

Inspection of Northampton School for Boys

Billing Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN1 5RT

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 March 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The executive principal of this school is Mr Richard Bernard. This school is part of The NSB Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The executive principal of this school also acts as the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Bason.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Education Act since November 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Northampton School for Boys. They demonstrate remarkable attitudes and commitment to all the opportunities that the school provides. There is a real sense of community built on the culture of 'respect the past, secure the future'.

The school has the very highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is aspirational for all. Pupils work hard and achieve exceptionally well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive alongside their peers.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils commit wholeheartedly to their learning. No time is wasted. Dedicated and caring staff make every effort to get to know pupils well. Pupils trust staff to keep them safe and provide support whenever they need it.

The school makes sure that all pupils benefit from an astonishing array of enrichment activities. The sports and expressive arts activities stretch pupils' talents and offer them opportunities to compete at the highest level. A vast range of clubs support pupils in developing other interests. These include 'female lead society', dance festivals, 'find your voice', staged performances and music shows, as well as inter-house competitions. The amazing opportunities the school provides mean pupils enjoy memorable experiences together.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum that is challenging and interesting. The curriculum has been well designed to build on what pupils know already. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, relish the chance to challenge themselves. They develop a sophisticated understanding of the subjects they study. The work pupils produce is of exceptionally high quality. The curriculum provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need for their next stage in education or employment. Almost all pupils go on to ambitious destinations when they leave the school.

Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach. They undertake rigorous checks on what pupils understand and immediately address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers identify the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. Teachers ensure that the support they provide enables these pupils to be successful. Teachers deliver the school's curriculum expertly. Pupils eagerly discuss their learning using subject-specific vocabulary accurately. Leaders consider staff workload well. Subject leaders have ownership of their curriculum.

The school prioritises reading and oracy. Pupils make excellent use of the school's library and reading clubs and demonstrate a love of reading beyond the curriculum. For those who need extra help in reading, staff provide personalised support, so pupils become more confident and fluent readers.

Pupils have incredibly high standards regarding what they should be able to achieve and the environment in which they should learn. This reflects the ethos and culture of the school. One student summed up the views of many, saying, 'This school empowers you, not only to be yourself, but to be proud of what you can and will achieve.'

Themes in assemblies and tutor time help pupils develop mature attitudes towards equality and a deep understanding of fundamental British values. There is a strong emphasis placed on learning about different faiths and cultures. Pupils enjoy the chance to celebrate different cultures together.

The school's personal development offer prepares pupils for adulthood exceptionally well. This includes an aspirational careers programme that encourages pupils to aim high. All pupils receive personalised advice about their future choices and partake in work experience. Pupils learn how to maintain positive relationships and keep themselves healthy and safe.

Attendance is excellent. Pupils are proud to attend the school. They follow routines without fuss, moving around the school in a calm and purposeful way. Many pupils gain leadership experience by representing the school in local and national events. A strong example of this is the numerous pupils involved in competitive national sports finals, where they learn how to win and lose professionally.

The school has strong links with the local community. Parents and carers appreciate this. Pupils learn how to be good citizens as they take part in a vast variety of charity projects. Students in the sixth form link their academic studies to societies focused on different careers, such as in medicine, where they gain first-hand experience of what it could be like to work in the field.

Pupils thrive at this school because of visionary leadership and the shared commitment of staff to provide the very highest quality education for all pupils. The school is well supported by committed trustees and governors who prioritise staff's well-being and provide strong challenge to school leaders. One pupil summed up the views of so many, describing the school as 'just amazing'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	136299
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10347504
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,678
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	568
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Bason
CEO of the trust	Richard Bernard
Headteacher	Richard Bernard (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.nsb.northants.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 November 2014 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The NSB Trust.
- The school has a large sixth form which is co-educational.
- 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.
- The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

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.
- 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 carried out deep dives in English, design and technology, mathematics, religious education, modern foreign languages and history. Inspectors also looked at pupils' workbooks and curriculums in science, art and design, and physical education.
- The lead inspector met with trustees and governors and reviewed documentation such as the minutes of trustee meetings.
- Inspectors met with leaders throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with associate staff as well as some leaders and teachers.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of different year groups, including pupils with SEND. They spoke with pupils informally and observed the behaviour of pupils during social times.
- Inspectors took note of the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and governors' minutes of meetings. They considered information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and suspensions, and the wider curriculum.

Inspection team

Sally Wicken, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Keval Thakrar	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Mason	Ofsted Inspector
Javier Sanchez-Garcia	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Hurcombe	Ofsted Inspector

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