

Inspection of The Holgate Academy

Hillcrest Drive, Hucknall, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG15 6PX

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils benefit from The Diverse Academies Trust's vision: 'We empower, we respect, we care'. However, for a significant number of pupils, their experience at Holgate Academy does not reflect those values well enough.

Leaders' expectations of how pupils should behave are too low. Staff do not manage behaviour consistently well. Pupils say that their learning is often disrupted by the poor behaviour of other pupils.

Pupils report that bullying is frequent. Pupils do not have confidence in staff's ability to tackle bullying effectively. Some pupils say that they feel unsafe.

Pupils can participate in the wide range of activities available. These include the popular football club, chess club and performing arts club. Pupils can become academy prefects or members of the school council. These opportunities enable pupils to develop leadership skills and confidence. Pupils speak positively about the rewards system and how they want to become a 'Holgate achiever'.

Pupils receive effective careers guidance. Many pupils proceed to post-16 education. The majority of students in the sixth form go on to study at a range of universities.

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

The curriculum is broad and offers pupils a range of academic experiences. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as other pupils.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They place emphasis in lessons on how they can help pupils learn and remember important information. Teachers start lessons by revisiting important content from previous learning. This approach is used well by teachers in English, mathematics and history to check what pupils have remembered. However, in other subjects, pupils struggle to recall information.

Some teachers do not check well enough if pupils' understanding of the knowledge they have previously learned is secure. This means that some teachers do not recognise gaps in pupils' knowledge. This restricts the progress pupils make over time.

The curriculum in the sixth form allows students to study courses that meet their interests and aspirations. Teachers are passionate about the subjects they teach. Pupils speak positively about how teachers provide supportive and timely feedback on their work. Students enjoy positive relationships with their teachers. They enjoy their sixth-form experience.

Leaders promote and celebrate reading across the school. They have invested in new books and resources so that pupils can read high-quality texts regularly in their lessons. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read get the additional support that they need to help them catch up. This is helping these pupils to read confidently, accurately and fluently.

Leaders have identified the needs of pupils with SEND, and how these needs can be met. Pupils with SEND are beginning to benefit from a better quality of education than they have done in the past. However, not all teachers support pupils with SEND effectively. Consequently, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

Poor behaviour has a negative impact on most aspects of the school's work. Staff do not consistently challenge poor behaviour. Low-level disruption often prevents pupils from learning. Too many pupils are released from classrooms and are left wandering the corridors or around the school grounds during lesson times.

Leaders support pupils who struggle to attend regularly. Nevertheless, too many pupils are persistently absent from school. These pupils are missing the opportunity to learn due to their poor attendance and/or punctuality to school and lessons.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through their personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. There are opportunities for pupils to learn about equality and diversity. Leaders have not considered how some aspects of the PSHE curriculum build pupils' knowledge of healthy relationships and British values. Some pupils do not value these lessons and the important messages that are shared. Some pupils have a limited understanding of aspects of the PSHE curriculum.

Leaders are keen for pupils to experience a wide range of social and cultural experiences outside of school. For example, Year 7 and 8 pupils have visited local universities. Many pupils achieve the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Governors are knowledgeable about their responsibilities. They offer appropriate support to leaders and hold them to account effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made safeguarding a priority. They are aware of the potential issues, including in the local area, that may put pupils at risk of harm.

The single central record and pre-employment checks meet statutory guidance. The trust oversees and check these processes regularly.

All staff have been well trained in safeguarding and understand their responsibility to keep pupils safe. Staff swiftly pass on any concerns they have to leaders.

Safeguarding leaders keep a close eye on the most vulnerable pupils. They work closely with external agencies, such as social care and the police, to help keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough. Staff do not challenge poor behaviour effectively. Learning is disrupted. Leaders and governors should ensure that all staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Leaders must support staff to deal effectively with pupils' poor behaviour so that pupils are able to concentrate in lessons and feel safe around school.
- Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. This means that they are missing out on their education. Leaders must ensure that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, attend school more regularly.
- Leaders do not deal with bullying consistently. Pupils do not feel confident in the staff's ability to tackle bullying. Leaders must ensure that there is a consistent, effective approach to addressing bullying so that all pupils know that bullying is unacceptable and that any such incidents are dealt with in a timely and effective way.
- The quality of education is inconsistent. Some teachers do not always use assessment information to check that pupils' prior knowledge is secure, to identify misconceptions, or to plan future learning. This means that there are times when pupils have not grasped new knowledge well enough before teachers move on to new learning. This prevents pupils from building on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to use assessment strategies to check that pupils understand and remember more over time.
- Some teachers do not consider the needs of pupils with SEND well enough when planning and delivering the curriculum. These pupils do not achieve well enough because they do not get the right support. Leaders must ensure that teachers make effective use of information about pupils' needs so that these pupils experience an ambitious curriculum that allows them to be successful.
- The PSHE curriculum does not enable pupils to build their understanding of fundamental British values and relationships education well enough. Leaders must ensure that the personal development offer allows pupils to gain an understanding of age-appropriate relationships education and 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.

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	139956
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10232859
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	10132
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	71
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Counsellor Mike Quigley
Principal	Matthew Pennington
Website	www.holgate-ac.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Diverse Academies Trust.
- The school uses six unregistered alternative provisions and two registered providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide students in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, science, art and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects. For these subjects, they checked the work pupils had completed in lessons and spoke to pupils in the class.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3,4 and 5.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. She reviewed a range of documents and the single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The lead inspector met with governors and trustees.
- Inspectors observed pupils around the school at breaktime and lunchtime. An inspector held telephone conversations with staff who work with pupils at alternative provisions.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Dawn Ashbolt, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Fearn-Davies	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Long	Ofsted Inspector

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