

Inspection of Trinity Academy New Bridge

Craigshaw Road, Sunderland SR5 3NF

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is on a journey of improvement. Pupils join the school roll at different times of the year. Most have experienced previous long-term absence from education. Leaders are determined to provide pupils with provision that meets their individual needs well. However, not all subjects in the curriculum are coherently designed and sequenced. The importance of reading is not well promoted. Some pupils do not learn the skills that they need to apply their phonic knowledge effectively.

There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Building effective relationships is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils are encouraged to be 'calm, kind and honest.' Staff have high expectations for pupils. They help them to manage their behaviour. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils say that they feel safe and that they have trusted adults they can talk to.

Pupils enjoy taking part in various enrichment activities linked to the reward system. These include trips to the trampolining centre, laser tag and Herrington Park. They relish going to Harry's Game Shack. These experiences help to reduce pupils' anxiety about school and develop their social skills. The sports club and twilight sessions help pupils to grow in confidence and develop their physical and mental health.

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

Leaders for the trust have worked effectively with school leaders to help the school through a significant period of change. These changes have taken time. Leaders continue to work towards improving the quality of education. The trust provides strong support to improve the school. Leaders know what needs to be done. They are making ambitious and sustainable improvements.

Leaders are redesigning the academic curriculum. They have not clearly identified the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn in every subject. Where this is done in more detail, for example in physical education and science, pupils build knowledge and skills over time. In other subjects including English and mathematics, this work is not complete. Sometimes, teachers teach topics of learning in a different order. For some pupils, this means that they do not have the knowledge they need to build effectively on their prior learning.

Many pupils arrive at the school with limited reading skills. Reading is not promoted well. Leaders have begun to improve this. The library has a range of new texts. Pupils have time to enjoy the library on a weekly basis. Yet, those in the early stages of learning to read do not receive the right support. They do not read often enough. Pupils do not have enough chance to practise using their phonic knowledge to improve their reading.

Leaders give careful thought to how the school can best meet the requirements of each pupil's education, health and care plan. There is a range of academic and vocational opportunities, including using alternative provision. Pupils attain qualifications in their areas of interest and in readiness for further education and employment.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is high priority. Topics of learning aim to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn respect for people with protected characteristics. They develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. They discuss and debate issues of local and national importance, such as gender identity and knife crime. They develop an age-appropriate understanding of relationships, sex and health education. They take part in residential experiences. Opportunities are planned to enhance their cultural experiences and personal growth. These include visits to the theatre and residential opportunities.

There is a suitable programme to help pupils to make informed choices about their future careers. Alternative providers offer vocational studies such as brick laying, carpentry, engineering and horse riding. Pupils receive independent advice and guidance about further education, employment and training.

Initiatives such as the 'skills to learn' programme and remote education offer are helping pupils to engage in education. Leaders do their very best to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Their actions are having a positive impact on the engagement and attendance of individual pupils.

Trustees and school leaders share the same passionate vision for the future of the school. Staff appreciate that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is an effective culture for safeguarding. They understand how pupils who are vulnerable can be at risk within their community. Pupils are taught about these risks and how to manage them. Leaders make frequent checks on the welfare of pupils who are absent from school and those who attend alternative provision. Staff are trained to understand pupils' needs and to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Pupils know the adults they can talk to about any concerns they may have. Leaders work proactively with external agencies to access guidance and support for pupils when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are redesigning the content for some subjects within the curriculum. It is not clear in all curriculum subjects what teachers need to teach or when. This means that some pupils may miss out on important learning. Leaders should make sure that the content for each subject identifies clearly the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and when.
- Reading is not prioritised. Pupils do not practise their reading skills daily. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read do not practise using their phonic knowledge often enough. This means that some pupils do not develop the knowledge and skills that they need to become fluent and confident readers. Leaders should ensure that a culture for reading is established across the school, that staff are able to teach phonics and reading skills well and that pupils have opportunities to apply the phonic knowledge to become fluent readers.

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](#)' 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	146640
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10267834
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	134
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Carter
Headteacher	Mark Flint
Website	www.tanmat.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Trinity Academy New Bridge converted to become an academy school in December 2018. When its predecessor school, The New Bridge Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school no longer provides post-16 education.
- Most staff, including leaders, are new to the school in the last two years.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school provides education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Pupils join the school at different times during the school year following referral from the local authority.
- The school makes use of nine alternative education providers. Four of these providers are unregistered.
- The school provides breakfast for pupils every morning.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the designated leader for safeguarding and pastoral leader, the trust leader for parenting, the teacher with responsibility for remote education and some curriculum leaders. They met with some members of staff and some pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the deputy chief executive officer for the trust, the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the local advisory board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into English, mathematics, physical education and personal social, health and economic education. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teaching staff and spoke to some pupils. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects including science and information technology.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff about the school's approach to safeguarding pupils in school. Inspectors checked the single central register and reviewed records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector visited some of the alternative providers used by the school. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Barton	Ofsted Inspector

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