

# The de Ferrers Academy

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136414
<b>Local authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	395337
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Gwendoline Coates HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1846
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Fraser
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steve Allen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	St Mary's Drive Burton-on-Trent DE13 0LL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01283 239936
<b>Fax number</b>	01283 239971
<b>Email address</b>	office@deferrers.com

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	24–25 April 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	395337



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012



## Introduction

Inspection team

Gwendoline Coates

Her Majesty's Inspector

Raymond Biglin

Additional Inspector

Alan Brewerton

Additional Inspector

Patrick Cook

Additional Inspector

Mary Sunter

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Parts of 48 lessons, three registration periods and two assemblies were observed. In total 53 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, primary headteachers and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plan and minutes of the governing body meetings, and took account of the 713 parental questionnaires that were received and questionnaires received from students and staff.

## Information about the school

The de Ferrers Academy is much larger than the average-sized secondary school. Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is slightly below the national average, with the largest group being of Pakistani origin. The proportion of students for whom English is an additional language is similar to the national average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of disabled students and those with special education needs supported by school action plus and statements is similar to the national average. The school exceeds the current floor standards set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards in recent years, including The Prince's Teaching Institute, International School Award (intermediate), ICT Mark, Arts Council Silver Award, Design Mark Award for Excellence in Design Teaching, National Healthy School Status, Dyslexia Friendly School, Eco-Friendly School.

The school operates on two sites approximately one kilometre apart. Years 7, 8 and 9 students are mainly based on the Dove campus and Years 10, 11 and sixth form students are mainly based on the Trent campus.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because teaching is not outstanding and rates of progress are good rather than outstanding.
- Students' achievement is good. As a result of good teaching, students make good progress in their learning. In English and mathematics, a greater than average proportion of students gain GCSEs at grade C or above.
- Teaching is good because teachers have very good subject knowledge, which they use to plan well-designed and tightly structured lessons that enable students to make good progress. Where teaching is satisfactory, activities are not always matched closely to the abilities of students. Not all marking and written feedback on students' work is of the high quality seen in English, and there is variation in the extent to which teachers use skilful questioning to challenge students and develop their higher-level skills.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Students say that they feel safe at school and most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire confirmed that the school keeps their children safe. Students are respectful of their teachers and their peers and have good attitudes to learning.
- The impact of leaders and managers on the quality of provision and student outcomes is good. They manage performance well by ensuring rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and of students' progress. The curriculum meets students' needs well and provision to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Leaders and managers are driving improvement in a very effective way and, as a result, the school demonstrates outstanding capacity to improve further.
- The sixth form is good. A rigorous tracking system, good teaching and support and students' excellent attitudes to learning all contribute to the improving standards of attainment at GCE AS and A level and to the improving progress.

**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

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

- Sustain the increased rate at which students are now making progress by improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better through:
  - ensuring the good planning in place to meet the needs of students in a class with a range of different abilities is fully implemented in lessons and results in high levels of challenge and engagement for all students
  - securing greater consistency in the quality of marking and written feedback across all curriculum areas so that students understand how to improve their work
  - developing teachers' use of questioning as a tool to promote students' higher-order thinking skills and to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. Students join the school in Year 7 with attainment that is broadly average. At the end of Year 11, the majority of attainment measures are significantly above the national average. Standards in a range of subject areas where attainment was previously a concern, including history, geography, science and languages, are now improving strongly. The proportion of students who are achieving at the highest grades across all subjects is increasing.

As a result of a strong focus on planning for the progress of every individual student, the large majority of students, including individual groups of students such as sixth form students, Pakistani students, students known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled students and those with special education needs, are now making good progress from their starting points.

Lesson observations confirm the school's own data that the large majority of students are now making good progress from their starting points. In most lessons observed, students acquired knowledge quickly, were confident in their understanding and able to answer questions aimed at confirming their knowledge and understanding. Students are developing good literacy, numeracy and interpersonal skills that prepare them well for their future adult lives. Parents and carers are positive about the progress their children are making and about how well they are developing skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. Destination data indicates that the vast majority of students progress to further or higher education, training or employment when they leave school.

### Quality of teaching

**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

The quality of teaching overall is good because, in most lessons, teaching is at least good and results in most students making good progress. Parents and carers are happy with the quality of teaching their children receive.

Teachers have high expectations of students and promote a very positive climate for learning for all students, including for those with disabilities and those with special educational needs. They use their very good subject knowledge to design well-planned lessons that ensure continuity and build well on students' prior learning. This planning indicates a good focus on matching teaching and learning activities to the needs of students with differing abilities. In the best lessons such planning was translated well in practice. For example, in a Year 11 French lesson, tasks, questioning and individual support were matched very well to students' individual abilities so that all made at least good progress. However, in a few lessons where there is a range of abilities, particularly at Key Stage 3, this good planning is not always translated into effective practice. In these lessons, not all students are sufficiently challenged to achieve at the highest level nor are they fully engaged.

Teachers' use of assessment to support learning during lessons is good and most teachers regularly check understanding or make use of visual checks of students' work as in a Year 9 art lesson, and adjust lesson activities or provide more support to ensure all students are making good progress in their learning. Although teachers generally use questioning well to confirm students' understanding, questioning is not always used well as a tool to challenge students' higher-order thinking skills or to extend and develop their knowledge and understanding.

Most lessons include a good focus on assessment criteria so that students understand what levels or grades they are expected to reach and what levels or grades they are currently working at. In some subjects, for example in English, the quality of marking and written feedback on students' work is excellent and enables students to understand clearly not only how well they are doing but also what they need to do to improve on their current work. However, such quality is not consistent across curriculum areas.

Attention to developing students' literacy and numeracy skills was a strong feature in some of the lessons observed, and the school makes good provision for those students identified as in need of additional and personalised support, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Positive encouragement and praise and the effective promotion of students' social and moral development are regular features of lessons and are evident in the respect and cooperation students show to their teachers and to their peers.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour and safety are good because students generally behave well in lessons and around the school. They say they feel safe, and almost all of the 713 parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children feel safe at this school.

**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

Good organisation of the school day ensures that movement between the two sites is strictly controlled and students are punctual to lessons. Cyber-bullying, homophobia and racism are topics that are dealt with well in the school's citizenship and religious education programme. Students are very clear about the fact that bullying of any kind is rare but, if it does occur, they know exactly who to talk to and are confident that prompt and effective actions will be taken.

There is a positive attitude to behaviour management in the school based on praise and reward. A general atmosphere of mutual respect between teachers and students is evident with most students conducting themselves maturely and acting in a considerate, respectful and courteous manner to staff and to each other. Their positive attitudes to learning mean that disruption in lessons is unusual. However, observations during the inspection indicate very occasional low-level disruption in a few lessons in Key Stage 3 when students are not fully engaged, and comments by parents and students echo this slight concern.

The school's pastoral system is highly valued and leads to good care, guidance and support for all students. Discussions with students about their individual needs indicate that, as a result of well-targeted support, many have been able to overcome a range of challenging personal issues.

Students are enthusiastic about the new rewards system that encourages more collective responsibility for behaviour and attendance. It is too soon to be able to evaluate its full impact on behaviour and attendance, although attendance has improved and is now above the national average.

## **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are good. Leaders have an ambitious vision for the school, high expectations of students and a strong focus on promoting equality and tackling discrimination. They have an uncompromising drive to improve students' achievement and this is evident in the rigorous action that has been taken to improve the quality of leadership and management, provision and achievement in a range of subjects, including mathematics, geography and history.

The school sets challenging targets and is currently meeting them all. There are rigorous and comprehensive systems to monitor students' progress and the quality of teaching, and prompt interventions and well-targeted support follow the identification of any underperformance. Performance management is a rigorous process and a highly effective and regular programme of professional development for teachers is based on issues that are identified through the monitoring process. The early impact of these systems can be seen in the current improvements to teaching and learning and to the rates of progress students are making.

Middle leaders are fully accountable for performance in their areas of responsibility. Key stage leaders and curriculum leaders work very closely together to ensure

**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

students are fully supported and their individual pastoral and academic needs identified and catered for promptly and effectively. In this sense, there is a very good integration of pastoral and academic monitoring that enables the school to plan effectively for the progress of every individual student and thus to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

The curriculum provides many excellent opportunities for students' broader development and is outstanding in its promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Extra-curricular provision is strong, with students engaging in an extensive range of charity fundraising, cultural, sporting and enterprise activities. The school has clear strategies for improving the literacy levels of all students and targets students with additional needs particularly well, both across the curriculum and in dedicated classes. This is already beginning to have an impact on student outcomes. The current curriculum is broad and balanced but is undergoing change in order to ensure that the needs of all students are met as effectively as possible, while responding to National Curriculum changes.

The governing body is very committed to the school and is keenly focused on maintaining the school's high profile in the local community. Governors have a clear structure of communication with the headteacher and senior leaders but this does not extend to regular meetings with curriculum middle leaders. There are very successful strategies to engage with parents, for example via the regular parent focus group meetings. Parents' and carers' support for the school is shown by the highly positive response to the parental questionnaire. The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet all statutory requirements.

The school's capacity to improve further is outstanding because:

- accurate self evaluation enables it to identify key priorities for improvement
- the use of data as a tool for improvement is a strength that contributes to accurate self-evaluation at all levels
- rigorous and comprehensive quality assurance systems identify promptly areas in need of improvement
- high levels of organisational efficiency are evident and staff are strongly committed and very able.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



26 April 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of The de Ferrers Academy, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 0LL**

We enjoyed our visit to your school and I would like to thank all of you who gave up your time to speak to us.

The de Ferrers Academy is a good school. Good leadership and management result in good teaching, good care, guidance and support and a curriculum that meets your needs and prepares you well for your future adult lives. As a result, you are making good progress and achieving good standards in formal examinations. From our meetings with you and in your responses to the questionnaire, we note that you enjoy your lessons, feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns about bullying and other issues will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We judged your behaviour to be good overall and that you are respectful to your teachers and other students. Some of you said that occasionally some students in Key Stage 3 do not always behave as well as they should in lessons and we agree with you.

We judged the school to have excellent capacity to become even better and have asked the headteacher to focus on the following to enable you to make even greater progress:

- ensure lesson activities are closely matched to your different abilities to ensure everyone is fully challenged and fully engaged in learning
- ensure marking and written feedback in all subjects is consistently good
- get teachers to ask challenging questions that develop your higher-order thinking skills and deepen your knowledge and understanding

You can all help the school to improve further by continuing to work hard, attend regularly and behave well at all times. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gwen Coates  
Her Majesty's Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**