

John Taylor High School

Dunstall Road, Barton-under-Needwood, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 8AZ

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2014

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.

- Students at John Taylor High School receive an outstanding education so that they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- A key feature in the academy's sustained excellent performance at GCSE is the care and guidance that is provided for each student to ensure that qualifications chosen are well-matched to their abilities and future aspirations.
- Most groups of students make consistently good progress and many make outstanding progress so that attainment is well above the national average.
- Teaching is outstanding, and particularly strong in the sixth form. Teachers have exceptionally good subject knowledge and use this very well to plan lessons that motivate and enthuse students to learn.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly and provide clear advice for next steps in their learning. However, students are not always encouraged to respond and discuss advice.
- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning, showing great respect to staff and to each other. This helps to create an exceptionally positive environment in which to learn throughout the academy.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students are exceptionally well supported both academically and in their personal development.
- The Principal, governors and leaders at all levels are relentless in their drive to continually enhance teaching and learning, so that the high standards already achieved are set to improve further.
- Students and parents value the academy greatly and believe that staff do the best they possibly can for them.
- Staff are exceptionally supportive of the academy and its leadership. One member of staff said, 'It's a privilege to be a member of staff at this school.'
- The governing body is very effective because it is highly ambitious for the academy and absolutely committed to its continuous improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons, including ten that were jointly observed with senior leaders. They visited assemblies and registration periods and carried out a series of short visits to lessons across the two days.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of students from all key stages, with senior and other leaders, governors and class teachers. Inspectors also met with the academy’s adviser from the National College. This is the organisation that works with teaching schools.
- Inspectors took account of 150 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 123 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of school documentation was reviewed and evaluated, including: records of progress made by current students; self-evaluation documents and improvement plans; behaviour and bullying logs; staff performance records; minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding policies and records.
- In addition, inspectors considered work from a range of students across all key stages and a range of subjects.

Inspection team

Merryl Ford, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Douglas Folan

Additional Inspector

Tracey Lecointe

Additional Inspector

Geoffrey Marston

Additional Inspector

Susan Tabberer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- John Taylor High School is a large secondary academy with a sixth form. It converted to become an academy school in November 2010. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding.
- Students come from a wide area with many travelling in by bus from outlying areas.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is slightly above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- A very small number of students in Year 10 and 11 attend alternative provision at Burton and South Derbyshire College.
- The academy enters students early for GCSE mathematics. All students have the opportunity to re-take mathematics in the summer and continue to study the subject throughout Year 11.
- The academy is a teaching school.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching even better, so that the proportion of outstanding teaching increases, by:
 - ensuring that the whole school marking policy requires that students correct and improve their work using the written feedback and guidance given by their teachers
 - developing a dialogue with students, through dedicated response time, to ensure that any misconceptions are identified at an individual level so that progress is always as rapid as possible.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The academy's detailed and rigorous data analysis shows that progress of all groups of students is improving strongly after a very slight decline in 2013. For the very few who fall behind, highly effective monitoring ensures that action is taken rapidly. Consequently, excellent achievement is sustained across all key stages and almost all subjects.
- The academy is making very good use of pupil premium funding. Students attain less than half a grade below other students in English. Although the difference is two thirds of a grade in mathematics, this represents a significant and rapid improvement from 2012. Overall, the achievement of students eligible for pupil premium has risen rapidly and in 2013 nearly two thirds achieved five good GCSEs including English and mathematics, which is close to the national average for all students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress as a result of rapid identification of need, carefully targeted intervention and support and outstanding teaching. As a result, there is a three year rising trend of school action and school action plus students achieving five good GCSEs including English and mathematics.
- The most able students also achieve very well and this is because teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve and provide the right challenge and support to enable this. As a result, many of these students make outstanding progress.
- A very small number of students in Year 10 and Year 11 attend alternative courses at Burton and South Derbyshire College. These courses are very carefully matched to students' abilities and they make at least good progress as a result.
- The school enters students early in Year 11 for GCSE mathematics. All students have the opportunity to re-enter in the summer term and many improve their grades as a result. This approach has been successful in promoting high aspirations.
- Highly effective use is made of Year 7 catch up funding to provide individual targeted tuition for English and mathematics as well as access to the academy's nurture group for those Year 7 students who are finding the transition to high school more difficult.
- Achievement in the sixth form is well above national averages in most subjects. This is because students are supported well and provided with excellent information, advice and guidance. As a result qualifications and subjects are well-matched to students' needs and abilities, retention from Year 12 to Year 13 is exceptionally high and almost all students progress to university or appropriate employment.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Inspectors confirmed the academy's judgement that teaching is outstanding. Students make rapid and sustained progress because teaching stimulates their interest and develops their skills and knowledge very well.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations of what students can achieve from their starting

points. They know their students extremely well and what they need to do next to improve further. Consequently, activities are planned to meet the abilities of groups of students so that they are nearly always effectively challenged to move forward in their learning. For instance, in a Year 13 history lesson, teaching that precisely matched activities to needs, enabled students to make rapid and outstanding progress in understanding what they needed to do to improve.

- Teachers' use of questioning is a real strength of the academy. Inspectors noted that nearly all teachers were highly skilled in ensuring that questioning required students to reflect on, and refine, their answers. As a result, students often provided sophisticated explanations supported by well-chosen evidence.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly and provide helpful advice to show what they need to do to improve their work. However, not all teachers routinely require students to correct or improve their work so that occasionally, where students do not understand the comments their teachers have made, progress can be slowed.
- Teaching assistants are an integral part of the academy and make a major contribution to the excellent achievement of students. Inspectors noted their expertise in enabling learning for the students they supported because they knew and understood their needs well.
- Students are extremely positive about their learning. They say that they enjoy coming to the academy because lessons are interesting and they know that they are making progress.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire agree that their children are taught well and make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They behave impeccably in lessons and around the school at different times of the day. Students have the utmost respect for each other, for teachers and other staff so that the academy is a harmonious and positive environment for learning at all times.
- The academy has an effective behaviour management system that is clearly understood by all students and focuses on positive reinforcement through a six-stage approach. This ensures that behaviour concerns rarely escalate. Any instances of poor behaviour are recorded and analysed, with rapid and effective action taken. As a result, students report that poor behaviour in and around the academy is very rare. This is supported both by the academy's own records and evidence from the inspection.
- Attendance is well above the national average for all groups of students, including for those who attend classes away from the academy. This is because the highly effective team approach supports students to attend regularly.
- Exclusions have reduced over the last three years and are below the national average.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Inspectors spoke to a range of students and all reported that they felt totally safe in all areas of the school and when attending alternative provision. This is because the academy has robust systems for monitoring such incidents and students were clear that bullying is not tolerated.
- Students have a very good awareness of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and

homophobic bullying and report that this seldom takes place. The academy's Anti Bullying Committee (ABC) run by sixth form students is greatly appreciated by younger students who say that they always have someone to talk to if they have concerns.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Principal's drive to improve outcomes for students through a determined focus on the quality of teaching has paid dividends and continues to do so. He is ably supported by an excellent team of senior and subject leaders who are as committed as he to the high expectations that have ensured sustained improvement and an educational environment that greatly enhances students' potential and success.
- The academy's systems for monitoring the progress of students are extremely rigorous and effective. Students who may need additional help are identified quickly and provided with targeted support that is carefully monitored.
- Leadership of teaching is outstanding. High levels of accountability, alongside rigorous monitoring, challenge and support have ensured that outstanding teaching is maintained.
- An excellent range of professional development opportunities is very much appreciated by academy staff. The twilight sessions for sharing good practice, often led by teachers, are seen as valuable opportunities for developing skills that will further enhance students' learning. In addition, the academy offers a broad programme of support and training, in its role as a teaching school, to a number of local primary schools.
- Subject and house leaders are integral to the success of the academy. This is because senior leaders provide effective support and challenge and have high expectations so that these leaders are absolutely clear about their responsibilities, how they are held accountable and how they hold others to account.
- The use of a wide range of monitoring activities ensures that leaders know the academy well. As a result all teachers are set challenging targets that are clearly linked to the academy's development priorities and to students' achievement. Only those who achieve the high standards expected move up the pay scale.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively because it is precisely targeted and takes into account the range of abilities within this group of students. The impact of the additional support is monitored rigorously and clearly informs further actions where necessary.
- The range of courses and subjects taught is broad, balanced and responsive to the interests and abilities of students. Literacy is embedded across subjects and is a real strength. The focus on developing a love and appreciation of reading is modelled very effectively by all staff and students say that they are now reading more often and widely.
- Leadership of the sixth form is outstanding because the range of courses is highly effective in meeting the abilities and aspirations of learners who are exceptionally well supported both academically and in their personal development.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision makes a very strong contribution to the effectiveness of the academy and the achievement of its students. A wide range of activities are offered during and after the academy day and in holidays including educational visits, summer

schools, sporting activities, community events and dramatic performances.

- Students receive high quality, impartial information, advice and guidance throughout their time at the academy so that nearly all students go on to further or higher education, employment or training.

- Safeguarding meets all statutory requirements.

- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has an in-depth understanding of the academy. Governors ensure that they are very well informed about the quality of teaching and of students' achievement, offering both support and robust challenge of performance data to secure further improvement. They ensure that the performance of teachers is well matched to salaries and promotion. Careful recruitment of new governors means that there is a wide range of experience and expertise which is put to effective use in support of the academy and its students. They have a detailed understanding of the way in which pupil premium funding is used and its impact on students' progress. Governors have strong links with subjects and areas of responsibility in the academy and work closely with senior leaders to set the academy's ambitious strategic vision.

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	136323
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	441271

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Academy converter
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	1480
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gareth Moss
Principal	Michael Donoghue
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01283 239300
Fax number	01283 239333
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