

North Shore Academy

URN: 136146 | Inspected: 06 January 2026

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement

Strong standard

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress effectively through the curriculum and produce high-quality work. They write at length using ambitious language and demonstrate secure knowledge across subjects. Leaders' relentless focus on reading has a clear impact. Pupils who need support improve quickly and go on to achieve highly. Older pupils enjoy borrowing books from the library and reading challenging texts in class. They take pride in these achievements, which motivates them to succeed more and show how far they have come in their learning. Outcomes in national tests are regularly above the national averages and gaps between different groups of pupils are narrowing over time. When groups are considered separately, pupils achieve higher than national averages. Pupils are being well prepared for their

next steps

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum that is carefully sequenced across all subjects and year groups. Subject leaders, with staff, keep the curriculum under review to make sure it continues to meet pupils' needs. Staff understand how pupils learn and use this knowledge to make effective decisions in lessons. They adapt the curriculum and teaching so that every pupil can succeed. Teachers know their subjects well and use strategies such as instant feedback and regular checks to help pupils learn and retain more knowledge. Both in and out of the classroom, leaders focus on building pupils' firm foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils catch up quickly when needed. Teachers support reading well. For example, consistent whole-class approaches help pupils to understand and use more complex vocabulary. Over time, pupils learn to recall and apply these words without effort. Teachers use assessment well to spot gaps and adjust teaching. This includes well-planned recall quizzes. Pupils who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or face other barriers learn successfully. This is because staff hold high expectations and make the right adjustments. Pupils enjoy their learning and are motivated to succeed. They appreciate how teachers skilfully

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help them to build knowledge and confidence over time.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders create an inclusive culture where staff quickly identify pupils' needs and provide the right support. Disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils known to children's social care receive well-planned help that removes any barriers to their learning and wellbeing. Pupils value the school's 'bridge' provision, which offers a calm, welcoming space for those who require quieter areas or extra support. This helps them to develop a sense of belonging and join in successfully with school life. Leaders check pupils' progress through the curriculum carefully through weekly inclusion meetings. They plan interventions that make a positive difference to pupils' learning and wellbeing. All staff receive high-quality training so they can use inclusive strategies confidently in lessons. Leaders work closely with families and outside agencies, such as the virtual school, to secure specialist help. This collaborative work is key to meeting pupils' needs and successfully raising their aspirations. Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively so that disadvantaged pupils can enjoy valuable enrichment opportunities and achieve well. Leaders maintain a detailed oversight of any alternative provision to make sure pupils continue to succeed. The commitment to inclusion throughout the school means pupils thrive both academically and personally.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders and governors have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use detailed analysis well to drive sustained improvement. Strategic priorities are clear and well executed, with inclusion and ambition embedded throughout. Decisions consistently place pupils' best interests at the centre, including those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or are known to children's social care. Leaders act swiftly to remove barriers to learning and wellbeing, supported by positive relationships with families and external agencies. Governance is effective. Trustees and local academy council members meet statutory duties and provide robust challenge and support. They ensure resources are managed well and improvement is sustained. Professional development is high-quality, evidence-informed and coherent. The trust-wide 'staff college' and leadership development model builds expertise at all levels, helping to accelerate staff into positions of responsibility. Early career teachers benefit from highly effective, structured support. Staff report feeling highly valued and able to focus on their work due to leaders' positive actions on workload and wellbeing. High-quality subject and teaching development underpins the impressive outcomes pupils achieve. Leaders' actions are improving all areas of the school, reflecting their relentless drive for excellence.

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Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Leaders have designed a clear and ambitious programme for pupils' personal development. It gives pupils the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to thrive in later life. Staff teach pupils to reflect on their experiences, show tolerance and embrace British values. Daily 'snippets' provide bite-sized information to deepen this learning. Pupils understand important topics, such as religion, relationships and responsibilities. This helps them to think carefully about issues like consent and risks in the wider world. They show respect for others' values and beliefs, including through visits to places of worship, such as a mosque. These experiences broaden pupils' cultural understanding and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils enjoy earning 'iAspire' badges by taking part in a wide range of activities. They attend after-school clubs and some compete nationally. Many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, discover talents and interests they did not know they had. They are proud of these achievements. The school council is active and influential. Student leaders make real changes, such as improving the school menu. Through council elections, pupils learn about democracy in action. Careers education is comprehensive. Pupils value one-to-one interviews and opportunities to meet local employers. They enjoy visiting a range of universities. Pupils speak confidently about their ambitions and the steps they need to take to achieve them. All of this work is supported by high-quality pastoral care. The school places a high priority on ensuring pupils have a sense of belonging. Positive relationships sit at the heart of this. Staff teach pupils to respect others and to be kind. Pupils feel safe, motivated and ready to try new things. They leave school confident, resilient and aspirational for the future. They are proud of their school and their community. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders understand attendance patterns and act quickly when issues arise. They use effective systems to spot barriers early. A skilled attendance team effectively shapes their work to meet the needs of individual pupils and their families. Where needed, staff put targeted interventions and reasonable adjustments in place. The school's positive ethos means most pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is improving over time. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to remove obstacles to high attendance. Despite this, improvement is not yet consistent or rapid across all groups. Persistent absence remains a challenge. Leaders know this and continue to strive to find better ways to help all pupils to attend regularly. The school is calm, orderly and respectful. Staff set high expectations and apply behaviour policies well. Pupils behave positively and show commitment to their learning. Pupils and parents value the culture of care and support. Respectful and warm relationships are the norm. Bullying and discrimination are rare and dealt with promptly. When behaviour falls below expectations, staff help pupils to learn from their mistakes. A wide range of interventions has improved behaviour for specific groups and individuals. Praise is used thoughtfully and consistently. Pupils love weekly 'proud' events, where they can share their best work.

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What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils attend a school where they feel safe, valued and capable of success. There is a welcoming warmth throughout the school. Pupils enjoy being part of a community that celebrates their achievements and helps them aim for a brighter future. They eagerly share 'proud postcards', applaud each other's successes and look forward to showcasing their best work on 'Proud Friday'. When life brings challenges, pupils know staff understand and will work hard to remove barriers so they can continue to blossom. Classrooms are calm and respectful. Pupils rise to high expectations and take pride in producing ambitious work. They speak confidently about what they know and can do. Reading is a strength. It opens doors to success across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged achieve well and enjoy the same ambitious expectations as their peers. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly. Pupils trust the staff and feel they belong here. Life at this school is full of opportunities. Pupils earn 'iAspire badges', discover new talents and take part in activities from sports to creative arts. They enjoy cultural experiences, such as visiting the theatre and local museums. Careers education inspires pupils to set ambitious goals, meet employers and explore future pathways. Pupils know positive behaviour matters. They also enjoy coming to school. Most meet the school's attendance expectations, but the school continues to work on improving attendance so that every pupil benefits fully from their rich offer. Pupils leave this school confident, resilient and proud. Not just of their achievements, but of the community they belong to. They see role models every day and learn to become role models themselves. For many, this school is a guiding influence that helps to shape their future.

Next steps

- Leaders should build on current strategies so that their actions lead to rapid and notable improvements in attendance for all pupils and groups.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/north-shore-academy-stockton-on-tees>