

The Dukeries Academy

Whinney Lane, New Ollerton, Newark, NG22 9TD

Inspection dates

22–23 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Sixth form provision		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' achievement, particularly in mathematics, and especially that of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, is not as rapid as it needs to be because teaching is not always good enough.
- The most-able students are not achieving their very best. Too few of these students are reaching the highest standards of achievement at GCSE or post-16.
- Teaching is not leading to good progress over time for enough students. Some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of students.
- Students' behaviour requires improvement. In some classes, there is some low level disruption and students do not always engage positively with their learning. As a result, they make less progress than they should.
- Leaders have not yet secured consistently good teaching or achievement across the academy, nor have they ensured that all staff consistently apply the academy's behaviour policy.
- Too many students, who start A-level qualifications in Year 12, fail to complete the first year of their studies. Opportunities for the personal development of sixth form students are under-developed.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal is an inspirational role model. He has very high expectations and all staff in the academy share his ambitious vision.
- The academy is improving rapidly. Leaders are successfully improving the quality of teaching, achievement and attendance. Leaders' capacity for further improvement is strong.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- The academy's sponsor has taken very effective measures to improve leadership at the academy. The sponsor and the governing body challenge and support leaders extremely well.
- The curriculum offers a broad range of academic and vocational qualifications. Students benefit greatly from the wide range of enrichment opportunities the academy provides.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 part-lessons. Many of these were observed jointly with the principal and other senior leaders. Inspectors also scrutinised a selection of students' work from English, mathematics, science and the humanities subjects.
- Inspectors met formally with four groups of students. They also spoke with many students in lessons and during break and lunch times, as well as at the 'Success Centre'.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and representatives of the governing body and of the academy's sponsor. One inspector spoke to staff working at each of the centres of alternative provision and work experience bases used by the academy.
- Inspectors scrutinised and evaluated a range of documents. These included leaders' evaluation of the academy's effectiveness and the academy improvement plan. Inspectors also scrutinised bullying and behaviour records, safeguarding records, leaders' accounts of how they monitor staff performance and the professional development opportunities for staff. The lead inspector also looked at records from meetings of the governing body and the sponsor's progress board.
- Inspectors considered the 83 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) as well as a letter received from a parent during the inspection. Inspectors also considered the 39 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Philippa Darley, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector
Ian Tett	Additional Inspector
William Alexander	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Dukeries Academy was established on 1 January 2013. It is sponsored by Academy Transformation Trust.
- The current principal took up post in January 2014.
- The academy is an above average-sized, mixed secondary school with a sixth form.
- The academy is part of the wider Dukeries Complex, which includes a Further Education College, and a very wide range of other organisations and facilities. Some of these, such as the construction centre, motor vehicle workshop and hair and beauty training salon, provide additional qualification options to students at the academy.
- The proportion of students supported by school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is slightly above the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action is also slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The majority of students attending the academy are White British and speak English as their first language.
- In September 2014 the academy established the 'Success Centre' which is on-site. This provides an alternative curriculum offer for students who may be at risk of exclusion.
- A few students at the academy attend alternative provision at West Nottinghamshire College on a part-time basis.
- In 2013, the academy met the current government floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of key Stage 4.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, in order to raise achievement for all students, including the most-able and particularly in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring teachers' expectations of all groups of students are high enough, so that tasks set are suitably challenging and students develop consistently positive attitudes to learning
 - ensuring teachers monitor students' progress more systematically, and use the information they have about students' prior attainment to plan and adapt learning which leads to greater depth in students' knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring all teachers secure good behaviour from their students, so that learning is rarely interrupted by low-level disruption
 - ensuring all teachers provide detailed guidance to students as to how they can improve their work, in line with the academy's marking policy, and check that students act on this
 - ensuring teachers have many opportunities to learn from the academy's most effective practitioners.
- Improve the achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs by:
 - providing teachers with training and support so they use a range of strategies to meet the needs of these students in their classes.
- Improve the achievement of post-16 students by:
 - ensuring they continue to receive better guidance about the subjects and options they are considering, so that retention rates improve and students choose study programmes that they can successfully complete
 - providing students with more guidance so they have a good understanding of potential risks to their health and well-being.

■ Strengthen leadership by:

- ensuring leaders carefully monitor how staff apply key academy policies that relate to teaching, assessment and behaviour, in order to build greater consistency in these aspects of the academy's work
- ensuring the recent plan for improving provision for disabled students and those have special educational needs is implemented, and reviewed regularly so that the achievement of these students continues to improve.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, whilst the academy is improving rapidly, leaders have not yet secured consistently good teaching on a day-to-day basis. As a result, the recent improvements to achievement at GCSE owe much to the additional interventions that have been deemed necessary by leaders, particularly in the case of students currently in Key Stage 4.
- Many new leaders have recently been appointed to key posts in the academy. This includes the new co-ordinator for special educational needs. While she has worked closely with the sponsor to write a comprehensive plan for improving provision for these students, the impact of this is yet to be seen in their educational outcomes.
- Leaders have not yet secured good behaviour across the academy. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of how students should behave in lessons. Teaching staff also report that behaviour is not consistently well-managed.
- The principal is inspirational. He has steered the academy through a period of considerable instability and established a culture of high expectation that is shared by all staff. Teaching staff have confidence in the leadership of the academy and this has resulted in an increased openness to challenge and support. The principal has ensured that the academy is now well-placed to improve further.
- Leaders have established a clear programme for holding teaching staff to account for improving their performance. Teaching is improving, but many staff do not have the skills they need to ensure that all students make good progress. The new programme for teachers' appraisal effectively links teaching targets to the progress of their students. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this in students' outcomes.
- The principal and sponsor have established a robust system for tracking students' progress at regular intervals. Subject and progress leaders analyse this information carefully to identify which students and groups of students require additional support. As a result, leaders target interventions more carefully and students, including disadvantaged students, are making better progress across year groups.
- Leaders' evaluation of the academy's effectiveness is accurate and based on detailed information about students' and groups of students' progress across subjects. From this, leaders have written a number of action plans to tackle weaknesses in aspects of the academy's provision. Where necessary, leaders have taken immediate action, such as by reviewing current sixth form students' programmes of study, and this is starting to have a beneficial impact on achievement. However, the quality of leadership and provision in the sixth form requires improvement.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve attendance and reduce exclusions.
- The quality of the curriculum is a significant strength of the academy. Students in all year groups study a broad range of subjects and, from Year 9, can access additional vocational qualifications at the Dukeries complex. Effective curriculum planning and teaching in the humanities subjects prepare students well for life in modern Britain. All students study religious education and report enthusiastically about the quality of discussion and debate they have about modern ethical issues. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported effectively by leaders.
- Alongside the planned curriculum the academy makes available a wealth of extra-curricular opportunities. Students benefit from regular external visits and an extensive range of clubs and after-school study groups as well as opportunities for local volunteering.
- Leaders have written a detailed policy for careers guidance, and students now receive detailed advice about the choices available to them for the next stages in their education or work. This policy sets out a clear aim to broaden students' horizons and raise their aspirations. As a result, all Year 11 students now attend a formal work experience interview. Increasing numbers are choosing to stay at the academy to

study post-16 and students in Key Stage 4 are now being better-prepared for sixth form life.

- Leaders keep close checks on those students attending off-site, alternative provision. They ensure they have good attendance, behave well and are safe.
- The sponsor has improved the leadership of the academy both through the appointment of the Principal and by strengthening governance. The sponsor has initiated a 'Progress Board', which meets monthly, to receive regular reports on progress. Through this, it has provided governors with a clear model of how they should hold the academy's leadership to account. The sponsor has also brokered extensive support to improve outcomes in key subject areas, particularly English and mathematics.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity effectively. They encourage students to develop values such as tolerance, understand and accept the beliefs of other cultures and ensure there is no discrimination. They have improved the attainment of disadvantaged students and ensure that students at risk of exclusion stay in school. Leaders are well aware that disabled students and those who have special educational needs have underachieved and are taking urgent action to resolve this.
- The academy's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements. Leaders ensure staff are competent in identifying students who may be at risk from harm. They work closely with the local authority and police to safeguard individual students and their families.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have faced significant challenges since the academy opened in January 2013. Through the support of the sponsor, they recognised that urgent action was required to secure a good education for the academy's students and they are working hard to secure this. Governors are now providing an effective challenge to school leaders.
 - Governors receive detailed information about the progress of students in all year groups. They have identified those groups who are underachieving and ask for regular updates on the impact of actions to improve their progress. As a result, achievement is rapidly improving.
 - Governors have put a clear pay progression policy in place, which directly links teachers' performance to any pay reward. Governors know how good teaching is and have worked effectively with the principal to tackle underperformance and ensure that inadequate teaching is quickly eradicated.
 - Governors have clear oversight of the additional funds the academy receives for those students who are entitled to receive support through pupil premium funding. They know which interventions have worked, and which have not. As a result, they have taken informed decisions about the allocation of these funds for this academic year. Disadvantaged students are now making much better progress than they have in the past, and many more are remaining at the academy to study post-16 qualifications.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Students are punctual to lessons and are prepared to learn. Despite this, in some lessons, students do not fully engage with learning and some occasionally disrupt the learning of others. Students' work shows that, where teachers have high expectations, they respond positively, work harder, and achieve more as a result.
- Students have very positive attitudes to learning in some subjects. This is particularly the case in the humanities subjects and in religious education. Nevertheless, the quality of the work in their books does not always reflect their enthusiasm for the subject.
- Students invariably behave well outside the classroom. They identify their school as one where the majority of students get on well with each other. They have positive relationships with adults and are very welcoming to visitors. They speak very positively about their school and the opportunities it offers them. Those parents who answered the survey, agreed with this view.

- Students in Years 7 to 11 take pride in their uniform and in the environment of their school. There is very little litter outside and they are quick to tidy up after themselves when an adult asks them to. Students in the sixth form sometimes support younger students in lessons.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Students are well informed about how to keep themselves safe and they view protection from bullying as a high priority in the school. Students say bullying occurs, but is not tolerated by the students themselves, or by adults. The academy has been active in seeking ways to support students who identify themselves as being homosexual. They have worked with Nottinghamshire University to run workshops for the entire student body. Consequently, those students who spoke to inspectors were very well-informed about what constituted homophobic bullying and understood it to be unacceptable.
- Leaders listen to students' views and respond to any concerns they raise. For example, they have made access to the site more secure. Students report that they feel much safer as a result of this.
- Academy staff closely monitor students who access any off-site provision. These students have had full attendance this term.
- Attendance is improving and is now at the national average. Those students who are regularly absent from school are specifically targeted for extra support, and as a result, their attendance is improving.
- The 'Success Centre' has been established for students at risk of exclusion. This has enabled some students to remain in school on a tailored educational programme. One student reported that 'it is basically amazing. It has kept me in school.'
- Fixed-term exclusions have reduced significantly and are now well below the average for secondary schools.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching, including in the sixth form, requires improvement because, even though it is improving, it varies greatly in its quality, both within subject areas and across them. Because of this, teaching does not ensure that students make good progress over time.
- Teachers have accurate information about students' prior learning. However, they do not routinely use this to plan lessons that will ensure students make gains in their knowledge and understanding. Students taught in mixed-ability groups are often given the same work to complete. This means the most-able students are not challenged enough to develop their thinking and subject knowledge in depth. Other students struggle with the work and leave it uncompleted. As a result, students do not make good progress over time.
- Where subjects are taught in ability groups, such as in mathematics, English and science, there are similar differences to the progress students make. Some teachers' expectations about what lower-ability students should be able to learn, and the skills they should develop, are too low. Others plan learning that is based merely on how much students would need to know to answer an examination question, without extending their thinking further. Where this happens, students are not developing a real interest in or a depth to their knowledge and understanding of the subjects and topics they are studying.
- Improving students' literacy across all subjects is a priority for the school, and most teachers develop students' subject specific vocabulary well. In some subjects, such as drama and the humanities, students' oracy is developed effectively and, in these cases, this has a direct impact on the quality of students' written work.

- Teachers regularly mark students' work and most follow the school's policy. They explain to students what they have achieved and what their next steps should be. However, there is little evidence that students are following this guidance to improve their work.
- Where teaching is more effective, teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this effectively to enthuse students about what they are learning. Teachers identify those students who need additional challenge, and those who need more support, and deploy themselves to ensure they receive it. Where this works well, teachers give careful consideration to the prior attainment of their students. These teachers expect students to work hard, to develop their thinking, and to complete their work. They are not satisfied with undemanding responses. In these classes, students are fully engaged in learning and make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' attainment on joining the academy in Year 7 is broadly average. In 2014, achievement by the end of key stage 4 improved for most groups of students. Attainment is now much closer to the national average, with 48% of students achieving five GCSEs including English and mathematics. Boys' progress improved in both English and mathematics. Boys are now just a third of a grade behind girls in English and half a grade behind them in mathematics. While proportionally more students are making expected progress in English and mathematics, not enough are exceeding expectations.
- The progress and attainment of disadvantaged students are improving across the academy but not as fast or consistently as they need to. In 2014, the in-school difference between the attainment of these students in English compared to non-disadvantaged students, narrowed to just a third of a grade. However, the gap in mathematics remains at a grade. This is because of weaker teaching over time in this subject. The gap in achievement between disadvantaged students and other students nationally remains wide in both subjects, but it is closing.
- Fewer most-able students reach the highest standards across a range of subjects than should be the case. Whilst the academy has targeted these students for additional intervention, and stopped them from taking their GCSEs too early, this has had minimal impact on their achievement in the most recent examinations.
- The practice of entering some students early for their GCSEs has not had a beneficial impact on their achievement and has been discontinued.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs made improved progress in English last year, but not in mathematics. The academy has started to identify and track these students more effectively and the progress of current students is improving. Many more of these students in Years 10 and 11 are now on track to make at least expected progress in English and mathematics. However, this improving picture is not yet consistently evident across the academy. The needs of these students are not being met as well as they should be.
- Achievement across other year groups in the academy is improving. This is as a direct result of the action taken to eradicate inadequate teaching. Consequently, more students are now on track to make expected progress.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. While attainment at A level in Year 13 is improving, this is often because too many students fail to complete their AS level year and leave before entering Year 13. Those students, who complete Year 12, do so with some success. Students in the current Year 12 have now received more effective guidance based upon their achievements at GCSE level. Consequently, they are studying courses that meet their needs well. Achievement in the vocational subjects is much better, with students reaching standards above the national average.
- Students who access alternative provision and work placements have high attendance and benefit from these opportunities. However, their achievement in English and mathematics has not always been good enough. Because of this, the academy has taken steps to ensure these students receive specialist teaching in these subjects.

The sixth form provision requires improvement

- The sixth form requires improvement. Despite offering a wide range of courses, both academic and vocational, the retention of students from Year 11 into the sixth form, is relatively low. In 2014 about a third of students dropped out of the sixth form, not completing their A level qualification. For those students who remain, achievement is improving. Achievement at A2 level is also improving. Achievement in the vocational qualifications, such as in construction, is much stronger.
- The academy meets the 16-19 interim minimum standards. These are the minimum expectations for students' attainment in this Key Stage. Sixth form students who did not achieve a grade C or better in GCSE mathematics receive further teaching. Of these, 60% achieved a C grade or above in 2014.
- Students receive good independent advice and guidance, which enables them to make informed decisions about what they should do when they leave the sixth form. Very few students leave without going on to additional education, employment or training. However, there is no programme for students' social and health education, and students report that they would benefit from more guidance in these areas.
- The head of sixth form has worked with other senior leaders to gain an accurate view of the effectiveness of this provision. Leaders have a clear vision and an appropriate plan for improving the sixth form, and have already ensured that students in Year 12 are on more appropriate courses.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form varies considerably, particularly in the academic subjects. Some teachers do not consider carefully enough the skills students will need to be successful when they finish their courses. In some cases, work does not challenge students to develop an in-depth understanding of their subject. However, teaching in the sixth form is improving overall, and this is leading to improved outcomes for all students.
- The behaviour of students in the sixth form is good. Students engage well in learning and speak highly of the support and challenge they receive from staff. Many engage in additional learning opportunities such as master classes and a regional debating challenge. However, there are few opportunities for students to develop their leadership qualities throughout the academy. Students' attendance is good.

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	139062
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	447870

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	950
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stella Smedley
Principal	Ian Barton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01623 860545
Fax number	01623 860545
Email address	office@dukeries.attrust.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

