

Nightingale Academy

34 Turin Road, London, N9 8DQ

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Students' GCSE examination results are not good in some subjects, including humanities, design and technology and work-related courses.
- Not enough teaching is good or outstanding.
- The most able students are not sufficiently challenged in some subjects.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not make good progress in a number of subjects by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Some teachers do not teach students to write extensively or to develop their mathematical skills in the subjects they teach.
- Not all subject leaders have the skills to improve the quality of teaching quickly enough to improve students' achievement.
- Teachers' marking does not always tell pupils what to do and how to improve their work. Also, students do not always respond to teachers' advice which limits their progress.
- Students' behaviour in corridors and outside spaces is not as good as their behaviour in the classroom.
- The sixth form requires improvement because most students only make reasonable progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' achievement in English and mathematics has improved rapidly.
- Students achieve well in languages.
- Students feel safe in school.
- Senior leaders and governors evaluate the academy's performance accurately. They are having a positive impact on improving teaching and students' achievement.
- Students' reading and communication skills are well developed.
- The governing body and the sponsor work well together to hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching and students' achievement.
- The different learning pathways, introduced in September 2013, which students in Years 7 to 13 are assigned to study are beginning to improve students' learning.
- In English and mathematics, the gap has closed between the progress made by students eligible for additional government funding and their peers.

Information about this inspection

- Long and short observations were conducted in 30 lessons across a range of subjects to observe teaching and students' learning and to examine students' books. Nine observations were completed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors visited morning registration, tutor time and a Year 8 assembly. They held formal discussions with students in each year group and also spoke to students receiving additional support for their learning.
- Informal discussions were held with students during breaks and lunchtimes. Meetings were held with the head of school, the Interim Executive Principal, senior, middle and subject leaders, groups of teachers, and administrative staff.
- Inspectors and senior leaders scrutinised a range of students' work together. Questionnaire returns from 102 staff were analysed. Inspectors took into account the views of parents in surveys collated by the academy because they were no responses to the online Parent View questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and the Regional Director of Education who is the academy sponsor's representative.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the academy's analysis of information about students' progress, and records of behaviour, attendance, exclusions and safeguarding. The academy's self-evaluation and improvement plan, anonymised records of performance targets set for teachers and teaching records were examined. The minutes of the full governing body meetings and the rapid improvement group meetings held with the representative of the academy sponsor were reviewed. Minutes of the governors' achievement committee were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Pamela Fearnley, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lesley Cox	Her Majesty's Inspector
Veronique Gerber	Additional Inspector
David Smith	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- Nightingale Academy opened in September 2010. The academy is sponsored by The Academies Enterprise Trust. One of its targets is to reduce the number of students not in education, employment or training.
- The academy is slightly smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided in this school for children who are looked after, and students known to be eligible for free school meals, is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion of students receiving extra support through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is much higher than found nationally.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of students by the end of Year 11.
- Six students currently attend training at places away from school. They study at Enfield College, The Kingfisher Programme and Reflex Training Education Limited.
- In May 2014, the governing body and academy sponsor appointed an Interim Executive Principal for three days a week. The Vice-Principal has been promoted to the role of head of school and is being supported by the Interim Executive Principal to lead the academy. This is a temporary arrangement while the substantive Principal is absent.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so achievement is at least good by:
 - using the academy's information on students' performance to pitch work at the right level so that students, especially the most able, are given suitably challenging work
 - always giving students high quality written guidance so they know what they need to do to improve and check that they act on this advice to improve their learning
 - ensuring there are more opportunities for students to write extensively and to develop and use their mathematical understanding, through a range of subjects.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on students' achievement by:
 - developing subject leaders' skills further so that they are all able to improve the quality of teaching and achievement in their subjects
 - ensuring disabled students and those who have special educational needs and the most able students always achieve well
 - improving students' behaviour so it is always good when they are outside lessons and moving around the academy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students' achievement requires improvement and is not good, because students in Years 7 to 11 do not achieve well enough in several subjects. These include geography, history, design and technology and some work-related courses.
- Students enter the school with low standards compared to others nationally. Their levels of attainment by the end of Year 11 are just below average so they make reasonable progress. However, the percentage of students attaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, increased by 10% in 2013. This shows that students' attainment is increasing and students' progress is speeding up.
- Furthermore, evidence from students' work and observations of teaching shows that students currently in the school are making faster progress than in previous years in many subjects. This is because students are benefiting from improvements in teaching and how teachers track their learning.
- In 2013, Year 11 students make progress which is close to national expectations in English and mathematics. Their progress in languages is above similar students nationally. However, even though students' progress is improving, the learning seen in their books is too variable. Students' progress is not consistently good across subjects and year groups.
- The most able students do not always achieve well because they are not given challenging work. The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is better in Key Stage 3 than in Key Stage 4. Furthermore, their ongoing progress is not always assessed accurately enough to tightly match and adapt the support and interventions they receive to their learning needs. In contrast, the progress made by lower ability students in English and mathematics in 2013 is much higher than national expectations. These examples show students' performance is inconsistent and requires further improvement.
- Students' extended writing is underdeveloped in some subjects. Students are able to tackle mathematical problems successfully in some subjects. However, in other subjects such as science, their mathematical skills are sometimes a barrier to their learning.
- Students' reading is good, helped by a number of reading initiatives including the accelerated reading intervention programme which students in Years 7 to 9 complete every day during their daily morning registration.
- Students who attend other schools, colleges or training providers make variable progress. This is due to their poor attendance. In some cases their poor attitudes to learning also hinders them from achieving well in the courses they study.
- Students who speak English as an additional language and those in the early stages of learning English make good gains in their learning. This is because of the effective additional support they receive to improve their English, especially their reading skills. Nonetheless, their learning declines when teachers are not fully prepared to support them to overcome their limited writing skills.
- In 2013, the average GCSE point score in English and mathematics for students eligible for additional government funding was below that of others in the academy. However, students eligible for this support make reasonable progress between Years 7 and 11 in English and mathematics. The result is that the progress gap between these students and others is closed in mathematics and is reducing in English. This demonstrates the academy's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.
- There has been a policy of entering students early for mathematics. This policy stopped because a significant number of the most able students did not achieve their target grade when entered early.
- The attainment of students eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, to develop the standard of their English and mathematics, is improving. This is because these students are receiving additional literacy and numeracy support. They are also taught English and mathematics in a teaching group with very few students so teachers can give them intensive one-to-one support. As a result, their attainment is improving towards matching the national level expected for Year 7 students in

English and mathematics.

- Sixth form students make reasonable progress from their starting points in A-level and advanced work-related courses. However, their progress is below that expected in AS-level courses. The academy is addressing this underperformance by improving the variety of post-16 courses available for students to study and targeting gaps in students' learning through additional intervention. This is improving the proportion of students gaining A* to E and A* to B grades, especially in AS- and A-level subjects.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good because there is too much variation across subjects and year groups, and there is not enough outstanding teaching. This results in students not making good enough progress in some subjects by the end of Year 11, particularly in GCSE geography, history, design and technology and work-related studies.
- Teachers frequently give students written comments about how to improve their work but significant numbers of students either do not respond or their responses sometimes do not demonstrate that their learning is improving. This is limiting the rate of progress students make and teachers' ability to correct errors in students' understanding.
- The most able students are not always set challenging work and this means they do not make more than expected progress in some subjects. The result is that they sometimes do not achieve well because the work they are set is not sufficiently demanding. Consequently, they do not always make rapid gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The school's focus on developing students' speaking and reading enables them to share their ideas and to speak clearly and confidently with their peers and teachers in the classroom. However, work in a number of students' books shows their learning is sometimes limited by their underdeveloped writing skills. These results in either their work not being completed or their explanations and answers to questions lacking in depth.
- Nonetheless, teaching is slowly improving and is having a positive effect on students' achievement especially in Key Stage 3 and the sixth form. This is also as a result of the different pathways that students are allocated to study in Years 7 to 13 which are linked to their academic ability and learning needs. This is beginning to help teachers to plan work linked to students' learning needs effectively. Furthermore, lower ability students are taught in very small groups and teachers and teaching assistants give them focused one-to-one attention during lessons which is helping them to learn well.
- When teaching is most effective, teachers explain difficult points clearly, check students' understanding and quickly adapt their teaching when necessary. The tasks they set are appropriately challenging for students of different abilities. The development of students' literacy, especially their writing, and mathematics skills is effective.
- Teaching in the sixth form requires improvement because it is too variable and not consistently good. As a result, students do not make good or better progress in all subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. It is not good because a small number are noisy in corridors when moving between lessons and their behaviour can become a little boisterous during breaks and lunchtimes. Nonetheless, the majority of students, including those in the sixth form, behave well in lessons regardless of the quality of teaching. They are committed to their learning and have respectful attitudes to visitors and their peers.
- The level of fixed-term exclusions is high compared to the national average even though they have reduced recently. This is because exclusions are being used as part of a combination of strategies to improve the behaviour expected in the academy. Over half of all parents and staff agree that the academy ensures students are well behaved. Older students say behaviour has improved. This shows the success of the academy's work to promote a cohesive community

where students from different backgrounds are accepted and good relationships are being fostered.

- The appointment of the education welfare officer in September 2013 is rapidly improving students' attendance. However, the academy's overall attendance remains below average. The academy is improving how it monitors poor attendance so persistent absence is reducing quickly. The academy also carefully tracks the attendance of different groups of students, including those who attend other places away from the academy to study. Action is taken swiftly if a student does not attend regularly.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say bullying is rare and they know how to deal with bullying, including cyber bullying and homophobic bullying. Students understand the risks associated with using the internet. The majority of staff and parents believe the academy deals effectively with bullying.
- High priority is given to ensuring students are well supported and are safe, particularly when they are in danger of not doing so well. The safety of students who study off site is monitored carefully to ensure they are safe. Very good procedures are in place so the academy is able to check whether sixth-form students are on the premises.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not sufficiently tackled weak teaching in some subjects which is leading to variations in students' academic progress. However, students' achievement has improved since the last inspection and is no longer inadequate. Better teaching is improving students' English and mathematics outcomes. Their progress in languages is good but weaknesses remain in a number of subjects, including humanities, design and technology and work-related courses.
- Senior leaders are beginning to improve students' underachievement in subjects by putting support plans in place to coach staff to improve their teaching. They have also revised the academy's timetable so the end of day finishes early on Tuesday and Thursday without reducing the time students spend in the classroom. This additional time is now used by staff to work in subject teams to develop the quality of their teaching or to attend whole-school training on how to improve teaching and other aspects of the academy's provision. However, this initiative is not yet improving teaching and students' achievement quickly enough in every subject.
- Some subject leaders do not have the skills required to lead developments in the quality of teaching and raise students' achievement in their subjects quickly. Senior leaders are identifying these leaders and are offering support and training. However, formal procedures are actioned if they do not improve. This is resulting in middle leaders being held to greater account and new staff being appointed as appropriate.
- The academy's evaluation of the quality of teaching over time and the impact of teaching on students' progress is accurate. Nonetheless, the academy's senior leaders recognise that more work is required to improve the organisation of the provision and support for disabled students and those with special educational needs to improve their achievement.
- Senior leaders demonstrate the capacity to secure improvement. They have addressed a number of areas for improvement and have successfully moved the academy from inadequate to requiring improvement. They have developed students' reading, improved the leadership of the sixth form and improved the results obtained by students studying post-16 courses. They have also revised the pathways to which students are assigned to study between Years 7 to 13 linked to students' academic ability. This is improving the range of subjects and qualifications that students study at Key Stage 4 so they are better prepared for their post-16 study.
- In Years 7 to 11, leaders set students challenging targets and collect and analyse information about students' performance every half term to monitor students' progress. Senior and middle leaders then meet with teachers to agree the intervention required to close the gaps in students' learning. They also identify where teachers require additional training to improve their classroom practice. This is leading to improvements in teaching and students' outcomes in some subjects, especially English and mathematics, but not in all subjects.

- Leaders and staff have received training about judging teachers' performance accurately and setting quality targets to evaluate their effectiveness linked to students' achievement and the quality of their teaching. This is helping leaders to support their own and teachers' development through professional training and to make decisions about future pay awards for staff. Nonetheless, these changes are relatively recent and have not yet managed to improve the quality of teaching so that it is usually good or outstanding in all subjects.
- The academy has very effective systems in place to safeguard students and its arrangements for child protection meet current requirements. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The curriculum meets students' needs, although leaders rightly recognise that further opportunities should be available to develop students' writing and use of mathematics in all subjects. There are clear and effective progression routes through Key Stage 4 and the sixth form to other education providers, employment and training. Years 10 and 11 students also study for a world of work qualification during their weekly tutor time. The school's enrichment programme provides clubs and sporting activities. Students enjoy sports and are aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle to support their learning and physical well-being.
- The academy is supported effectively by the sponsor through the sponsor's regional representative. He visits the academy regularly to assess the progress of the Principal towards making improvements. He also works extremely well with governors to judge the impact of leaders to raise students' achievement. He has quickly secured the capacity of the senior team to continue to improve the academy and deliver its improvement priorities while the Principal is absent. This is by commissioning an experienced leader, the Interim Executive Principal, to support the head of school. In the short time that the Interim Executive Principal has been in post, she is very aware of the academy's strengths and areas that require improvement. This means she is well equipped to continue to take appropriate action and make further suggestions to move the academy forward.
- Students are active participants in the academy and the local community. Assemblies and tutor periods promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, a Year 8 assembly focused on improving students' attendance and making them reflect about choosing the correct pathway in life to increase their future success.
- Parents are supportive of the school with over half of those who took part in the Ofsted survey agreeing they would recommend the academy to other parents. They are actively encouraged to have a voice, for example through the academy's yearly parent survey. Parents also volunteer as support advisors for the Turkish and Somalian communities to ensure parents who speak these languages can communicate effectively with the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body, appointed in April 2013, has set up a Rapid Improvement Group. This is composed of the governor committee group leaders, the academy sponsor's representative and is chaired by the Chair of the Governing Body. The group meets half-termly and invites the Principal and senior leaders to attend so they can be questioned and challenged about the impact of their actions to improve teaching and students' achievement. This meeting ensures governors are now far better informed about underperforming subjects and areas that need improving in the academy, as well as those that are performing well. Governors use targets set for staff to hold leaders and teachers to account for students' performance and the quality of teaching effectively. They do not reward poor performance. Governors assess the Principal's performance against the academy's key priorities.
 - Governors' judgements about all aspects of the academy's performance, including the impact of teaching over time on students' achievement, are accurate. They compare information on the performance of students with other students' nationally. Governors are extremely aware of how additional government funding is used and are provided with clear information about the impact of the funding on the achievement of these students. They are determined to continue to improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement. For example, they have recently commissioned an external consultant to review the provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs, in order to make improvements to this aspect of its work. Governors audit their skills to identify the training they need to improve their effectiveness.

They visit the academy regularly and initiate student, parent and staff surveys. They also attend staff briefings and academy events.

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	136157
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	430620

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

Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
School category	Community
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	815
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Cox
Principal	Jane Willis
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 January 2013
Telephone number	020 8443 85002038
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