

Inspection of Magnus Church of England Academy

Earp Avenue, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 4AB

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 February, and 5 March 2025

The quality of education **Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Requires improvement**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade **Good**

The headteacher of this school is Anna Martin. This school is part of Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy 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), Chris Moodie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Hunter.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, staff and parents describe Magnus Academy as a school with a 'family feel' where everyone is included. One parent, typical of many, said, 'My daughter is very lucky to be part of the Magnus family; she isn't just a number, she is seen and supported as an individual.'

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and respectful. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm. Pupils are cared for and supported well by adults. This helps them to feel safe.

The school has high aspirations for pupils. It is working to make improvements to the quality of education that they receive. These are not implemented consistently. As a result, pupils do not learn or achieve as well as they are capable.

The school provides a broad range of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests, including sports clubs, the school show, Combined Cadet Force and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Pupils enjoy the valuable experiences they get from these activities. Sixth-form students contribute to school life, for example as reading or peer mentors.

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

The school is led with a strong moral purpose. Decisions are made in the best interests of pupils and families. This reflects the inclusive, ethos of the school.

The school's well-designed curriculum is ambitious for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils in key stages 4 and 5 select from a broad range of subjects that allows them to pursue their interests. Across subjects, the school has identified the knowledge that pupils will learn. This provides clarity to staff about what pupils should know and by when.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use to present information clearly. However, checks on pupils' understanding are often not done effectively enough. As a result, pupils do not receive consistently clear feedback. Sometimes, gaps and errors in their learning are not resolved or teachers move on before pupils are ready. When this is the case, pupils struggle with subsequent learning. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers receive accurate information about the needs of pupils with SEND. The school has trained teachers in how to use this information to meet pupils' needs. However, teachers do not adapt their teaching consistently well. When this happens, pupils' progress through the curriculum slows. The teaching of the curriculum is stronger in the sixth form. Sixth-form classes are small and teachers know students well. Teachers provide individualised feedback and support, which students value. As a result, students in the sixth form achieve more strongly.

The school promotes reading through a recommended reading list for each year group, 'The Magnus Canon', as well as author visits and a well-resourced library. Pupils who need extra help with reading are well supported by specialist staff. This is enabling them to catch up.

The school has prioritised actions to improve pupils' attendance and behaviour. As a result of this effective work, attendance is improving. Consequently, they miss less learning and benefit more fully from the school's wider offer.

Pupils benefit from a strong personal development offer. The personal, social and health education curriculum ensures that pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships, staying healthy and keeping themselves safe. The school's strong focus on equality and diversity means that pupils understand and respect difference. Enrichment sessions and school trips provide rich opportunities for pupils to enjoy new activities and develop new skills. Pupils appreciate these experiences.

The school's strong careers programme ensures that pupils are well informed about possible next steps in education, employment or training. They receive information from local employers and education providers, as well as personalised careers advice. Older pupils benefit from completing work experience placements.

Leaders have taken effective action to improve some areas of the school, such as attendance. The school's actions to improve the quality of education so that pupils achieve consistently well are at an earlier stage. Staff have received relevant support and training but are still developing how they translate these into practice. The implementation of the curriculum is variable. Governors and the trust know the school well. Although there are appropriate systems in place to check on the school's work, these have not secured the improvements needed in pupils' outcomes.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the regular support and training that they receive. Most parents are positive about the care and breadth of opportunities provided by the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not check pupils' understanding effectively enough. Sometimes teachers move on before all pupils are ready to do so. Pupils do not get clear feedback, and gaps and errors in their learning are not resolved, which means they do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers check pupils'

understanding systematically, using information from these checks to close gaps in pupils' knowledge effectively.

- Sometimes, teaching is not adapted sufficiently well to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress through the curriculum that they should. The school should ensure that teachers adjust their teaching effectively so that pupils with SEND achieve consistently well.
- The school's recent improvements to the quality of education are at a relatively early stage. While the school has provided support and training for staff, the implementation of the curriculum is variable. The school and the trust should ensure that high expectations for teaching and pupils' outcomes are translated into practice securely well.

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	140549
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10347588
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	750
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	87
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Hunter
CEO of the trust	Chris Moodie
Headteacher	Anna Martin
Website	www.magnusacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 April and 1 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust. The school joined the trust in February 2014.
- This is a Church of England academy. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2018. The next inspection is due in 2026.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school hosts a provision called 'Maple' for pupils in key stage 3. A small number of pupils from other schools also attend this provision. All pupils remain dual registered with their home school.
- The school runs one off-site alternative provision unit (also called 'Maple') for key stage 4 pupils, located on Quibbel's Lane, Newark.

- 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.
- The inspection started on 4 February 2025. Inspectors returned on 5 March 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with [Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence](#) policy.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 spoke with the headteacher and a range of other leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, design and technology, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors visited tutorial sessions and assemblies.
- Inspectors met with early career teachers and with the staff involved in their induction.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND. Inspectors spoke with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke to staff and spoke to pupils from the alternative provision unit.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

- An inspector met with members of the governing body. They also spoke to the CEO of the trust and the director of education from the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation provided by the school, including documents on the school's website.

Inspection team

Damian Painton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Gulbanu Kader	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Rhatigan	Ofsted Inspector
Thomas Wraith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Mills	His Majesty's Inspector
Ben Hill	His Majesty's Inspector

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