

Samworth Church Academy

Sherwood Hall Road, Mansfield, NG18 2DY

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- There is not sufficient consistently good teaching, particularly in English and mathematics, to speed up students' progress throughout the academy. Standards are not high enough.
- The reason for this is that students' work is not regularly set at the right level, especially for more-able students.
- The sixth form requires improvement because students' progress is not yet good.
- Marking does not consistently provide students with regular, specific information about what they have achieved and how to make further progress. Teachers do not always check that the advice they give is acted upon in students' subsequent work.
- Subject leaders do not check the quality of teaching, assessment and progress in their areas often or thoroughly enough, and they are not held sufficiently accountable for making the improvements expected by the academy.

The school has the following strengths

- The Principal, executive team and the governing body provide strong leadership which provides the basis for the academy's capacity to keep improving.
- Students value the academy and its ethos.
- They behave well in lessons and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Students feel safe, within a supportive and aspirational environment.
- Their attendance is above average.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 31 lessons. Eight of these were observed jointly with the headteacher and the executive group.
- They held meetings with four groups of students, the executive group, senior and subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the Southwell diocese.
- The inspectors considered the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the information from 10 staff questionnaires, in conducting the inspection.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation including information about the progress of different groups of students through the academy, governing body minutes, and samples of students' work. They also checked records of observations on the quality of teaching and students' behaviour and attendance, as well as policies to help safeguard them.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kevin Harrison

Additional Inspector

Richard White

Additional Inspector

William Cassell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is sponsored jointly by Sir David Samworth and the Diocese of Southwell.
- It is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. The number on roll is increasing steadily each year.
- Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of students known to be entitled to support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked-after children, students known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The academy uses alternative places for a very few students to learn away from school at local businesses.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching across the academy and particularly in English and mathematics, so that it is always at least good and raises standards, by making sure that:
 - work is at the right level to enable students of all abilities, particularly the more able, to achieve the best that they can
 - marking always states what students have achieved and how they can make further progress, and teachers check that students respond to their marking.
- Increase the impact of leaders and managers on the pace of students' progress by making sure that:
 - subject leaders take full responsibility for checking thoroughly and regularly the quality of teaching and assessment, and rates of progress in their areas
 - the actions taken by the subject leaders show the improvements in students' achievement expected by the academy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students do not make fast enough progress throughout the academy, particularly in English and mathematics, because teaching is not consistently good enough to enable them to do this.
- However, the academy's performance continues to improve and the rate of progress is quickening in younger year groups. At the end of Year 11, the proportion of students achieving five A* to C grade passes (excluding English and mathematics) is above average and has been so for the last two years.
- The gap in the proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades including English and mathematics has narrowed, compared to those nationally, for the last three years. Although English and mathematics results remain well below average, evidence from lesson observations and from work in students' books show that students make the progress expected of them from their starting points. The academy's progress information points to a further small improvement in standards this year.
- The school has not received the Year 7 catch-up premium yet.
- A lower proportion of students reach higher levels of attainment because work is not regularly sufficiently challenging to help them secure the necessary skills.
- All groups of students, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, make the progress expected of them throughout the academy from their starting points, which vary from average to well below average. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make progress at least in line with other groups of students overall, although there are variations within year groups and subjects.
- Students in the sixth form make expected progress and achieve below average levels, from their below average levels on entry. Their progress is slower in Year 12 than in Year 13. It quickens as students deal better with the demands of A2 level courses. Ninety per cent of students now stay on into Year 13, which is a big improvement from recent years and the same proportion get a job at the end of Year 13 or go into further or higher education.
- A very few students learn off-site and records of their progress, including on work-related schemes, shows at least expected progress in their learning and skills.
- Pupil-premium funding has been used in a variety of ways, with a very appropriate emphasis on raising achievement in English and mathematics in Years 10 and 11, through extra teaching groups, revision classes and study residential courses. The academy's progress information shows that the gap in the average points scores in English and mathematics between students known to be eligible for free school meals has closed and is 1.3 grades below that of other students.
- More-able students study and sit GCSE courses early in mathematics and a range of other subjects. However, they re-sit the examinations if they have not achieved their potential. No students study purely work-related courses, although the impact of such courses is to raise the academy's pass rates in Year 11 considerably.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- There is not enough good teaching throughout the academy to hasten students' progress. However, there is some good teaching in Key Stage 3 and 4 and in the sixth form. The issue is the lack of consistency, which over time slows students' progress.
- Although the academy collects detailed information about the levels at which students work, the tasks they are given do not consistently reflect this. Work does not always match students' levels closely enough, especially for the more able.
- The inspectors saw some excellent marking, which informed students very clearly what they had done well and what to do next. However, some marking is infrequent and brief and does not always state what pupils have achieved or how they can make further progress. Marking is weaker in mathematics than in English.
- In most books seen, there was little evidence of students carrying out the advice given to them by their teachers. More regularly, students are beginning to assess their own learning and that of other students.
- Students are keen to learn and make quick progress in lessons which interest, challenge and involve them. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, students made good progress in identifying, for example, the mean and median because the teacher regularly reminded them of the purpose of learning, gave them a range of tasks on which to work independently and in groups, and checked their progress as the lesson proceeded, in order to adapt teaching as required.
- Relationships between staff and students create a positive environment for learning. This includes in the sixth form where an increasing proportion of lessons are good. Teachers support students well in finding things out for themselves, particularly in the sixth form, together with specific questioning to deepen their learning.
- Support assistants provide unobtrusive support to secure students' knowledge in literacy and numeracy.
- Students are increasingly expected to practise literacy skills in a range of subjects. In science, there is emerging good practice in making sure that students practise specific grammatical skills. The academy is at an early stage in developing numeracy skills across different subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' attitudes to the academy, learning, staff and each other are good, including in the sixth form, and are evident in their good behaviour. Their attendance, also, has risen for the last three years and is above average, reflecting their enjoyment of the academy. Permanent and fixed-term exclusions have fallen.
- The academy provides a widening range of opportunities, both in and out of lessons, for students to develop their personal skills and leadership capacity. They enjoy the expectation of an increasing proportion of staff that they take responsibility for their learning. Students have said that they would like more chances to take responsibility, including among younger year groups.
- The house system and mixed-age tutor groups help to create the supportive and family-feel of

the academy and also its aspirational ethos.

- The academy provides a safe environment. Students feel secure because the academy does not tolerate bullying, of which students say there is little. They show a good knowledge of possible dangers and are therefore able to make informed judgements about their actions. They speak confidently of how to use the internet safely and responsibly.
- The range of subjects and courses provides a comprehensive programme to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Through lessons such as art and humanities, students have regular opportunities to develop their cultural understanding.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders have not made sufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, particularly in English and mathematics. While some subject leaders are effective, overall performance is variable and leads to an uneven impact on raising achievement. There is inconsistency in how thoroughly, regularly and effectively subject leaders check teaching and assessment practices, and the rate of students' progress. In addition, they are not held fully to account for seeing that students' achievement matches that expected of the academy.
- The academy's major academic priority is to raise achievement in English and mathematics. Quicker improvement is being promoted through, for example, the recent greater emphasis on students' progress rather than just on standards.
- The staff work as a cohesive unit and this is fundamental in enabling the academy to continue to improve. Together with the strong and focused leadership of the principal and executive group, the academy has made progress in several areas since the last inspection, such as the proportion of students achieving five good A* to C passes and in the greater aspirations of the students.
- Very regular observations of teaching take place. During the inspection, leaders' judgements of teaching matched accurately those of the inspection team. Teachers' performance targets reflect how they need to strengthen their teaching skills. Training opportunities and coaching sessions are provided to meet individual and group needs. Staff are not given pay rises unless their performance shows that they have met their targets over a set period. Any under-performance is addressed quickly and supportively.
- The head of sixth form is increasingly focusing on the rate of students' progress, with detailed tracking making sure that gaps in learning are tackled more quickly.
- Subjects and courses are being more carefully considered to meet the range of students' needs, including in Year 7 and the sixth form, but require improvement because they are not yet resulting in the good progress of enough students. As part of the academy's determination to promote students' personal, as well as academic development, all students make pledges to carry out specific tasks, including within the school community, which they deliver during their time in the academy.
- Students enjoy and benefit from the interesting and wide ranging out-of-lesson activities, and it is a growing expectation of the academy that all students participate in these. Students' expected progress and the range of courses and activities available to them confirm that the academy is promoting equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination.

- Partnerships with a range of businesses and agencies support well students' learning and well-being. The diocese, as co-sponsor, checks the academy's performance, and is closely involved in its management.

- Safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements, including for those students who learn off-site.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the academy well and is supported by good systems to check its work. It is well placed to steer the academy further forward. Minutes of governing body meetings show that the governors challenge the academy's actions and performance strongly and regularly. They understand what progress information is saying about the academy, including pupil premium funding, and why the academy's present major academic goal is to speed up progress in English and mathematics. Although governors do not observe teaching, they meet regularly with senior leaders to consider the performance of staff in their areas. Any under-performance in teaching is addressed quickly. Governors know about the targets that are being set for teachers to improve their practice and how good teaching is rewarded.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	135583
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	406608

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

Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
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	1006
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Linney
Headteacher	Michael Griffiths
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2011
Telephone number	01623 663450
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