

# The Nuneaton Academy

Radnor Drive, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 7PD

## Inspection dates

2–3 March 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- The school GCSE results were below the government's floor standards in 2014 and dipped further in 2015. Only 21% of pupils gained five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C.
- Pupils do not make enough progress across many key subject areas, including English, mathematics, science, humanities and modern foreign languages. Progress is often poorer for boys and disadvantaged pupils.
- School leaders have not yet had time to be effective in turning around the impact of several years of declining performance and weak teaching. School predictions for pupil outcomes in 2016 are still well below national standards and pupil performance in some subjects, for example science, is currently very low
- Too many lessons are taught by temporary or unqualified staff, particularly in science. Pupils are concerned about the frequent changes of teachers and the impact this has on their learning.
- The quality of pupils' behaviour in lessons is closely matched to the quality of teaching. Where teaching is weak pupils often lack interest, wander out of their seats and attempt very little work.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Pupils reach standards that are broadly in line with national levels but there is considerable variation between subjects and teaching does not support all pupils to make good progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new operational principal has a compelling vision for school improvement that he has convincingly shared with staff, pupils and parents.
- Senior leaders, working closely with the executive principal, governors and the school trust have already brought about improvements in pupils' achievement, attitudes to learning and attendance.
- The school has prioritised making sure every pupil is kept safe. The school support team meets weekly to consider any concerns and put in place appropriate intervention and support, including home visits where necessary.

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils, including boys and disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in all subjects and across all year groups, by:
  - making sure that teachers provide pupils with learning activities that engage and interest them and are hard enough to help them make good progress
  - making better use of questioning to challenge pupils to think more deeply about their work
  - giving pupils better guidance on how they can improve their work, both through written feedback and in discussions with teachers
  - ensuring that accurate assessment of pupils' work in lessons leads to well-targeted interventions
  - raising aspirations and securing the motivation of pupils
  - supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour more effectively so they try their hardest regardless of the quality of teaching.
  
- Tackle the underperformance in science by taking urgent steps to address the lack of permanent teachers and seeking support from other partners to provide help for pupils to catch up with missed work.
  
- Continue to develop the improvements seen in leadership and management, by:
  - ensuring that new systems and processes are consistently applied by all staff
  - ensuring that new middle leaders have the opportunity to access additional training to further help them in understanding their roles
  - taking rapid action to eliminate any remaining inadequate teaching
  - making effective use of external partners to provide the support the school needs at any given time
  - ensuring that pupil premium funding is spent on the areas where it will have most impact.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The failure of the school to improve in 2014–15 has led to considerable reflection and analysis by governors and the trust. Inaccurate assessment processes and a high turnover of staff, including at leadership level, partly explain the results. Trustees also recognise that they over-stretched the limited capacity of school leaders by using a number of different schools to provide support, making it difficult to be clear who was responsible for what. As a result, this year they have concentrated their support through the engagement of an executive principal from a local outstanding school. He provides valued weekly challenge and support to the operational principal and the wider senior team.
- Some of the weaknesses in the quality of assessment have been addressed through moderation of practice examination papers with Kenilworth School and partner schools in the trust. This has been effective in giving leaders confidence that standards in Year 11 have been accurately assessed. However, such moderation is less well established in other year groups and therefore achievement and progress information for those pupils is less secure.
- Some Year 11 pupils have had limited access to a broad curriculum as senior leaders prioritise improving progress in English and mathematics. They have been taken off GCSE subjects, in particular modern foreign languages, to have additional study time in English or mathematics. Pupils welcomed this initiative, recognising the importance of gaining their qualifications in English and mathematics. Senior leaders expect this to be a temporary model with current Year 10 pupils having access to a broader curriculum. Younger pupils study an appropriate range of subjects. Developing literacy skills is a key focus for the school and targeted Year 7 pupils have additional help to reach national standards.
- Pupils take up a range of enrichment activities at lunchtime and after school. For older pupils this is focused around preparing for examinations and revision.
- The new leadership team has already had significant impact in driving short term improvements. Current pupils are making more rapid progress than they have in previous years; behaviour and attendance have improved; there is less inadequate teaching and the level of teacher mobility is reducing, leaving a more stable staffing structure.
- There is a genuine desire and commitment among leaders to develop an inclusive learning culture with high expectations for the achievement of all pupils. These aspirations are evident in discussions with pupils who are highly appreciative of the support they are now receiving.
- Leaders have introduced many changes to systems for behaviour, teaching and assessment in a short period of time. Changes have been thoughtfully introduced with training and thorough checking to ensure systems are working well. Heads of department understand the key elements of their roles but lack expertise in carrying out their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities.
- The executive principal has a flexible approach to providing support for the school that adapts to its immediate needs. This year the school has already benefited from specific targeted support. For example, some Year 11 pupils visit Kenilworth School for additional mathematics lessons and there has been support for the development of resources in geography. However there are still areas, like science, where the school lacks the necessary capacity and would benefit from further intervention.
- Leaders have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are refreshingly honest in describing their impact to date and what still needs to be done to improve outcomes for pupils. They are happy to seek help when required and have identified the actions required in the school improvement plan.
- There is a well planned and extensive professional development programme in place to improve teaching. This has shown early impact in reducing the proportion of teaching that is inadequate or requires improvement, although much work remains to be done to ensure that all teachers consistently apply the new guidelines. Newly qualified teachers are very appreciative of the good support they have been given to develop their teaching skills.
- The school's performance management system has been rigorously applied this year, ensuring that teachers and leaders are held to account for the quality of outcomes of pupils.
- Leaders make good use of the information collected about pupils' achievement. Information is collected frequently and meetings are held with heads of department shortly after each data collection point to ensure that there are short-term plans in place to address underachievement. However, ongoing issues with teaching capacity limit the effectiveness of such actions.

### ■ The governance of the school

- The Nuneaton School is governed by directors of the Midland Academies Trust and a local governing body. Members of both the trust and local governing body fully understand their responsibilities and have set up a raising achievement board to allow them to closely monitor the progress of the school.
  - Governors and directors have a clear understanding of current attainment and progress data and have regular meetings with senior leaders to check that this information is being used to drive interventions.
  - Governors and directors share the vision of the principal and have the highest expectations of pupils.
  - Governors and directors closely monitor the work of the school and use their own educational expertise to triangulate information provided by leaders with their own visits to the school.
  - Governors and directors are aware of how pupil premium funding is being spent and are working with senior leaders to ensure that actions are more effective in improving the outcomes for the pupils that receive this.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school works closely with all partners to ensure that keeping pupils safe sustains a high profile. Statutory requirements are met and regular training takes place for all school staff.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- There is considerable variation in the quality of teaching at the school. Frequent changes of teachers and difficulties in recruitment have meant that many pupils have had little consistency in teaching over time and that has limited their achievement in a range of subjects. More recent improvements in this situation have yet to impact on pupils' longer-term progress.
- In most classes, all pupils are doing the same work, even when there is a wide range of different abilities in the group. As a result, some pupils finish activities quickly and have to wait for everyone else before they move on, so limiting their progress.
- In some lessons pupils lack understanding about why they are doing things. This means that they approach tasks mechanically with little interest in successfully completing their work.
- In other lessons pupils complain that they have to do too much copying out, particularly in science lessons with temporary teachers. As a result they become bored and their behaviour deteriorates.
- Questioning is frequently used to make simple checks of understanding. However, questioning is rarely used to challenge pupils to think more deeply and develop a wider understanding of their work.
- Most marking feedback follows the school marking policy although there was considerable variation in the effectiveness of this marking in helping pupils understand what they needed to do to improve. There were examples of books remaining unmarked for a whole term, particularly in science or with cover teachers.
- Many pupils have weak communication and numeracy skills on entry to the school and so struggle to access the full curriculum. In some lessons, teachers carefully make sure that pupils understand the meanings of words and are able to read any necessary text but this frequently was not the case during the inspection.
- The development of pupils' literacy skills is also supported well through marking in some subject areas, particularly humanities and English.
- A targeted reading scheme has been introduced into Years 7 and 8. Pupils are enthusiastic about it but its recent introduction means the school has limited evidence of its impact. All humanities, languages, art and English lessons begin with silent reading and a reading project called 'drop everything and read' is consistently used in tutor time. However, some of these sessions lack structure and not all pupils are engaged.
- In some subjects, for example drama and art and design, pupils are consistently presented with a high level of challenge and as a result are enthused by their work and are making good progress.
- Where teaching assistants are evident in lessons they are used well, organising and supporting small groups of pupils to successfully complete activities. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs or disability make progress in line with their peers.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

#### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils value the care given to them by all adults in the school and appreciate the efforts being made to help them catch up following the poor provision they have experienced in recent years.
- The action taken by staff at the school to improve punctuality exemplifies the approach used to support pupils' well-being. Pupils are met at the school gates every day with staff warmly greeting and welcoming pupils while checking uniform and hurrying them towards lessons. Punctuality has improved considerably since September.
- Pupils feel safe in the school and they know they can turn to staff to resolve any concerns they have.
- A system of pupil leaders, introduced at the start of the school year, is in its infancy but it has already been effective in developing a group of pupils who are committed advocates for the school. They are proud of their new roles, play an active role in representing the views of pupils and are currently working closely with staff on how to promote a more positive profile of the school to the wider community.
- Pupils in Year 11 that attend alternative education provision are carefully tracked and monitored by staff at the school. Any concerns raised are quickly addressed and currently all these pupils are behaving and attending well and making the expected progress.
- There is a well-structured programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education delivered through all subject areas. Provision in different subjects is carefully tracked, and supported by external agencies, to ensure that pupils gain a wider perspective of life in Britain.
- The school provides a programme of advice and guidance to help raise pupils' aspirations of the type of jobs they could do in the future. Although the great majority of pupils leave the school and move onto further education or training there are still some students who do not have an appropriate pathway.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils do not yet take full responsibility for managing their own behaviour. Poor behaviour is particularly evident when pupils don't understand why the work is important or are bored by the tasks set. All pupils commented that disruptive behaviour in lessons was becoming less frequent as they have more permanent teachers and the quality of teaching is improving.
- Behaviour is effectively managed when teachers consistently use the school's new behaviour system. Pupils like the clarity the new system brings although they recognise there are still some inconsistencies in the use of the sanctions and rewards by some teachers.
- The impact of the new behaviour system is evident in the school's behaviour records. There have been fewer call outs to lessons following incidents of poor behaviour. The number of more serious incidents of poor behaviour that require an exclusion are also reducing.
- An internal inclusion unit provides effective provision for pupils who need support to improve their behaviour.
- Pupils are generally very sensible around the school site. There are orderly queues at breaks and lunchtimes and pupils are respectful towards each other and visitors. Younger pupils commented that on occasions some of the older pupils were boisterous on stairs and in corridors but agreed that behaviour was improving and that poor behaviour was challenged.
- Attendance is just below the national average but there have been significant improvements in attendance this year, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Good attendance is promoted at every opportunity. The school carefully monitors the attendance of different groups of pupils so is able to adapt interventions to best support those pupils.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **are inadequate**

- Examination results in 2015 were very poor for the great majority of subjects studied in the school. Very small proportions of pupils were successful in gaining higher grades and science was particularly weak with only 16% of pupils gaining two good science GCSE passes. However, there were success stories. Pupils performed well in drama and resistant materials where results were above national levels.
- Only about a third of pupils made the expected levels of progress in English and mathematics in 2015. Poor teaching and inaccurate assessment meant that pupils were not given the necessary support to achieve well. In English the most-able pupils made less progress than their peers.
- Current pupils in all year groups are making more rapid progress between assessment points than last year but are still well below the levels they would expect to be at given their starting points.

- In 2015, boys did considerably less well than girls in English and that continues to be the case for current pupils. Leaders are aware of the issue and are attempting to develop strategies that will encourage boys to engage better with their English work.
- The development of literacy skills is a key focus for the school this year. Pupils who enter the school with reading ages below average are given intensive support to improve their reading and early progress measurements suggest that these pupils are beginning to catch up with their peers.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are making better progress this year than they did in previous years, partly as a result of more focused support in lessons and better tracking systems.
- In 2015, there was a small gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school; although the gap is large compared to the performance of pupils nationally. Progress and attainment outcomes are improving for disadvantaged pupils, but at a slower rate than for others in the school. Leaders are revisiting their use of the pupil premium funding to consider what activities may be most effective in further increasing the rate of improvement.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## require improvement

- The school meets the current standards for 16 to 19 education.
- Outcomes in the sixth form require improvement. Examination results in 2015 showed a slight improvement over the previous year. Students do not make consistently good progress across subjects, with vocational subjects performing slightly better than academic subjects.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form requires improvement and like the rest of the school is affected by staff turnover and teachers on temporary placements, although to a lesser extent.
- Current students in Years 12 and 13 are making progress broadly in line with expectations.
- Students who have not yet attained a GCSE grade C in mathematics attend timetabled lessons in preparation for a resit examination in the summer. All students in the sixth form have already achieved a grade C or better in English.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good. Leaders made a decision in the autumn term that there were too few students in Year 12 to sustain a high-quality viable provision. As a result, following consultation with parents, students were moved onto provision at one of three local off-site providers. The school rigorously and systematically monitors the progress, attendance and conduct of these students.
- Information, advice and guidance offered before students joined the sixth form was extensive and independent and as a result retention rates are high and students are confident they are on the right courses. Students behave well in the sixth form and are good role models for other students in the school.
- The 16 to 19 study programme offered by the school is appropriate for the students and prepares them well for future education, training or employment. There is an extensive programme of additional enrichment activities and all students take part in work experience.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136158
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10008201

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	716
<b>Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	47
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Melville
<b>Principal</b>	Simon Lomax
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476341134
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nuneatonacademy.co.uk">www.nuneatonacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@nuneatonacademy.co.uk">info@nuneatonacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6–7 March 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is sponsored by North Warwickshire and Hinckley College through the Midland Academies Trust (MAT).
- The school is an average sized secondary school.
- The great majority of pupils are of a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is average.
- The leadership team is very new. The operational principal, who is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school, has been in post since September. Two of the vice-principals joined the school in September 2015 and the third vice-principal joined in April 2015.
- The trust has appointed an executive principal who is a national leader of education from a local outstanding school, Kenilworth School, to provide additional support and challenge to the leadership team. He also took up his position in September 2015 and provides support one to two days a week.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Sixteen pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 attend alternative provision at six different providers; North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Shaftesbury Extended Learning Centre, Positive About Young People, U-Neek, Educa8, and Jumpstart. A further group of Year 12 students attends King Edward VI College.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups and looked at the work in pupils' books. They talked to groups of pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, members of the governing body and representatives of the Midland Academies Trust.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation including safeguarding records, self-evaluation summaries, the school improvement plan and information held by the school about pupils' progress.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 28 parents on the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of the views of pupils and staff who also responded to an online Ofsted questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Deborah James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Josie Leese	Ofsted Inspector
Gwen Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Steed	Ofsted Inspector



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