

# Inspection of John Whitgift Academy

Crosland Road, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN37 9EH

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Inspection dates:	3 and 4 June 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Robert Spendlow. This school is part of Delta Academies 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), Paul Tarn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Hodsman. There is also an executive principal, Chris McCall, who is responsible for this school and four others.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending this inclusive school. They recognise and value the care that they receive. Pupils and staff share very positive relationships. Pupils say they are proud to be part of the John Whitgift team.

Pupils respond very well to the school's high behaviour expectations. Their conduct in lessons is exceptional. They are keen to support other members of their school community. For example, older pupils act as buddies for younger pupils on the school bus. Pupils respond positively to the school's rewards system. They enjoy watching a film in the onsite cinema in recognition of things such as high effort achievement or attendance. Pupils appreciate how the school recognises their hard work.

The school's high expectations for pupils' achievement are realised by many. Pupils make impressive progress through the ambitious curriculum and achieve well in published examinations.

Pupils are proud to be leaders in the school. The extensive range of leadership opportunities have a high take-up from pupils. For example, prefects support pupils in the school during social times. Pupils praise peers who demonstrate the school values. This initiative is known as 'Be Kind'. Pupils are integral to the positive ethos that is part of this ambitious and caring school.

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

Pupils study a broad and ambitious curriculum. They study increasingly complex content as they progress through the school. For example, in art and design, pupils expand their understanding of tone as they learn about observational drawing techniques. However, on occasion, some pupils find it hard to make connections in their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. The school accurately identifies their needs and swiftly puts support in place. Whole-school strategies support all pupils in their learning. For example, the school breaks knowledge down into the most important concepts. This helps pupils understand what the key learning is. Teachers know pupils very well. Pupils with SEND progress very well through the curriculum.

The school has strengthened its approach to reading. The school identifies those at the early stages of reading accurately and provides bespoke support. Pupils develop an enjoyment of reading, particularly those in key stage 3. Within lessons, pupils enjoy reading a range of texts. For example, pupils in Year 7 learn about autism when studying their class reading book. These carefully selected books help pupils to develop a deep understanding of differences in the world.

Pupils describe with enthusiasm an extensive range of enrichment opportunities. The school goes to great lengths to ensure that pupils benefit from these. Clubs such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, cooking and sports are very well attended. Pupils enjoy high-

quality support for their future careers. They are aspirational and well informed about a range of potential careers and pathways.

Pupils show respect for peers, adults and visitors to the school. They are proud of their work in lessons. Pupils relish the opportunity to earn badges through the 'colours' scheme. Here, pupils collect different badges for completing certain activities. These include debating, charity work and taking on leadership roles. Pupils gain vital skills that prepare them extremely well for life in modern Britain.

The school and trust share a passion and ambition for improvement. The school has a culture that strives for excellence. The school's strategic approach to secure high attendance is impressive. Those responsible for governance provide effective support and challenge. This has helped the school's significant improvements over time. For example, adults in the school recognise the strength in pupils' behaviour that exists now. Leaders have an accurate understanding of where they will make further improvements.

Leaders of the school and trust have continued to make the school a happy place to be for all. Staff at the school are proud to work there. They know that they are valued. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A parent spoke for many when they said, 'The school supports my child and helps them reach their full potential.'

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- At times, the curriculum does not support pupils to build on previous learning as well as it could. This means that some pupils are not confident in applying new knowledge and struggle to make connections with previous learning. The school should further refine and embed curriculum strategies to enable pupils to link and apply their prior 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137464
<b>Local authority</b>	North East Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346425
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,033
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Steve Hodsman
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Paul Tarn
<b>Principal</b>	Robert Spendlow
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.johnwhitgift.org.uk">www.johnwhitgift.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	30 and 31 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Delta Academies Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- 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 principal, executive principal, vice principals and other members of the senior leadership team. An inspector also met with the leader responsible for SEND.
- The lead inspector spoke with the CEO. He also spoke with members of the trust board, including the vice-chair.
- The lead inspector met with members of the academy advisory board (those responsible for governance), including the chair.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, English, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff through meetings held with them and through their responses to Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils through meetings held with them and through speaking with them during break times and lunchtimes.

## Inspection team

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Cole	Ofsted Inspector
Dimitris Spiliotis	Ofsted Inspector
Jayne Gaunt	Ofsted Inspector

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