

# Inspection of a good school: Endeavour Academy Durham

Willerby Grove, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 2RN

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Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

## Outcome

Endeavour Academy Durham continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Kerrie Whelan. This school is part of Apollo Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Saxton.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive socially and emotionally in Endeavour Academy. They are taught the importance of manners and respect. They learn how their behaviour can affect others. Over time, pupils become increasingly reflective in this nurturing environment. They are proud to explain how the school has helped them to become a better person.

Pupils appreciate the calm and friendly approach of all the staff around them. The academy's belief that 'sometimes all we need is a fresh start' is lived out by everyone. Pupils trust the adults they work with to treat them fairly. They also know staff will teach them how to stay safe in the wider world. When pupils find things difficult, staff support them with relentless positivity.

Due to the high-quality relationships in the school, pupils achieve well across the curriculum. They enjoy a well-designed curriculum that meets their needs. Pupils leave the school with qualifications in a range of academic subjects, including English and mathematics. They also gain accreditation in vocational subjects, such as hospitality.

Every pupil who attends the school knows what they are going to do when they leave. This is because pupils enjoy extensive opportunities to prepare them for their next steps. Staff support pupils with choosing courses, apprenticeships and post-16 providers that best meet their needs. Pupils are also taught how to travel independently to their varied destinations.

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

Endeavour Academy places equal importance on a high-quality education and excellent pastoral care. The school has designed a detailed and well-sequenced curriculum in core

subject areas. All pupils access this ambitious curriculum. The school is proud to teach pupils citizenship as part of this core offer. In 'active citizenship', pupils carry out ambitious projects. They plan interviews and research to support their work. Recently, pupils' project work influenced the teacher training offered by a local university. Pupils won an award for this project. Many pupils arrive at the school with high levels of anxiety. They lack confidence due to missed learning in previous settings. The skilful blend of learning and care ensures pupils reach ambitious goals.

The school increasingly places a high priority on reading. An exciting new reading space and book vending machine are now in place. The school carries out detailed assessments of pupils' reading ability on entry. This highlights any pupils who need additional support. Well-trained staff teach reading interventions to these pupils. It helps them catch up with their peers. However, some pupils' literacy is a barrier to achievement across the curriculum. They often have the required subject knowledge but struggle to interpret longer questions. This limits their achievement across a range of subjects.

The school has a positive impact on pupils' attendance over time. A high percentage of pupils join the school with historically low attendance. The school supports pupils and families to remove the barriers to positive attendance. This work often has a significant impact. The appointment of a family liaison worker has led to further improvements.

High-quality pastoral care is everyone's business at Endeavour Academy. Every adult in the school models positive attitudes and self-care. Pupils see this and replicate it. For pupils who struggle socially or mentally, thoughtful and timely interventions help them improve rapidly. Pupils enjoy weekly 'ologies' lessons. These lessons teach them about restorative practice and how to use this to repair friendships when things go wrong. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe online and offline. In addition, all pupils undertake a mental health awareness qualification.

Across the curriculum, pupils develop and celebrate important skills. These include creativity, speaking, problem-solving and teamwork. Pupils earn badges for these skills. This supports the school's embedded focus on employability and pupils' other next steps. Pupils become increasingly confident and articulate. This helps them leave the safety of the school and move into new environments.

Governors, trustees, school leaders and the wider staff unite in their goals. They ensure a positive culture of success runs through the school. Leaders prioritise the well-being and workload of staff. Staff feel valued. They say they are part of a team and know their work makes a difference. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent represented the views of many. They described the school as 'transformational' for pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some pupils lack the confidence and skills to interpret longer written questions in lessons and assessments effectively. This can be a barrier to pupils' achievement. The school should continue to improve its approach to supporting literacy and reading across the curriculum.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141109
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297404
<b>Type of school</b>	Alternative provision
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	50
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Margaret Saxton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kerrie Whelan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.endeavouracademy.co.uk">www.endeavouracademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Endeavour Academy Durham is the only academy in Apollo Schools Trust.
- The school is an alternative provision catering for pupils aged 14 to 16. Pupils who attend have social and emotional barriers that prevent successful education in a mainstream setting.
- The school does not use alternative providers of education for its pupils.
- The school is located within East Durham College. Some pupils attend lessons in the college for specific vocational courses.
- 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 headteacher and deputy headteachers over the course of the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust board and three trustees. They also met with the chair of the local governing body and three governors. The lead inspector reviewed documentation relating to governance, including minutes from governor meetings.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following curriculum areas: mathematics, science and citizenship. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with leaders responsible for personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors met with groups of pupils formally throughout the inspection and spoke with them informally at social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors met with two groups of staff formally during the inspection.
- A range of school documents were reviewed, including the school's self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff gathered through Ofsted's questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Hannah Millett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Penny

Ofsted Inspector

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