

# Inspection of a good school: City of Norwich School, An Ormiston Academy

Eaton Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 6PP

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2021

## **Outcome**

City of Norwich School, An Ormiston Academy continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to be a part of the City of Norwich School community. They say staff and leaders care about their needs and interests. This makes pupils feel happy, safe and included. Bullying is very rare. Pupils praise the way leaders have resolved occasional instances of unkindness.

Behaviour is calm. Pupils rise to leaders' high expectations of them. In lessons, pupils concentrate and work hard. They say teachers' consistent responses to any issues mean learning is seldom disrupted. Pupils behave in an orderly manner as they move around the school.

Pupils have a strong voice. They value how leaders listen to their views. Pupils lead groups such as 'expect respect' and 'COD' (celebrate our differences). These groups challenge leaders to make changes. Pupils talk with passion about the impact their initiatives have on the school. This helps them develop high levels of self-confidence, responsibility and respect.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities for personal development. For example, there are many clubs, including 'lab rats', baking, film and a 'kindness' club. These enrich what pupils learn throughout their curriculum.

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

Leaders have put in place a broad and well-designed curriculum. They have identified what pupils should know to be ready for their next stage of learning. This includes the sixth form, where the curriculum ensures students learn what they need to be successful when they leave school. Leaders want pupils to develop deep knowledge about their subjects, not just what they need for exams. Subject leaders ensure that learning in all year groups builds on what pupils already know. As a result, pupils progress well throughout the curriculum.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Almost all teachers are subject specialists. Where this is not the case, they get the training and help they need. Teachers know how to check and address misconceptions. Therefore, pupils understand and enjoy what they are learning.

Teachers recap what pupils have recently learned. They check that pupils remember this. In most cases, pupils can use and apply what they know. For example, in history, Year 12 pupils insightfully compared the censorship in pre-revolutionary Russia with the modern day. That said, in some cases, teachers do not recap learning from previous years as effectively. Because of this, sometimes, pupils do not see as clearly how their learning connects to what they have studied in the past.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to know what they need to succeed in life. For example, they check closely on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders put well-considered actions in place to support these pupils, such as at times of transition. Leaders check that the curriculum addresses gaps in their knowledge about culture and the wider world.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive strong support. Leaders accurately identify the needs of these pupils. Teachers are knowledgeable about how to support pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils with more complex needs get specialist support. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders show less ambition regarding the subjects pupils choose for key stage 4. Leaders do ensure pupils have a wide range of subjects to choose from. However, they do not do enough to help pupils make more aspirational choices, in particular, modern foreign languages (MFL). As a result, the school enters a significantly lower than average proportion of pupils for the English Baccalaureate.

Leaders prioritise reading. They help pupils experience a wide range of books that, in turn, support pupils in all curriculum subjects. The weakest readers get effective support to catch up. This includes pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Leaders support staff well. Leaders listen carefully to what staff tell them about workload. Staff praise the collaborative culture of the school. Leaders want teachers to use their time and energy in helping pupils learn.

Governors have the skills they need to fulfil their roles. They work closely with the trust to support and challenge leaders. For example, governors and the trust have monitored leaders' work on less developed areas of the curriculum. They have identified needed improvements which leaders have then put into place.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have built a vigilant and transparent culture of safeguarding. They regularly consult members of the school community. This ensures leaders have the information they need to keep pupils safe. Leaders evaluate local risks, such as county lines. They teach pupils to avoid these. Staff are well trained in identifying risks. Leaders work closely with agencies to make sure that pupils get the help they need. Safeguarding case records are thorough.

The curriculum provision pupils receive about how to stay safe is effective. For example, they are knowledgeable about how to stay safe online and apply this in their day-to-day lives.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Teachers do not revisit what pupils have learned in previous years effectively enough. As a result, pupils do not see the connections between current and prior learning as well as they could. Leaders should train staff so that they know how to do this well, and then check that they do it effectively to support and improve pupils' achievement throughout the curriculum.
- Leaders do not show enough ambition in helping pupils choose their subjects for key stage 4. Because of this, too few pupils choose the English Baccalaureate subjects, especially MFL. Leaders must ensure that pupils understand the value of these subjects and are encouraged to make appropriately aspirational choices.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 11 and 12 October 2016.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141269
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200202
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1757
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Dr Paul Hann
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Philpott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://cns-school.org">cns-school.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- City of Norwich School is part of Ormiston Academy Trust.
- The school is a larger than average secondary school.
- The majority of pupils at the school are White British.
- Since September 2021, the school has opened an on-site specialist learning resource base for a small number of Year 7 pupils.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

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 headteacher, senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors met with governors and a representative of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, creative technologies, modern foreign languages 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 pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the arrangements in place to safeguard all members of the school community. Inspectors scrutinised checks leaders make on the suitability of staff, and other safeguarding records.
- Inspectors reviewed 102 responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also reviewed 67 free-text comments that parents submitted during the inspection. The inspectors also spoke to staff and pupils to gather their views on the school's provision. There were no responses to the staff and pupil surveys due to a technical issue with the Ofsted portal.

### **Inspection team**

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Daniel

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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