

Trinity High School and Sixth Form Centre

Easemore Road, Redditch, B98 8HB

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Sixth form provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders have raised expectations throughout the school and adapted the curriculum, so that students are now achieving well across an increasingly wide range of subjects.
- Leaders' checks on teaching and provision of staff training are steadily improving the quality of teaching. This is particularly evident in the sixth form.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the school. They are exceptionally well-informed and use their professional skills to make wise long-term plans.
- At Key Stage 4, students' progress and attainment in English, mathematics, history and geography are at least good.
- The school makes effective use of lessons, assemblies and special events to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. As a result, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive. Students appreciate how the school's expectations help them to achieve. They behave well in lessons and during social times.
- Teaching is good. Students respond well to teachers' enthusiasm, high expectations and established routines. Strong relationships have a positive impact on learning.
- The sixth form is good. Sixth form students benefit from an increasingly wide range of academic and other opportunities, and good careers guidance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The tasks set by teachers do not always build precisely on what all groups of students already know and understand. This sometimes results in a lack of challenge for the most-able students.
- The progress of the most-able students has lagged behind that of their classmates, and is only now beginning to improve quickly enough for them to attain enough top grades.
- Teachers' marking does not always help students to improve their work.
- A small number of vulnerable students underachieve when accessing alternative provision.
- Some improvement plans lack urgency and the detail required to hold staff to account, especially in science.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 34 lessons, taught by 33 different teachers; 15 observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also visited an assembly and observed students' conduct at break and lunchtimes. They visited the site where some students receive alternative provision.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, other leaders, class teachers and governors.
- Inspectors met with four groups of students, including two selected at random, and spoke with many others informally. Inspectors listened to students reading in some lessons.
- Inspectors looked at books and folders in lessons. They scrutinised some Year 11 students' work in depth, checking it against the teachers' assessments of attainment and progress. They also looked at information on students' targets and current levels of achievement.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents. These included: development plans and their evaluations; records of how leaders check on teaching; minutes of governing body meetings; case studies; policies; records showing how the school supports vulnerable students and checks on their progress; school publicity.
- Inspectors took into account the 37 recent responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the school's records of parental surveys. They also considered the 69 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephen Ruddy	Additional Inspector
Lesley Voaden	Additional Inspector
Jane Bonner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Trinity High School and Sixth Form Centre is an average-sized secondary school. Students join in Year 9. The number of students on roll is increasing rapidly.
- Trinity High School converted to an academy on 1 August 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The large majority of students are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium, which the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care, is average.
- At Key Stage 4, 12 students currently receive full-time alternative provision arranged by Worcestershire Medical Education Team. Six have recently taken up full-time or part-time placements at The Forge short-stay school. A very small number attend the Heart of Worcestershire College to follow work-related courses for one day each week.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up his post on 1 September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - using information about what students already know and understand to set activities which closely match their abilities and enable all groups in the class, especially the most-able, to make outstanding progress
 - making sure that marking consistently helps students to improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management so that leaders:
 - hold staff to account through identifying specific actions, tight deadlines and the division of responsibilities in all improvement plans, especially in the science department
 - ensure that where alternative provision is used to provide support for vulnerable students, that those students make the progress they are capable of.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders set high expectations for behaviour and for academic attainment. Recent initiatives to reward good behaviour are enhancing students' positive attitudes towards their studies. Teachers set tests for students each half term. This provides a structure to students' learning and enables them to understand clearly their own progress. Leaders use the results skilfully and promptly to provide additional lessons which enable any students at risk of falling behind to catch up.
- The school has responded well to rising standards in the school by offering courses at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form which present a stiffer challenge. The school is moving on from a heavy emphasis on English and mathematics, and it is now paying the same attention to standards in all subjects. Leaders regularly check on teaching and link training closely to teachers' professional requirements. As a consequence, teaching is improving steadily.
- The school assesses students' attainment in Year 9 using GCSE criteria. This is an appropriately straightforward response to the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- Although the school's overall evaluation of its own performance is generous, leaders have identified the right areas for improvement. Their plans are wide-ranging and include appropriate actions, but in some instances the lack of detail on responsibilities, deadlines and expected outcomes make it hard for leaders to check on progress and hold staff to account. This particularly applies to plans for improving standards in science.
- Subject leaders understand well their roles in carrying out school priorities. They ensure that test results are consistent and accurately tied to GCSE grades, and discuss frequently with senior leaders how the progress of individuals and groups can be improved. They have begun to plan for the new GCSE courses. They are drawing on excellent practice in other schools to guide improvement, but this work is at a relatively early stage.
- The curriculum provides students with a good balance of activities. The school has renewed its promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through lessons, particularly in religious education and through form time. Assemblies and themed 'learning days' tackle topics which are relevant to the school community. Sixth form students discuss a wide range of social issues appropriate to their age. Students are able to influence school policy: for example, the school listened to their views when writing the new policy to reward positive behaviour. Cultural differences are celebrated and explored, with the result that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupil premium funding provides effective academic support for students who need to catch up and additional social support to overcome any constraints they may face. As a result, disadvantaged students remain committed to their learning and keep up with their classmates. The school evaluates the impact of its provision carefully and adapts its expenditure accordingly. A good example of this is the decision to provide special help for the most-able disadvantaged students to make sure they attain the top grades.
- Leaders create good relationships between students. Good support for disadvantaged students and their strong stand against any form of discrimination promotes equality of opportunity effectively. Impartial advice on the next steps in students' careers is freely available. Staff give careful consideration to balancing freedom of choice with the subject or course most likely to yield success. As a result, students show good commitment to their courses and almost all complete their studies.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet all statutory requirements. Staff keep clear records and are able to draw on the sustained involvement of other agencies to help vulnerable students. They work effectively with parents, including those who are initially distrustful of education. Parents are almost all very supportive of the school.
- Leaders check regularly on the academic progress, attendance, behaviour and well-being of students

attending alternative provision. They plan carefully in conjunction with professionals from other disciplines how best to combine medical, social and emotional support with academic progress. Some students succeed in rejoining mainstream education, but for a small minority, academic attainment is disappointingly low.

- Leaders set targets for teachers that are linked to students' progress and the development of their teaching skills. The results are used to make decisions about pay rises and promotion. Staff, including teachers at an early stage of their careers, report that training is proving very helpful in improving their skills.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have very effective oversight of the school. They are impressively well-informed both about the school and about wider developments in education. Governors support leaders in planning to improve the school. They ask searching questions about students' attainment, the quality of teaching in the school, standards of behaviour and the impact of the pupil premium. Consequently, they are able to hold leaders closely to account for the school's performance.
 - Governors understand the local community and make sure that the culture of the school promotes respect for people from differing cultural and religious backgrounds.
 - Governors have a strong command of staffing issues. They ensure that the headteacher manages the pay and performance of the staff so that only good teaching is rewarded and weaker performance is tackled effectively. They involve an independent adviser in their management of the headteacher's performance so all decisions concerning his role are well founded.
 - Governors have a wide-ranging understanding of risk and check that all safeguarding requirements are met. As a result of this, students in the school are very safe.
 - Governors ensure that the school works within its budget.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students, including those in the sixth form, approach their learning with commitment and enthusiasm, bring the right equipment to class and present their work tidily. They understand how their behaviour contributes to learning and respect the clear rules for conduct. Students collaborate effectively in lessons, for example commenting in detail on a partner's work to help them improve. Students appreciate new school rewards for good behaviour.
- During the inspection, students were universally polite and helpful. Students take care with their appearance. They mirror the courtesy and respect that staff show to them. Students' conduct at social times is orderly and responsible. They respect the school's facilities and they drop very little litter.
- The school records behavioural incidents carefully. There have been few incidents of a racist nature and the school has responded with an appropriate degree of seriousness. There have been no instances of homophobia. The school's use of exclusion is reducing, so that permanent and fixed term exclusion are now rare.
- Younger students report that a very small number of lessons are disrupted and in minor ways. Inspectors observed that where tasks fail to completely engage students some do not involve themselves fully in the lesson or talk quietly across the teacher.
- Students understand that both school staff and adults from other agencies are working together to help improve their emotional and social skills. As a result, students' attitudes and behaviour when they attend alternative provision are good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Child protection procedures are robust, and staff have received an enhanced level of training. As a result, all staff are aware of the various risks to student safety, including those related to extremism and exploitation. They take decisive action when needed. The school involves other agencies promptly to support vulnerable students. All necessary policies and risk

assessments are up-to-date and reviewed regularly.

- Students say that they feel very safe in school and almost all their parents agree. Even with a large and complex suite of buildings, staff manage student safety effectively. Students report that bullying is very rare, there is a simple procedure for raising concerns and the school resolves any problems swiftly. They are well informed about different types of risk, including those posed by the internet.
- The school follows up promptly on absence, including any absence at alternative provision. A viral outbreak at the end of 2014 set back the school's attempts to reduce absence, but attendance is now rising again and is broadly average. The proportion of students, particularly girls, who are absent persistently, has been a concern for the school. However, the effective deployment of additional staff has led to a gradual reduction in such absence.
- Students attending alternative provision say they feel safe and well supported.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have very good relationships with their classes. They have established effective routines so that very little learning time is wasted. Classrooms exude a positive atmosphere and in most lessons, teachers' enthusiasm goes a long way to secure students' engagement.
- Departments begin work on their Key Stage 4 courses in Year 9. As a result, a high proportion of lessons have an examination focus and students are engaged because their learning is clearly relevant to their GCSEs. The examination board's mark schemes provide students with clarity about what they should be aiming to achieve and a checklist against which to assess their progress.
- Teachers use a variety of strategies, including targeted questioning to ask students to indicate their understanding by using coloured cards or mini-whiteboards as a check on progress during lessons. This enables teachers to adapt the lesson if students do not understand or if they have made particularly rapid progress.
- The school makes good provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. The school provides a literacy plan for those who enter the school with reading and writing difficulties and this enables them to catch up. Teachers take into consideration how these students are best able to learn and adapt work when necessary. For example, in English lessons, students with acute handwriting difficulties are able to use a tablet computer to complete a piece of extended writing. As a result, they are able to demonstrate their understanding of how a novel is written.
- Students are sometimes made to think deeply about their learning, especially in sixth-form lessons. In a media studies lesson, a short video clip provided the focus for a detailed discussion about the signs which lead observers to make social assumptions about a young person's character. In a lesson on ethics students were asked to ponder challenging questions about whether morality was purely a matter of opinion and to justify their responses.
- Teaching assistants are well informed about the purpose of classroom activities and work skilfully with individuals or small groups of students. They ask pertinent questions and provide extra ways to enable them to grasp ideas. Regular and varied homework makes an effective contribution to learning.
- Teachers in all subjects contribute to the development of English and mathematics, for example by helping students to structure longer pieces of writing or draw and label graphs accurately. Students are encouraged to develop brief spoken responses, so that they become more articulate and confident.
- Teachers receive comprehensive information from leaders about the attainment of their students. This ensures that they set tasks which build on students' prior learning. Occasionally, the work they set is not challenging enough for the most-able students.
- In line with the school's expectations, teachers regularly award a grade to a substantial piece of work.

Students receive comments, which are often detailed, about how to improve it. This gives students confidence and helps them to understand their progress. In most instances, students are able to use this guidance to take the next steps. However, in a minority of classes, the teacher does not state exactly what is expected or explain carefully enough how improvements can be made. In some cases, the teacher does not check that the student has acted upon the advice, with the result that some of the impact of the marking is lost.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The attainment of the students who left the school in 2014 was above average in English, geography, history and, in terms of the proportion attaining a good grade, mathematics. When these pupils were in Year 6 their attainment was broadly average, but it was another two years after that before they joined Trinity High School.
- In 2014, the proportion of students who made expected progress in both English and mathematics was above the national average. The proportion of students that made more than expected progress in both English and mathematics was broadly average. Progress information, presented by the school and checked thoroughly by inspectors against samples of work, indicates that students currently in Year 11 are on track to make progress which, in almost all subjects, is at least good.
- In 2014, disadvantaged students left the school on average half a grade behind their classmates in English and two thirds of a grade behind in mathematics. Compared with other students nationally, they attained a third of a grade lower in English and two thirds of a grade lower in mathematics. In 2014, a small gap opened between the progress of disadvantaged students in the school and students nationally, but assessment information supplied by the school indicates that this gap is on track to close again in 2015.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs generally learn well. This is because of regular and thorough assessment of their needs and carefully planned provision which meets their needs effectively. From their different starting points, they are now making good progress in line with their peers in the school.
- In the past, the school has entered all its students early for GCSEs in English and mathematics, with the intention of providing them with greater self-belief. Students continued to study both subjects and had the opportunity to improve their grade at the end of Year 11. However, for students currently in Key Stage 4, the school has discontinued the practice and replaced public examinations at the end of Year 10 with a formal internal test. Students in Year 11 stated that they found this reassuring and it helped to prepare them well for taking their final examinations.
- In 2014, the progress of the most-able students lagged behind that of other students in the school. Work scrutinised by inspectors and the schools' information suggest that the progress of the most-able students is increasing rapidly, especially in English and science. This reflects the school's clearer expectations for this group and means more of these students are attaining at the higher levels.
- Over recent years, students' achievement on some science courses has been weak. The actions taken by leaders, including the adoption of best practice from other schools, has recently improved progress in the single science subjects of physics, chemistry and biology. Planning for improvement in science has not always been strong enough.
- The academic progress of students attending alternative provision varies too much. Some students rapidly adjust their approach to their studies and attain highly. A small number of students with the most complex medical and social needs fail to re-engage fully with the school and do not fulfil their academic potential.

The sixth form provision is good

- The sixth form is a vibrant community in which learning is improving rapidly. It currently draws almost all of its students from the main school, although an increasing number join from other schools and the roll is rising. The attainment of students when they join the sixth form has been broadly average, although the

proportion of students who have attained the top grades at GCSE is below national levels. A minority of students follow work-related courses; most study for academic qualifications; some study a mix of qualifications.

- In 2013, progress on academic courses was above average and broadly average on work-related courses. In 2014, progress fell on academic courses. However, inspectors saw progress in sixth form lessons which was uniformly good or better. This confirms the school's data indicating that progress and attainment will rise in 2015 to be at least in line with national averages. In 2014, the school met the 16-19 interim minimum standards. The progress of disadvantaged students is exactly in line with that of their peers.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Learning is well planned to provide work that challenges all students, even where there is a wide spread of ability within the class. Students receive detailed and thoughtful feedback on their work, which makes a significant contribution to their progress. Teachers have thorough subject knowledge. They are skilled at extending students' learning and encouraging reflection.
- The behaviour and safety of students are good. Students' attitudes towards their learning are very positive. Students appreciate the school's protocols and how the support and challenge from staff are driving their progress. Many students say that moving on from Key Stage 4 was demanding, but that the school supported them and made the transition manageable. Students collaborate expertly with each other, for example to be able to structure a complex argument. They rightly believe that the sixth form represents a very safe environment. They are able to explain how the school has helped them to consider important social and cultural issues.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. The adoption of more rigorous procedures for checking the work of the sixth form has driven up both the quality of teaching and students' progress. Leaders showed ambition in introducing more demanding courses, such as further mathematics. There is a good range of after-school activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, and take-up is high. Teachers provide well-informed advice and guidance tailored to the needs of each student, with the result that a high proportion of students stay on to complete their courses.

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	137167
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	453323

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	13–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	934
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Prever
Headteacher	Adrian Ward
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01527 585859
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