

John Port School

Main Street, Etwall, Derby, DE65 6LU

Inspection dates 19–20 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's strong and determined leadership has successfully halted a decline in standards since the last inspection. Aply supported by other leaders, he is bringing about marked improvements in teaching and achievement.
- Students' achievement is now good and rapidly improving. The proportion of students who gain five or more A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics, is significantly above average.
- All groups of students make good progress and achieve well, including disadvantaged students.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Achievement has improved year-on-year. Students consistently attain high standards, reflecting the outstanding teaching they have received over time.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers make lessons interesting so that students enjoy their learning. Good leadership of teaching is making sure that its quality continues to improve.
- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the academy is good. They are polite, want to do well in their studies and attend regularly.
- Staff make sure that students are safe and well cared for whilst they are in the academy.
- The curriculum is matched closely to students' needs and interests. A rich variety of extra-curricular activities contributes effectively to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors check the quality of teaching and students' achievement closely. They show a good understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for development, and make a strong contribution to improving the academy.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers consistently set work at an appropriate level of challenge, so students do not always make the best possible progress.
- Not all teachers check that students act on the advice they are given in marking.
- Too few students attain the highest GCSE grades in all the subjects they take at GCSE.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 parts of lessons, including eight jointly made with academy leaders. Inspectors listened to a small number of students read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, students and governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also spoke to students informally at break and lunchtime.
- The inspection team looked at documents provided by the academy, including: the academy’s self-evaluation and its improvement plans; safeguarding documents and those relating to attendance and behaviour; student progress data; records of monitoring the quality of teaching; and minutes of the academy’s governing body.
- Inspectors took account of 37 staff questionnaire and 196 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, and also the academy’s analysis of its own parent questionnaire, which had 300 responses in the autumn term of 2014.

Inspection team

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Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is a free-standing academy and is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The great majority of students are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for students who are known to be eligible for free meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The academy has created a dedicated facility called the 'Bridge', which provides a learning environment for students at greatest risk of exclusion. Currently, there are five students who attend this provision for part of the week.
- The academy does not use any off-site provision.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement by making sure that all teachers:
 - set work that is consistently challenging and pitched at the right level to enable students of all abilities to make the best possible progress
 - check that students act upon the feedback given to them in their marked work.
- Increase the proportion of students attaining the highest grades in all the subjects they take at GCSE.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Academy leaders and governors have responded effectively to halt the decline in students' achievement that had occurred soon after the last inspection. The headteacher and senior leaders have ensured teaching is now good and that students behave well at all times and are keen to learn. This is leading to significantly improved achievement, most notably in science and mathematics, where previously there was significant underperformance.
- Senior leaders and governors promote an ambitious vision for the academy. Their high expectations and drive for improvement are shared by academy staff. Leaders are determined to ensure that the academy takes whatever steps are needed to become outstanding.
- Much has been achieved already. For example, there have been sustained improvements in the sixth form, which has resulted in excellent outcomes for students. GCSE results in science already confirmed indicate that students' attainment in Year 11 this year is on track to be above average.
- The leadership of teaching is especially strong and is a key factor in the improvements seen in the quality of teaching. Teachers make good use of the training they receive to develop their skills further. Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress their students make, and staff receive pay increases only when they meet the challenging targets set for students' progress.
- A key improvement has been in the academy's system for tracking and checking students' progress. This information is now being used well by leaders at all levels to judge the quality of teaching and its impact on students' achievement over time. The academy's review of its work in all areas is thorough and robust.
- Leaders' detailed analysis of data showing the progress made by different groups of students enables the academy to take effective action to address any evidence of underperformance. For example, their careful analysis of the progress of disadvantaged students is resulting in a narrowing of the gaps in these students' attainment across the academy
- The most-able students are being provided with harder work to help them make the progress they are capable of making. This reflects the academy's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The quality of subject leadership is good. Senior leaders are effective role models for other staff. Faculty and subject leaders benefit from sharing and learning from the best practice in the academy.
- Leaders' use the pupil premium funding effectively. Funds are used, for example, to provide individual and small group tuition in English and mathematics. This is helping current students to catch up with others in the academy. Funds are also used to help develop eligible students' personal well-being and confidence and help them to take part in academy visits, sports and cultural activities.
- The academy is a cohesive community, where discrimination is not tolerated and good relationships between staff and students are successfully fostered.
- Impartial careers education is available to students across the academy. This enables students to make well-informed choices about their future education and destinations when they leave the academy.
- The range of subjects taught is broad and balanced and meets students' needs well. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is enjoyed by students. These help to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Students learn about key values and ideas that are central to the British way of life and this ensures they are well-prepared for life in modern Britain when they leave.
- The very few students who attend the 'Bridge' for additional support for their behaviour make good progress and are frequently successfully reintegrated into mainstream lessons.

- Parents have a good degree of confidence in the academy and most would recommend the school to other parents. Some parents have expressed reservations about how well their child is taught and how well the academy responds to concerns raised by parents. Inspection evidence indicates that senior leaders and governors are aware of these concerns and are keen to address them quickly, for example, in improving the quality of communications with parents.
- Safeguarding arrangements are organised well and are effective. They meet current statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors carry out their responsibilities effectively. They use their training and expertise well.
 - Governors receive detailed reports from leaders about the work of the academy. They challenge the information provided and ask searching questions to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the information received.
 - Governors have a good understanding of how well different groups of students are achieving and systematically compare their performance with students nationally.
 - Governors carefully check that the pupil premium funding is used effectively and challenge the academy's leaders to make sure that actions taken are improving the achievement of disadvantaged students. There is a clear focus on accelerating the progress of these students.
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching. They provide good support and challenge for academy leaders. They ensure they tackle weaknesses in teaching promptly and make sure that systems for checking teaching and linking pay to students' progress are fair and rigorous.
 - The governing body oversees the management of resources and finances well. Governors regularly check safeguarding arrangements to make sure that these are effective and meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students are well-behaved when moving around the large academy site. At break and lunchtimes, they integrate well in mixed groups and socialise well. They are polite and courteous to staff and to each other. Most use the litter bins to help keep the environment tidy. The site is free from graffiti.
- Students arrive promptly to lessons and have the right equipment. They show good attitudes towards learning. Lessons during the inspection were not disrupted by poor behaviour. Academy records suggest disruption in lessons occurs only rarely and is dealt with effectively.
- Exclusions are rare because the academy has developed effective systems of managing and improving students' behaviour. A minority of parents responding to the inspection survey did not agree that the academy manages students' behaviour well. The academy's own questionnaire, seeking parents' views, indicated most parents have few concerns in this regard.
- Conversations held by inspectors with students of all different ages showed that students understand, and support the system used by teachers to manage behaviour.
- Students' behaviour in the 'Bridge' is good. Students are as well motivated as other students and respond well to the good support they receive from staff. Consequently, they learn to manage their behaviour effectively and make at least steady progress.
- Attendance is above average. Leaders are taking firm action to reduce the number of persistent absences recorded last year, which were above average. Current data shows a significant drop in the rate of persistent absence, so that it is again predicted to be below average, as it was in 2012 and 2013.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Students of all ages say that they feel safe in all

parts of the academy. A high proportion of parents who responded to parent view agreed that their children were safe in the academy. Students observed in lessons, for example in design and technology, were using equipment sensibly and safely.

- Students say that bullying is rare, and this view is reflected in the academy's behaviour and exclusion records. When incidents of bullying do occur, staff are swift to act and deal with them appropriately. There is clear recognition by all students that racist behaviour or other forms of prejudice will not be tolerated.
- Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in the range of situations, including use of the internet and social media. Students have a growing understanding of extremism and radicalisation. Academy leaders plan to increase the amount of teaching about extremism within the curriculum from the next academic year.
- Staff are trained well in child protection and other aspects of safeguarding. Students say that there is always an adult they could speak to about their concerns if necessary.

The quality of teaching is good

- Senior and subject leaders check the quality of teaching regularly. Teaching is typically good and there are examples of outstanding practice.
- Positive relationships between staff and students enable teachers to create a purposeful climate in lessons and to make learning interesting. Teaching is effective because almost all teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan learning which is pitched at the right level, so that students of all abilities can make good progress.
- For example, this kind of effective teaching was seen in a Year 10 English lesson where students were analysing a poem. The teacher's perceptive questioning provided good challenge for students so that they thought deeply about how language is used to express complex ideas. The teacher encouraged the less confident students to engage with the poem and their curiosity was deftly captured and sustained. However, not all teachers set work at the appropriate level of challenge for all groups of students, so that in some lessons the work can be too easy or too difficult for students.
- Students work hard towards their challenging targets because of their teachers' high expectations. In the wide range of books seen by inspectors, the quality of students' work was good and well presented.
- Teachers make sure that students read widely and are provided with regular opportunities in lessons to read aloud. Teachers also make sure that students understand technical vocabulary, for example in Spanish, science and design and technology lessons.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is good and, as a result, students make good progress in these subjects.
- The teaching of literacy, reading and mathematics is embedded systematically across the academy. Students are expected to write at length in a wide range of styles in different subjects, for example in history. Inspectors saw students applying their mathematical skills in product design lessons, where students were confidently able to use scale drawings.
- Teachers set homework regularly and use it to extend students' learning suitably. More recently, teachers have started providing homework tasks on the academy website. This is helping to keep parents informed about the quality and range of homework.
- Many teachers use marking and verbal feedback well to help students improve their work. They encourage students to discuss their work with their peers and this helps them to reflect on and improve their learning. However, there is some inconsistency in the teachers' marking expectations. Not all teachers

check that students make the improvements to their work where this has been requested.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the academy in Year 7 with standards that are above average. In 2014, the proportion going on to gain five or more GCSE grades at A* to C, including English and mathematics, was significantly above the national average. Tracking information provided by the academy leaders indicates that Year 11 students are on track to perform equally well this year.
- In 2014, students made good progress in English, but only expected progress in mathematics. The academy's tracking evidence indicates that this year students are expected to make good progress in both these subjects. This is a significant improvement, reflecting senior leaders' drive to raise students' achievement across Years 7 to 11.
- The most-able students are now making good progress across a range of subjects, including in English, mathematics and science. Teachers provide regular opportunities in these subjects for students to attempt work at the highest levels. However, the action academy leaders have taken to raise achievement has not yet resulted in an increase in the proportion of students attaining the highest GCSE grades across all the subjects they are entered for.
- Last year a small number of students entered early for their GCSE examinations in mathematics. Although this did not disadvantage the most-able students, academy leaders have decided to stop entering students early.
- In the past there has been a gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students and their peers in the academy and all students nationally. In 2014, the gap in English between disadvantaged students and their academy peers was almost a GCSE grade; the gap was three-quarters of a grade compared to all students nationally. In mathematics, the gap between the academy's disadvantaged students and their academy peers was one and two-thirds of a GCSE grade and one and a half grades compared to all students nationally.
- The academy's current tracking of students in Year 11 provide strong evidence that the progress of disadvantaged students in improving and that the gap between their attainment and other students is narrowing significantly in mathematics. The gap between disadvantaged students and their peers has narrowed to two thirds of a grade compared to others in the academy. In English, the gap between disadvantaged students and their academy peers is now around half a grade.
- The gaps between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged students and that of their classmates are also narrowing quickly in Years 7 to 10.
- Effective use is made of the pupil premium funding and the Year 7 'catch-up' funding. Their use includes one-to-one tuition and small-group sessions in English and mathematics. Funding is also used to provide resources for these students so that they are able to access learning quickly. Good quality support is provided for students who are working below expected levels in English and mathematics when they enter the academy in Year 7. This enables them all to catch up by the end of the year.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress and achieve well against their challenging targets. These students do well because teachers know the students and plan well for their needs.
- The very small numbers of students who attend the 'Bridge' facility are supported very well so that they make good progress, both in their social and in their academic development, including in English and mathematics.

The sixth form provision is outstanding

- Students' achievement in the sixth form is outstanding. In 2014, standards in A-level and AS courses were well above the national average. The academy's tracking of students' current progress indicates that these high standards are set to continue this academic year.
- The outstanding leadership of the sixth form is reflected in the robust systems used to check students' progress. Any underachievement is quickly identified and swift action taken. Students unanimously say that they appreciate the additional help they get to keep them on track to achieve high standards.
- The quality of teaching is excellent. There are very positive working relationships between students and teachers in all subjects, and students are extremely willing to work together on challenging tasks.
- Notable strengths in teaching include sixth form teachers' ability to build well on students' prior learning and deepen their understanding through careful questioning. Teachers in the sixth form mark students work in detail; students have a very clear idea about how they can improve their work and they make timely responses.
- The academy has a very rigorous application process. This means that students are consistently placed on courses that match their prior attainment, potential and aspirations.
- A small number of disadvantaged students attend courses in the sixth form. They too achieve very well and there is no gap between their performance and their peers in the subjects they take.
- Attendance rates are high and students say that they feel very safe and supported. The proportion of students completing courses and achieving qualifications is consistently high over time.
- Students receive excellent guidance and information to help them make future choices. A high proportion of students continue into higher education. In 2014, all students in Year 13 secured work or training on completion of their courses.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. Students are excellent role models to younger students and take a full part in contributing to the wider life of the academy, for example, by mentoring younger students.
- Academy staff make sure that students are safe. Students have a very good understanding of managing risks and they show respect and tolerance for a diversity of views and beliefs.
- The 16 to 19 programmes of study fully meet requirements. The academy ensures that the very small numbers of students who have not secured GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics on entering the sixth form, have done so by the time they leave.
- Achievement in the sixth form meets the current 16-19 national minimum standards.

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	136591
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	461552

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	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	1967
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barrie Whyman
Headteacher	Chris Sainsbury
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2011
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