

Trinity Academy

Church Balk, Thorne, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN9 5BY

Inspection dates

22–23 September 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and students

This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress made by all students is uneven, particularly by boys and disadvantaged students. Gaps between their progress and that of other groups of students remain.
- Teaching is not always strong enough to promote good outcomes for students.
- Students' attitudes to learning are variable in lessons, resulting in off-task chattering and inattention by a few students, particularly in Key Stage 3.
- Students make less progress and reach lower standards in mathematics than in English, because of the inconsistent quality of teaching and a lack of challenge in some mathematics lessons.
- Some teachers' expectations of what students can achieve, especially the most able, are variable.
- Feedback given to students varies in quality, so not all students are clear about how to learn from their mistakes and make improvements to their work.
- The quality of work undertaken by middle leaders is mixed. Half of the middle leaders are at an early stage of leading their subjects and not all are effective at checking the quality of provision and the outcomes reached by all groups of students.

The school has the following strengths

- The Principal, senior leaders and governors are relentless in their pursuit of better teaching and outcomes for all groups of students. Coaching of staff and regular monitoring have led to good improvements since the previous inspection.
- Leadership, management and teaching in the sixth form are strong. This results in students making good progress in academic and vocational courses.
- Students feel safe in the academy. They conduct themselves well, particularly outside of lessons. Senior students have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- The vast majority of students are keen to learn, attend regularly and are proud of being at the academy.

Full report

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?

- Continue to strengthen the quality of teaching to be at least good, with a significant proportion that is outstanding, so that all groups of students achieve to the best of their ability by ensuring that:
 - work set is challenging, but apt, for all groups of students and adjusted appropriately if they need more, or less, time to complete an activity
 - all staff have high expectations of what different groups of students can achieve
 - the quality of marking and feedback enables students to understand where they have gone wrong and how to learn from their mistakes
 - students' attitude to learning is always positive in lessons.
- Improve the standards reached and the progress made by all students in mathematics, including for those students who re-take the subject in the sixth form.
- Ensure that disadvantaged students and boys make rapid progress so that the gaps between them and other students close quickly.
- Ensure that middle leaders gain confidence and the ability to lead their subject areas successfully by:
 - empowering them to challenge underperformance of students and any aspects of weak teaching in their departments.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The quality of work undertaken by middle leaders is variable. Some middle leaders are beginning to have a noticeable impact on student outcomes and the quality of teaching in their departments. Others are at an early stage of development. However, those to whom inspectors spoke feel empowered, challenged appropriately and are keen to make a difference to the quality of teaching and the progress made by all groups of students.
- The academy has come a long way since the previous inspection. This is due to the unflinching drive and determination shown by the Principal. He is strongly supported by members of his senior team. They have gained the support of the vast majority of staff in their resolve to improve the quality of teaching and to ensure that all students make the progress of which they are capable.
- Over time, senior leaders have tackled weaknesses in teaching head-on, a key issue at the previous section 5 inspection, so that student progress is improving. Their self-evaluation is thorough, well evidenced and recognises that there is still more to be done. Their detailed and regular monitoring of lessons, students' work and discussions with middle leaders enables them to identify weaknesses and provide coaching and support where necessary. During the inspection, several senior leaders accompanied inspectors to observe lessons and were able to discuss where coaching had made a difference to the quality of their teaching and where more work is needed.
- Staff to whom inspectors spoke reported that they feel well-included in the drive for improvement and are well supported by senior leaders. Evidence from staff surveys completed before and during the inspection supports this view.
- Senior leaders have put new, more rigorous systems in place this term to ensure accountability of teachers and to check that they are meeting their performance targets. Staff report that they are challenged regularly by senior leaders to ensure that students are making appropriate progress.
- The curriculum has been changed this year to enable students to begin their GCSE courses in Year 9. It is too early to judge the impact of this on students' outcomes. Bespoke programmes designed to support some students who have particular difficulties, especially with English and mathematics, are in place. For example, enabling some students to access part of the curriculum at Emmanuel House is proving successful in allowing students to catch up and return to lessons with their peers. Tutor time is carefully planned, along with assembly time, so that students experience a well-considered variety of activities. These are designed not only to improve their academic studies but also provide opportunities to discuss current affairs and gain awareness of how to be a responsible citizen. Throughout the academy, leaders work hard to ensure equality of opportunity for all students.
- There is a full programme of careers guidance from Year 7 which builds incrementally as students get older. Students are guided in their choice of subjects and career choices, which includes a number of visiting speakers from local and national firms and professions. However, some students in Key Stages 3 and 4 have mixed views regarding the quality of careers guidance provided. Leaders recognise the need to evaluate this provision against student outcomes.
- The core values of the academy are regularly reinforced and known by students. They have good opportunities to take part in productions, sports events and other after-school activities. These events help to effectively develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders ensure that all staff are trained regularly so that they are fully aware of potential safeguarding and child protection issues.
- The use of additional funding for disadvantaged students and the 'catch-up' funding for Year 7 students is used effectively. The way this money is used is monitored carefully so that these groups of students can make better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. The impact of this work is evident in a range of measures, including improving Year 7 reading ages so that they are more able to access different subjects.
- Academy leaders have benefited from the support provided by senior leaders from other academies within the Emmanuel Schools Foundation. They provide strong challenge and support and are effective in providing an external view of the work within different departments and the progress made by the academy while in special measures. This support is set to continue as the academy moves forward.

■ The governance of the school

- Over time, governors have been tenacious in holding leaders to account. They have a good understanding of the improvements evident within the academy and are very aware of the challenges still to be overcome. They understand where strong and weaker teaching is to be found and how this impacts on the progress made by students. Governors have given their support to the Principal in taking action to identify underperformance.
- Governors speak clearly about the use of additional funding and how it is making a difference to student outcomes. Governors are ambitious for all students and are fully involved in discussing the academy's self-evaluation judgements. Governors keep parents aware of the improvements being made within the academy. They are aware of some negative comments from some staff and students regarding the limited amount of time for lunch and are keeping a watch on this.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Expectations of what students are capable of achieving are not high enough in many lessons. Too often activities are set for all students to complete before moving forward onto more demanding work. This restricts the progress of the most able, who do not always have enough challenge because the work is too easy for them. Similarly, some students in lessons need longer amounts of time to be able to secure their understanding. More teachers than at the time of the previous inspection adjust their teaching to suit students' needs, but not enough of them. As a result progress is uneven.
- Inspectors saw examples of well planned and organised lessons where teachers challenge students successfully and question them well to test their knowledge and understanding. Helpful display material was used by students to solve problems. These positive aspects enable them to make rapid progress.
- Reading is promoted effectively, and where younger students arrive at the academy with weaknesses in this area, additional help is provided for them. Evidence provided by senior leaders and inspection observations confirm that this provision is effective. Inspectors saw that literacy is being promoted successfully in a number of subjects.
- Students' work is checked regularly in most lessons, with helpful developmental comments provided. However, the quality of this work is inconsistent. Students confirm that the quality of marking and feedback is variable. The very few parents who responded to the online Ofsted survey had no concerns about the quality of teaching in the academy.
- The teaching of mathematics, although improved since the previous inspection, is still of variable quality, with a lack of challenge in many lessons. At times, lessons do not always give students enough time to master and use a mathematical skill. Consequently, students' progress in this subject is weaker than their progress in English.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **require improvement**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is good.
- Students are involved in a good range of additional activities at the end of the academy day. These events enable students of different ages to work together. Sixth form students help younger students with their learning, particularly in English and mathematics, and this has a positive impact on their confidence and self-esteem.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe and are confident to ask for help should this be needed. Tutor time and assemblies are well planned so that messages about safety and different forms of bullying are reinforced regularly. Students have regular opportunities to discuss current events that occur locally, nationally or internationally, which promotes their understanding of particular issues. These activities help to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness as they learn how to be a responsible citizen in the 21st century.
- Senior leaders and pastoral staff are conscientious in looking after all students, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Any concerns are followed up tenaciously, involving outside agencies if this is necessary.
- Work to ensure that students understand the dangers of radicalisation is at an early stage.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- Students' attitudes in lessons are inconsistent, and this has an impact on the progress they make. Inspectors saw a small number of students, mostly boys in Years 8 and 9, who were unwilling to learn and behave sensibly in lessons. In a small number of lessons idle chatter by students is not checked and consequently students make very little progress. Students themselves confirm that this is sometimes the case. Nevertheless, inspectors saw students working together well and, although the noise level rose in one instance, the discussion was all about the task that had been set. Collaboration between students is a positive feature of many lessons.
- Attendance is above the national average. Students come to the academy ready to learn, with the vast majority punctual in the mornings. They conduct themselves well around the academy, between lessons and at social times. Students report and inspectors confirm that there is occasional jostling in the narrow corridors but any inappropriate conduct is dealt with swiftly.
- Inspectors saw minimal amounts of litter in the dining room or around the academy. Graffiti is non-existent and some high-quality art displays are evident in corridors. Students respect and value this work and it is left to be viewed without the use of protective covering.
- Behaviour has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Students arrive and leave the academy sensibly, and show a good awareness of traffic on the site at these times. Evidence provided by leaders confirms that considerable work has been done to secure positive behaviour by those students who have been at risk of exclusion. Much of this work has been done at Emmanuel House through individual education plans or by the work done by students who take part in the DAPPE=R programme. Leaders provided information to show that improvements in behaviour have resulted in improved progress for these students.
- A very small proportion of parents, who replied to the online questionnaire, have concerns about behaviour. Just over 10% of staff who responded to the survey carried out at the beginning of the autumn term 2015 felt that behaviour was not good, and one quarter did not feel that behaviour was well managed. However, a staff survey completed during the inspection by a smaller number of staff indicated that there are no issues with behaviour.
- Inspectors found that the behaviour and attitudes of a few students in lessons contrast to the way they conduct themselves outside of lessons and during social times. These inconsistencies are known to senior leaders, who continue to improve the situation.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Students' progress is not good enough given their broadly average starting points. This is because there is too much teaching that requires improvement, particularly, but not exclusively, in mathematics. Students in Years 10 and 11, especially, have experienced teaching of mixed quality and are still playing catch-up in some subjects so that they make secure progress.
- In 2015 a greater proportion of students achieved five good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, compared to the previous year. This improving picture, which was above the 2014 national average, did not match the targets set by leaders in a number of subjects.
- More students in 2015 made better than expected progress in English than previously, again exceeding the 2014 national average. However, these gains were not so evident in mathematics, where the proportion of students who made expected and more than expected progress remained below the 2014 national average. Despite some improvements, gaps between certain groups still remain, particularly between the performance of boys and girls. Lesson observations and work in books confirmed that these gaps are not so marked where teachers' planning takes careful account of students' potential.
- Results of the national tests carried out in 2015 show an improvement in the attainment and progress made by students in 70% of subjects compared to the previous year's results.
- The progress of disadvantaged students in both English and mathematics has started to accelerate, and the gap between their progress and that of their peers is closing. Nevertheless, the gap remains and these students achieve less well than other students, both in the academy and nationally.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are making better progress than formerly because more teachers are generally more aware of their needs and abilities. Their progress in mathematics is not as good as in English. Progress of the most able students is much improved in English

and mathematics compared to the time of the previous inspection, but, given their starting points, is not good enough.

- Inspectors considered students' work in a number of subjects and noted that challenge, particularly for the most able, is often missing and therefore these students do not reach the levels of which they are capable.
- Year 7 catch-up funding (government funding for those entering secondary school with below average standards in English and mathematics) is helping younger students make effective, and in some cases, rapid, progress. The additional support and bespoke curriculum are key factors in this improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, more students are better prepared for the next stage of their education. However, weaknesses in mathematics must be overcome so that students are not held back in their understanding and use of mathematical concepts.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Leaders are ambitious for all students. Over time, the quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Consequently, the vast majority of students in Year 12 and Year 13 are guided onto the right courses, complete them and make good progress.
- The 16 to 19 interim national minimum standards are met. In both academic and vocational subjects, current students make better progress than the national norm. No subject falls below this level. Focused work from leaders is having a positive impact on the improvement of some subjects. For example, in media and film students' progress is improved given their starting points.
- Achievement by male students is above the national average, but it remains lower than that of female students. Disadvantaged students make good progress. However, a small gap remains between their progress and that of other students. Leaders know this and work closely with students and subject staff. As a result, attainment rates show a continued upward trend at both A level and AS level.
- Teaching is good because students are challenged well and lessons are adapted regularly to meet the needs and reflect the progress being made by different students.
- The head of sixth form works well with subject leaders to ensure that strong systems for checking the progress made by students are in place. They are diligent in monitoring both the quality of students' work and the quality of teaching. They use this information to provide good additional support where progress is not good enough. Evidence provided during the inspection showed inspectors that this brings students' performance back up to standard quickly. Students confirm that this process makes a big difference to their success.
- The academy is not as successful as it should be in securing GCSE grades A* to C in mathematics for those students who enter the sixth form without this qualification. Success in enabling students to attain this qualification in English is much more secure.
- Leaders ensure that all students benefit from external and impartial careers advice so they can make well-informed choices. They provide effective guidance to students entering the sixth form and as they prepare for the next steps in education, training or employment when they leave. As a result, no student leaves without a secure pathway for the future. An increasing number of students take up study places at university, many at the top universities in the country.
- A wide range of opportunities are provided for students to learn through non-qualification activities. Students are enthusiastic about them and recognise the importance of these in developing their personal and interpersonal skills. Activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and mentoring activities within the school, for example buddy reading and supporting younger students if they are anxious or need to talk about a problem, are complemented by work experience for all.
- Students have a strong sense of right and wrong. They develop knowledge and understanding of other faiths and lifestyles, including those groups who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act. This work is very effective in preparing students for adult life and helps them to understand the rule of law and to be tolerant of all in society.
- Safeguarding in the sixth form is effective. Students develop a sound understanding of risks, for example those associated with social networking sites and substance misuse. In discussion with inspectors they said that they feel very well cared for and are confident that staff will provide help and counselling if needed.

School details

Unique reference number	135007
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10004235

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 – sponsor
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,288
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Robson
Principal	David Page
Telephone number	01405 813000
Website	www.trinity-academy.org.uk
Email address	dpage@trinityacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 December 2013

Information about this school

- When the academy was inspected in December 2013 it was judged to require special measures. Inspectors conducted four monitoring inspections where the academy was judged to be making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.
- The academy is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those supported by education, health and care plans is below average.
- A small number of students follow individual education programmes for varying periods of time and are educated for part of the week at Emmanuel House. This is a self-contained unit within the academy grounds.
- The academy makes use of Goole College, St Wilfred’s, Central Learning Centre, Maple Medical Service and North Learning Centre as placements for some students.
- The academy receives support from the executive principals from two other academies within the Emmanuel Schools Foundation.
- In 2014 the academy met the current government floor standards, which sets out the minimum expectations for students’ attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons. Eight observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders from the academy.
- Inspectors spoke formally to four groups of students covering a range of issues but particularly about their learning in lessons, their observations of improvements since the previous inspection and their safety in the academy.
- An inspector held a meeting with the Chair and another member of the School Improvement Board. She also held a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Local Governing Body and met with the executive principals from other academies within the Emmanuel Schools Foundation.
- Meetings were also held with the Principal and other members of the senior leadership team, middle leaders and a group of newly qualified teachers and those following the Teach First course.
- Inspectors looked at senior leaders' review of performance, academy policies and minutes of the governing body meetings. Inspectors also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and assessment.
- An inspector visited Emmanuel House to evaluate provision.
- Inspectors reviewed students' work in lessons.
- Inspectors considered the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the 107 staff survey responses conducted by the academy at the start of the term and the 36 responses to the Ofsted survey completed by staff during the inspection.

Inspection team

Marianne Young, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Campbell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynn Kenworthy	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Disbrey	Ofsted Inspector

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