

Inspection of Easington Academy

Stockton Road, Easington Village, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 3AY

Inspection dates:	13 and 14 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The head of school is Nicola Falconer. This school is part of the North East Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Lesley Powell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Saxton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn to become 'world ready' during their time at Easington Academy. In line with the school's aims, pupils develop into well rounded citizens who respect others. Pupils enjoy coming to school. One pupil captured the culture of care and support when they stated that the school 'is like a big family'.

Alongside the caring and supportive nature of the school is an ambition that all pupils will achieve well. The school has high expectations for the academic achievement of all pupils. Pupils rise to this expectation and achieve well.

Pupils behave well at the school. Classrooms are calm and purposeful learning environments. Pupils play an active part in their learning. The school encourages a positive climate through a well-structured rewards system. Pupils proudly wear their 'IMPACT' badges to demonstrate that they have consistently displayed the positive values of interactions, manners, preparation, aspiration, curiosity and tolerance.

Through the school's exceptional personal development programme, pupils develop a deep understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils learn to respect and understand a range of different people, faiths and beliefs. As a result, pupils play their part to ensure that everyone is welcome at the school.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. The proportion of pupils that access the English Baccalaureate pathway is well above the national average, and growing. The school has thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils will learn. In subjects such as history and art there are clear links to the local community. For example, pupils study the local artist Fabric Lenny and explore the links to Picasso. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. When delivering the curriculum teachers regularly revisit pupils' prior learning. As a result, most pupils have a strong understanding of subject content. On occasion, teachers spend too much time scaffolding learning and do not move pupils on to independent tasks as quickly as they could. In these areas, pupils take longer to secure their understanding of the curriculum.

Reading is a priority at the school. The school identifies the weakest readers effectively and supports these pupils to catch up with their peers. The school develops a love of reading through activities such as 'blind date with a book', 'reading champions' and links to local libraries. Pupils engage enthusiastically with these activities.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. All pupils with SEND access the full curriculum offer. The school trains staff to deliver support in lessons. The school thinks carefully about how to help pupils to learn the curriculum. Pupils with SEND are very well supported at the school.

The school applies an effective system to support pupils who struggle with their attendance. The school challenges and supports pupils and families where appropriate. As

a result, the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced. Staff consistently apply a clear behaviour and rewards system. As a result, pupils are polite, courteous and respectful.

The provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. The school weaves opportunities for enrichment and character development into every aspect of its work. The curriculum helps to create a culture of mutual respect and high aspiration. The school ensures that all pupils have the chance to take part in meaningful trips and visits that they may not otherwise experience. The school's '12 days of Christmas' event provides a rich cultural experience, ensuring that all pupils benefit from Christmas celebrations as part of the Easington family. Pupil leaders, including the leadership groups of: 'my world', 'my community', 'my future' and 'my identity', have a significant impact on the life of the school and the local community. For example, they support local care homes, collaborate with a local brass band and work with local primary schools. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Those responsible for governance have strong oversight of the school. The school provides a comprehensive package to support staff development. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. Staff are well supported with their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, teachers spend too much time scaffolding learning and do not move pupils on to independent tasks as quickly as they could. This means that some pupils do not secure their understanding of the curriculum as swiftly as others. The school should ensure that, when appropriate, pupils benefit from opportunities to independently apply their learning.

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	138075
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10346436
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	797
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margaret Saxton
CEO of the trust	Lesley Powell
Headteacher	Nicola Falconer
Website	www.easingtonacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.
- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 met with the head of school and other senior staff.
- An inspector met with the CEO of the trust.
- An inspector met with a trustee and two members of the local academy council.
- 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 with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the quality of education in physical education.
- 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 pupils’ behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at social times, at transitions and in lessons. They also spoke with pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school’s programme of personal development.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff gathered through discussions and Ofsted’s online surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Tim Johnson	His Majesty’s Inspector
Martin Featherstone	Ofsted Inspector
Vicky Callaghan	Ofsted Inspector

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