provision for a small number of pupils.
- 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 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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, physical education, modern foreign languages and science. 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors visited tutorial sessions and an assembly.
- 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 met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND. Inspectors spoke with pupils at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaire.
- The lead inspector met with trustees.
- Inspectors met with the principal, vice-principals and the assistant principals.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and break and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Paul Halcro, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Martin Rowe	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Sammy	Ofsted Inspector

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