

# Newbridge High School Academy Trust

Forest Road, Coalville, LE67 3SJ

**Inspection dates** 21–22 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Teaching is nearly always good right across the school and across the full range of subjects.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and make sure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress, including the more able.
- As a result, the standards reached are above those seen in most schools for pupils of the same age. This is true of most pupils, including disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs.
- Standards are particularly high in mathematics.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, work hard in lessons and feel happy, safe and free from bullying.
- Behaviour is generally good, both in classrooms and around the site. Pupils have many opportunities to take on roles or responsibility.
- The planning and checking of the work of the school by leaders and managers have resulted in good teaching being maintained over time.
- Adults who lead the school have made sure that a strong sense of direction has been sustained through a period of significant change.
- Governors know the strengths of the school well and where it can be improved. They check on the quality of what the school provides and are ambitious for its further success.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Only a small number of lessons are outstanding.
- At times teachers do not use questioning enough to check how well pupils are doing in lessons.
- The recently revised teaching and learning policy is not fully in place, so that independent, active learning and helpful marking and assessment are not consistently seen.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 24 longer parts of lessons taught by 24 different teachers. They also made many shorter visits to classrooms to look closely at marking in books.
- The team watched an assembly, observed tutor periods and visited many different areas of the school and the site during lessons and at break times.
- Meetings were held with three different groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body with two governor colleagues, senior staff and subject leaders. The lead inspector conducted a brief telephone conversation with the school improvement adviser.
- The inspection team examined a range of school documentation, including school development plans and policies, lesson and departmental plans, records of lesson monitoring and checks on pupils' work, and the minutes of meetings, including those of the governing body.
- Inspectors examined a range of data, both that available to the public and that used by the school to monitor current rates of pupil progress and attendance.
- The 39 responses made to Parent View by the end of the first day of the inspection were considered, along with staff questionnaires. Inspectors also considered a wide range of consultations that the school conducts with pupils, parents and carers and staff.

## Inspection team

David Martin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Thelma McIntosh-Clark

Additional Inspector

William Cassell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Newbridge is a smaller-than-average secondary school and specialist sports college. It converted to become an academy school in July 2012. When its predecessor school, Newbridge High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, extra government funding to narrow gaps in achievement by pupils eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and pupils from service families, is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than in most similar schools, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, although a small proportion of pupils from a variety of different ethnic heritages are represented in the school population.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is a little below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school leadership is in a period of change. It has been led by two co-headteachers for the current academic year, one of whom is the long-standing post holder. A new headteacher has been appointed for September 2013. He was able to join the inspection meeting and the feedback on the final day.
- The school, having only Key Stage 3 pupils, is not subject to government floor standards, by which minimum expectations are set for secondary schools.
- No pupils regularly attend other schools or centres for part of their education.

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

- Make sure that much of the teaching in the school is outstanding and never less than consistently good at the time of the next inspection by:
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to spend parts of lessons working more independently of the teacher, in discussing their work together and solving problems for themselves
  - more consistently engaging pupils actively in their own learning, by employing the wider variety of learning activities outlined in the new teaching and learning policy
  - ensuring greater consistency in marking and feedback to pupils, so that they always know exactly how to improve their work and have regular opportunities to do so
  - asking more probing questions and checking learning during lessons in order to adapt teaching more readily to pupils' different needs and abilities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils learn well in the great majority of lessons. They settle to work quickly, are cooperative and positive in their attitudes and work productively. Because of this, lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils develop a broad range of skills and knowledge in subjects across the school. These include literacy, numeracy and communication skills, including information technology.
- More-able pupils often have extension activities provided for them so that they achieve well in lessons and are often set highly challenging tasks and activities, which is reflected in the good progress made at higher levels of attainment.
- Improved data and tracking systems mean that early support is provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who may find learning harder. This helps these pupils to achieve well in lessons and in the smaller steps measured through additional support out of lessons.
- Pupils entitled to support provided through the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up premium also make strong gains as a result of planned activities. The recently revised reading support is effective. As a result, gaps in performance are closing to a point where these pupils are currently less than two terms behind their peers in English and mathematics.
- Pupils attain standards in Year 9 final assessments that are above national expectations, although there has been a slight decline. This is partly due to pupils entering the school with significantly lower levels of attainment.
- Attainment in English was around expected levels in 2012, although school assessments indicate that this is on course to rise back to above-average levels in 2013. Attainment in science was above average and was high in mathematics.
- The progress that pupils make is good overall and particularly strong in mathematics. No group of pupils achieves less well than their peers as progress is consistent for all groups of pupils, including minority ethnic pupils and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Teacher assessments place the school consistently in the top quarter of all schools overall for progress. However, there has been some variation in progress in core subjects due to changes to staffing and subject leadership.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and subjects are taught by specialists. Planning is generally thorough and classroom resources and display are used well to support learning. Relationships are positive and warm, although some lessons are dominated by teacher talk.
- Teachers' planning often provides extension activities for more-able pupils, and in higher-ability sets the level of work is often very high. This means these pupils achieve well and reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The school has focused on developing questioning skills this year. As a result, questioning is

usually open in style and directed at individuals to encourage full participation. However, there is sometimes a lack of more probing questioning or providing opportunities for pupils to build on each others' ideas.

- School leaders, managers and a working group drawn from across the staff have recently revised the teaching and learning policy. This gives good guidance on the type of learning that will more actively engage pupils and encourage them to be more independent learners and to solve problems for themselves. It also gives guidance on assessment and marking. However, this policy is not yet fully in evidence across the school.
- Marking is inconsistent. It does not always give pupils precise advice on how they can improve their work or give opportunities for them to do so as a result. In some cases books are not marked regularly, and the presentation of work is occasionally untidy and lacks care.
- In the best lessons, teachers assess learning at different points. This enables them to quickly adapt the learning for individuals or groups, either by providing additional challenge or providing different approaches and methods where pupils are having difficulties in understanding.
- There are some successful instances where pupils are given responsibility for leading parts of lessons, or for solving problems together. Pupils are encouraged to assess each others' contribution and their own, enabling them to understand their next steps in learning. This was seen in physical education and several arts lessons, but only occasionally in other areas.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Lessons are conducted with mutual respect and cooperation. Movement around the school and conduct in social areas are generally sensible and considerate. The school has a friendly, positive atmosphere where visitors are welcomed.
- Attendance is below average, but not markedly so. School staff are concerned by the issue and are particularly aware of the negative impact that a small number of particularly complex individual cases is having on the overall figures. These issues are being rigorously addressed through working closely with families and a range of other agencies.
- There have been no recent permanent exclusions. Although a little above average, fixed-term exclusions are falling as the revised behaviour policy is taking effect and the initial impact of higher expectations is becoming more established.
- The school provides convincing case studies of how support has led to improvements in behaviour and achievement for a number of pupils. All pupils report that they feel well cared for and that there would be an adult to talk to if they had a particular problem.
- In discussions with inspectors, pupils say they know how to keep safe. They understand different types of bullying, including prejudice-based and cyber-bullying. Pupils report that bullying is uncommon and is dealt with quickly and effectively where it does occur.
- Most pupils reported some occasional poor behaviour in class, but that it rarely affects their learning. School records reflect these views and indicate that the good behaviour seen during the inspection was typical.

- The many ways that are used to check on pupil satisfaction show that they are very happy with life at the school. Pupils particularly noted the many leadership opportunities available, as sports leaders, house captains, school council members or reading mentors for example.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- School leaders and managers, together with the governing body, have ambition for the continuing success of the school. Their focus is on academic excellence whilst developing wider opportunities and experiences for pupils in preparation for adult life.
- Good achievement and consistently effective teaching has been sustained during a significant period of change for the school. This is due to concise improvement plans that have a limited number of key priorities, informed by accurate self-evaluation. There is a well-established cycle of observation in place to check the quality of teaching.
- Some development-plan actions are not very sharply focused or specific. This leads to some inconsistency in how subject areas and teachers interpret policy, particularly that relating to teaching and learning and marking and assessment.
- Challenging targets of being in the top five per cent of schools for progress at Key Stage 3 have been adopted. Along with teaching targets, these are built in to objectives for all teaching staff. Staff have accepted this challenge, and training has been provided to help staff to improve their teaching further.
- The curriculum has a strong impact on attainment. It is suitably broad and balanced, and is enhanced by some early GCSE work being trialled in some subjects. Pupils enjoy the challenge of this work, notably in citizenship. There is also a broad range of enrichment activity, notably in sports and the arts but also across a wide range of pupil interests, as seen in the 'activities week' programme.
- The school provides well for the personal development of pupils. There has been an audit of social, moral, cultural and spiritual aspects of the curriculum. Teachers take many opportunities to link subject work to these themes, and tutor time and citizenship contribute strongly. Pupils have a sense of fairness and right and wrong, exhibit good social skills and develop their wider cultural understanding of life in the modern world.
- School leaders and managers check that the many opportunities that the school provides are available for all pupils. They take speedy action if any student is discriminated against and help pupils to be tolerant and thoughtful.
- Although the school is a free-standing academy, a group of local schools share a school improvement partner who provides an external view of the school's performance and effectiveness. This school partnership is also providing valued support for staff and wider opportunities for pupils in the school and local area.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the strengths of the school and areas for improvement well. They have a thorough working understanding of a range of school data and pupils' achievement. They bring a strong breadth of expertise and experience to their roles, and are able to challenge school leaders and managers on a wide number of issues.
  - Governors visit most classrooms every year. They also receive first-hand reports from subject

leaders and senior staff. Because they are well informed, they know what the quality of teaching is like across the school. They understand that there is now a need to move more teaching to outstanding, as is shown in the development plan and revised policy documents.

- The arrangements for the management of teachers' performance are well linked to ambitious school priorities. Governors are clear that career progression will be based on meeting these targets. Staff do not progress to higher pay scales if performance does not match expectations. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance.
- A deficit budget has been brought back into balance. Governors work closely with a highly efficient business manager to ensure that money is used effectively for the benefit of pupils.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138301
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	409374

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	506
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jo-Anne Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pat Young and Cath Crossley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 831561
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