

Ninestiles School, an Academy

Hartfield Crescent, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7QG

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The academy provides an exceptionally high quality of education for its students. They make outstanding progress in their academic and personal development.
- Teaching is outstanding and students make rapid progress as a result. Teachers have high expectations of students, who have very positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Teachers make sure work is well matched to students' needs, enabling them to gain skills, knowledge and understanding rapidly.
- Students are very proud of the academy. Their behaviour in lessons and around the premises is exemplary.
- Students feel safe and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Teaching is often exceptionally challenging and effective.
- The executive principal and principal share their vision of excellence for the academy through dedicated and ambitious leadership. Their example inspires outstanding leadership at senior and other levels.
- Governors (the academy councillors) know the academy very well and make an outstanding contribution to leadership through very effective support and challenge.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons, including 19 joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors visited tutor group sessions, observed an assembly and scrutinised students’ work.
- They observed behaviour in lessons and around the academy during breaks.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, senior and other members of the leadership team, other academy staff and members of the academy council.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of academy documents, including self–evaluation and development plans, behaviour records, safeguarding records, academy council documents, and documents relating to the management of teachers’ performance.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 20 parents and carers who responded to the online Parent View survey. They also considered the more detailed information from recent surveys of parents and carers carried out by the academy. Inspectors considered the views expressed in 26 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Ian Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mick Marks	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector
Dot Bond	Additional Inspector
Joe Skivington	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Ninestiles School, an Academy, converted to become an academy school on 1 January 2011. When its predecessor school, Ninestiles School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The proportion of students for whom the academy receives the pupil premium (additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the very few looked after by the local authority), is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The academy meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of students by the end of Year 11.
- A very small number of students are taught in alternative provision away from the school site at South and City College and at the East Birmingham Network Free School.
- Almost all students transfer after Year 11 to other schools and colleges in the area; consequently only a small proportion of students attend the sixth form.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine teaching in those lessons where it is less than outstanding by giving students more opportunities to learn independently.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students join the academy in Year 7 with levels of attainment in English and mathematics which are typically average. They make outstanding progress and attainment at the end of Year 11 is high. The proportion of students who gained five or more GCSE grades at A*– C, including English and mathematics, is well above average.
- Students attain high levels of literacy and numeracy skills. Government funding for Year 7 catch-up is being used very well by providing individual support to students where it is needed. The academy works exceptionally well to make sure that students' reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills are applied and reinforced appropriately across different subjects. As a result they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Early GCSE entry in some subjects has allowed many students to tackle more challenging courses in Year 11 and has not adversely affected levels of attainment in key subjects. Early entry has also raised these students' self-esteem and their belief that they can succeed. It has not limited the potential of the most able students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress. Their needs are swiftly identified and teachers and teaching assistants provide high quality support, giving challenge and encouragement where necessary.
- The academy makes extremely effective use of its pupil-premium funding. Extra staffing, one-to-one tuition and funding for additional educational resources, for example, are helping students to make rapid and sustained progress. However, as all groups of students make outstanding progress, the one GCSE grade gap in English and mathematics between these students and their classmates in 2012 remained in 2013.
- Students make excellent progress in the outstanding sixth form, with many of them exceeding challenging targets in 2013. Examples of very high quality art and design work and outstanding sports leadership skills were observed during the inspection.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching motivates students extremely well and enables them to make outstanding progress. Students are inspired by high-quality lessons across the curriculum, and teachers consistently convey high expectations for students' effort, behaviour and perseverance.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to make sure that activities stimulate interest, using real-life examples where appropriate, while maintaining a calm, purposeful atmosphere. English and mathematics lessons in particular frequently offer challenging and engaging experiences. In a Year 9 poetry lesson for example, students persevered with learning how text conveys meaning by referring to their own experiences of city life prompted by excellent questioning and challenge from the teacher.
- Teachers explain very clearly what they want students to do. They create an exceptionally positive climate in the classroom that encourages students to succeed. As a result, students approach their own work in a responsible and conscientious manner.
- Teachers carefully set work to challenge students of different abilities. They are skilled in using prior achievement information to enable all groups of students to make at least good and often

outstanding progress. On rare occasions the rate of learning slows because students are not given enough opportunities to learn independently.

- The very small number of students who attend alternative provision achieve well on courses that are well suited to them.
- Teachers make very effective use of a range of questioning techniques to challenge students' thinking. In an outstanding Year 11 mathematics lesson, for example, students were constantly challenged to reflect on their own understanding of calculating area through questioning by the teacher. Each question from the students was met with a carefully chosen question in reply which challenged their thinking and contributed significantly to their enjoyment of learning.
- Lesson activities are expertly planned and work is carefully modified for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. These students are taught very well so that they make similar progress to other students.
- The marking of students' work is mostly of a high standard although there is a little variation in quality. Teachers praise high-quality work appropriately and provide clear guidance for improvement. Students are given frequent opportunities to assess their own and each other's work which they do maturely and accurately.
- Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. Over time, highly effective teaching means that students make rapid progress. Feedback is rated very highly by students who say that it is invaluable in improving their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The students' outstanding behaviour contributes to the calm and purposeful atmosphere in the academy. They regulate their own behaviour, rather than through rules imposed on them. Students are proud of the academy and are respectful and caring members of their community.
- The academy makes every effort to provide a safe and secure environment that is valued and appreciated by all. Students talk very confidently about how they would keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as using the internet and social networking sites. They display an excellent understanding of the issues relating to safety.
- Behaviour management policies are clear and consistently applied. Senior staff effectively monitor behaviour and this has a positive impact on learning. Expert counselling and mentoring has a positive impact on a very small proportion of students who need additional support in managing their behaviour.
- Students say bullying is very rare but if there are any incidents, they are dealt with quickly and effectively. They are aware of the different types of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and cyber bullying, and know what to do if it occurs.
- Students have highly positive attitudes to learning and are very keen to do their best in lessons. Almost all parents and carers agree that their children are safe and happy and are very positive about behaviour in the academy.
- The academy's well developed procedures and robust actions ensure that students' attendance is above average. They arrive at lessons punctually.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The highly effective team of executive principal and principal share high expectations and an uncompromising vision for the academy. Their example inspires outstanding leadership at senior and other levels. There is a determination that all students will achieve the highest standards possible that permeates throughout the academy.
- The school's view of itself is very well focused and accurately identifies the priorities for development. Improvement planning clearly explains how the academy intends to reach its ambitious targets. Resulting actions have been successful. For example, following a detailed review the academy has successfully restructured the curriculum at Key Stage 3 with the result that progress is accelerating further still for these students.
- Teaching has continued to develop through a rigorous programme of checking the quality of lessons, together with well-focused training. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of the students they teach, and senior, subject and year leaders for their areas of responsibility. There is a clear link between performance and salary progression.
- Academy leaders track and analyse students' progress carefully. As a result any underachievement is quickly spotted and effective support is quickly put in place. This means that all have equal opportunities to succeed and no one is discriminated against.
- The wide range of GCSE subjects offered means that students have a good choice of courses and this meets their needs very well. The development of work-related courses reflects the needs of students and extends the opportunities available to them.
- The academy regularly hosts independent careers information events where a large number of external institutions provide guidance in helping students make appropriate career choices. This is highly effective, and the proportion of students not in education, employment or training is much lower than average.
- The academy uses a range of consultants to support improvement. For example, training took place this term to support middle leaders in developing teaching and learning strategies.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effectively promoted by a very broad range of arts, drama, music, science and sports activities. Social development is particularly well supported as shown by the excellent relationships between students of diverse backgrounds.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Academy councillors rigorously hold the academy to account. They contribute fully to the well-developed vision, strategic planning and monitoring processes. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and students' performance from the data and where there is even the smallest room for further improvement. They effectively monitor additional funds from the pupil premium and make sure it is used to improve the achievement of the students entitled to it. Their awareness of how teacher performance is checked, evaluated and rewarded is well developed, which will enable them to engage with the new teacher performance systems coming into force this year. They know what the school would do to tackle any underperformance. Councillors rigorously check safeguarding practice, and as a result, safeguarding procedures meet current legal requirements.

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	136406
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	427235

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1345
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	30
Appropriate authority	The academy council
Chair	Bob Fear
Headteacher	Christine Quinn (Executive Principal) & Gaetano Ferrante (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0121 628 1311
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