

Trinity Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135007
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	364041
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Clive Moss HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1330
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nigel Robson
Principal	Mr Ian Brew
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. They observed 39 lessons, taught by 34 teachers and one cover supervisor, four tutorial sessions taken by four teachers, other occasions when the students were learning, as well as shorter visits to lessons. They held meetings with groups of students, members of staff and a representative of the governing body. They observed the academy's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation, records of support for students, the academy's information about lessons, and data about attendance, behaviour and students' progress. They looked at 880 parent and carer questionnaires, as well as others filled in by students and members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What strategies are the academy using to improve attendance and what evidence is there of the impact?
- How well does the academy deal with reducing variations in performance between subjects?
- Are lessons equally engaging and students enthused; how are they linked to supporting students at risk of underachieving?
- What strategies is the academy using to bring about improvement in the sixth form and what evidence is there of the impact?

Information about the school

Trinity Academy is much larger than the average secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average and has risen since the last inspection. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is low. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is low. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average overall and below average also for those with a statement of special educational needs. The academy has specialist status for business and enterprise.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

A combination of outstanding care, guidance and support, an extensive and varied curriculum and teaching that is predominantly good, results in the students making exceptional progress over the course of their time at the academy. In the time since the last inspection, students' attainment has been above average overall. The most recent set of examination results and the academy's own high-quality data on the students' current levels indicate that attainment is close to being high. Examination results have increased significantly each year since the last inspection, continuing a trend that was clearly evident at that time, and the rate of increase has been consistently much better than the rate of improvement nationally.

The academy has invested much time and effort in developing teaching and learning in lessons and to good effect. The academy's data show that inadequate teaching has been eliminated and none was observed during the inspection. The best teaching seen during the inspection engaged the students fully, promoted very positive attitudes to learning and resulted in the students' tangible enjoyment of the work. In slightly less successful lessons, the teaching was not related entirely securely to the standards of work of which all groups of students were capable. In addition, the effectiveness with which teachers used questions, to check students' progress and to challenge them to improve, varied.

The staff have a very clear and accurate understanding of where things work well and where they need improving. Self-evaluation is based upon comprehensive and detailed data about every student's progress and current levels of attainment, along with considerable information about the quality of teaching and learning. The information is gathered frequently through a searching process of observations, monitoring and discussions. The analysis undertaken is rigorous and leads directly to carefully planned and usually successful actions. The plans support individual students who appear to be making less progress than might be expected of them and support subject areas in which performance appears to be less successful than for other subjects. The success of the actions can be seen, for example, in the students' attainment in English, which has improved each year and changed from being significantly below average just after the last inspection, to a little above average in 2010. The academy evaluates its performance against the most stretching benchmarks, though its deep determination and desire to succeed leads very occasionally to a slight over-estimation of its current performance. Not every aspect is examined quite as rigorously as students' progress. Action to improve attendance, for example, has reduced levels of absence, but the improvement is much less secure than it is for attainment. The academy has recruited to the sixth form increasingly successfully and the students' outcomes are generally good, but the levels of attainment and progress made are not as strong as in the main school. Nevertheless, the improvements made to date demonstrate the academy's outstanding capacity for further sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further, in both the main school and the sixth form, by ensuring more consistent use of the best practice seen during the inspection, particularly:
 - the use of assessment during lessons
 - the use of information about the students to devise different learning opportunities to meet the needs of all groups of students in the lessons.
- Ensure all aspects of provision and performance in both the main school and the sixth form, particularly attendance, are subject to the same rigorous analysis that has been used to improve students' progress and attainment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Almost all groups of students achieve examination results at the end of Key Stage 4 that are significantly above the national averages for those groups and much higher than might be expected given their starting points. This includes, for example, students known to be eligible for free school meals and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In a large majority of the lessons seen during the inspection, the students made progress that was good or better and their progress was never less than satisfactory. The students made rapid progress when engaging activities were combined with challenging work matched to their abilities. Most students say they feel very safe at school and they show great understanding of how to stay safe. In a design technology lesson, for example, the students demonstrated a very mature and well-grounded sense of safety and responsibility in a very busy and highly productive workshop environment. They used equipment with precision, demonstrating considerable concern for and pride in the quality of the work they were producing and working, for the most part, independently.

The students demonstrated impressive levels of self-control throughout the inspection. Their behaviour was impeccable when gathering for, during and when leaving at the end of a whole-school assembly. It was evident that they were used to the very high standard expected of them. Most parents and carers say that the academy deals effectively with any unacceptable behaviour. A few raised concerns with the inspectors about how the academy does this. The inspectors investigated the matter further and found that the great majority of students understand the academy's discipline procedures very well and most thought that they were operated fairly. The students were able to tell inspectors about the importance of and need for clear rules and high standards and equally could talk very responsibly and sensibly about changes to the academy's rules that they would like to see. The inspectors found clear evidence that the academy has reduced significantly instances of behaviour that interrupts learning in lessons and witnessed no examples of such behaviour. Indeed, the students' behaviour made a strong contribution to the progress they made in the lessons observed. The academy's specialism in business and enterprise provides various opportunities for students to take the initiative with work in the local community. Of particular note is the Young Chambers programme that has enabled students identified as needing some additional help to build their confidence to make an important difference to local matters, such as safety beyond the academy and environmental projects.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The best lessons seen at the academy were characterised by clear purpose, a good pace of learning, and a range of interesting and varied activities. The teachers demonstrated strong subject knowledge and a good understanding of how students learn. In a particularly good French lesson, the teacher sustained the pace of learning and a high level of challenge for the students. The teacher used an interactive whiteboard very effectively to record what the students were learning as the lesson progressed and to develop questions and activities to extend that learning. Lesson planning is done to a common format, but it does not always draw upon the information available about students' progress. The academy allocates students to classes according to ability levels. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the inspectors found that the work devised by the teachers was generally at an appropriate level for each group as a whole, but was not always sufficiently varied to meet particular individual needs within those lessons.

The students receive well-focussed, rigorously provided support which contributes significantly to their exceptional rates of progress. The support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. These students speak highly of the staff and of the quality of communications with parents and carers. One sixth-form student with physical needs told the inspectors that she would not be applying to university were it not for the experience she had had at the academy. Students needing

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particularly high levels of additional support explained how they are helped to understand their difficulties and enabled to manage their own learning very effectively.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The academy's Christian ethos and deeply held sense of values are clearly apparent in all aspects its work. A strong commitment to ensuring the best possible opportunities and outcomes for all students is evident throughout the staff. The proportion of lessons that are good or outstanding is increasing. As a result, there are no significant differences between the progress made by different groups of students and almost all groups make significantly better progress than might be expected given their starting points, including groups that nationally tend to make much less progress than others. There are very striking examples of the positive benefits of the academy's work for individual students, including for example, students from the Traveller community, who have stayed into the sixth form. The rigour with which the academy examines the take-up by students of the varied opportunities afforded by the curriculum is less well developed than for students' progress and so the academy is less able to show the impact of its work with the same impressive clarity that it has achieved regarding students' progress.

The governing body is influential and has played a key role in securing the major improvements at the academy by scrutinising data on students' achievement thoroughly and being prepared to indicate clearly to the academy's leaders and managers the level of performance that is expected. Safeguarding is attended to well. The academy has ensured that its contribution to community cohesion has been evaluated independently and the evaluation points to notable success in inculcating common values and supporting increasingly high levels of parental, carer and community engagement at the academy. The academy surveys the views of parents and carers routinely and uses the results to guide developments and has increasingly attracted high levels of parents' and carers' attendance at guidance and consultation meetings with the staff.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Sixth form

The sixth form is increasingly popular, with many students joining from other schools. The students' attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average and they reach average attainment in examinations by the time they leave. Their attendance is above average. Sixth-form students make a strong contribution to the life of the academy, of which they are proud to be members. They support the local community outstandingly well. For example, one student spoke about 'assisting the elderly and housebound during the winter snow by shopping and providing food for them'.

The quality of teaching is good and, as in the main school, the inspectors saw examples of outstanding teaching. The curriculum offers a good range of subjects and certificated courses. The students spoke about memorable experiences, such as residential programmes and team-building exercises and undertaking work experience in Switzerland and charity work in South Africa. The students are provided with outstanding care, guidance and support. The engagement with parents and carers through the process for monitoring students' progress is excellent and the students are known to the staff very well.

The leaders and managers share the academy's ambition to achieve outstanding outcomes and have ensured that the good provision noted at the last inspection has been maintained while student numbers have increased. They have begun to replicate for the sixth form the very structured and highly effective approach used in the main school to improve teaching and learning.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire was much higher than the average for academies. The responses indicate a high level of satisfaction with the work of the academy in all of the areas for which parents and carers were asked to express a view. Parents and carers express more positive views about the academy than is the case for schools nationally in response to almost all the sections of the questionnaire, including the academy's management of unacceptable behaviour. The inspection evidence indicated that the many areas of the academy rated highly by parents and carers are of high quality. The inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers when reaching their judgements and followed up some matters raised by parents and carers and these are commented upon in the main text of the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trinity Academy to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 880 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1330 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	228	26	514	58	91	10	43	5
The school keeps my child safe	415	47	434	49	24	3	3	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	443	50	397	45	28	3	7	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	342	39	466	53	60	7	5	1
The teaching is good at this school	352	40	475	54	38	4	8	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	272	31	525	60	66	8	7	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	226	26	571	65	66	8	5	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	324	37	504	57	22	3	6	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	311	35	487	55	56	6	10	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	391	44	383	44	69	8	21	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	176	20	528	60	116	13	19	2
The school is led and managed effectively	361	41	449	51	42	5	10	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	395	45	415	47	43	5	14	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Trinity Academy, Doncaster, DN8 5BY

Thank you for talking to my colleagues and me and making us welcome when we visited your academy recently. The inspectors spoke with you in lessons, around the academy and in groups, looked at your work, read the results of questionnaires filled in by you and your parents and carers, and spoke with some of your teachers. Here is a summary of the main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- You receive high-quality care, guidance and support, an extensive and varied range of courses and other activities, which, together with consistently good teaching helps you to make exceptional progress.
- Your results in examinations are above average and improving and your attainment is now close to being high. In the sixth form, you achieve good outcomes and your examination results are average.
- Your attendance is average, although you do not do as well with this as you do in your examination results. Your attendance in the sixth form is above average.
- You showed a lot of maturity and excellent self-control during the inspection.

The academy has improved extremely well since the last inspection three years ago. I have asked the principal and the staff to make further improvements, however, so that teachers make sure that activities provided meet the needs of different groups in lessons, including in the sixth form. I have asked also that the academy takes the same sort of approach to improving your attendance as it has to increasing your progress and examination results and also to making sure that every one of you is getting the most out of everything the school has to offer. Many of you, I know, already make a major contribution to the school and I am sure all of you will want to do everything you can to support the staff in making Trinity better still.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Moss,

Her Majesty's Inspector

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