

# The Totteridge Academy

Barnet Lane, Barnet, London N20 8AZ

## Inspection dates

6–7 March 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The quality of leadership and management in the school is outstanding. The school is led by an inspirational principal. He is supported by a strong and effective leadership team.
- The school joined the United Learning Trust in 2016, at the same time as the current principal took up his post. Since then, the quality of education has improved rapidly.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that is broad and rich. It prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance during their time at the school.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good. In some subjects, including mathematics, teaching is highly effective. In these subjects, teachers plan meticulously and ask probing questions to check and develop pupils' understanding.
- In 2018, pupils' outcomes were good overall. They were particularly strong in mathematics. Low and middle prior attaining pupils achieved well in almost all subjects. There is a similar picture for those currently in the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make strong progress from their starting points over time. Teachers consider pupils' needs when they plan, and they are well supported in lessons.
- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils made good progress compared to other pupils nationally, with similar starting points. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are also making strong progress.
- Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and set very high standards. Behaviour in the school is outstanding. Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well around the school and in lessons. They treat each other with respect and enjoy positive and healthy relationships.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. Pupils are provided with a wide range of high-quality and effective support.
- There is some variance in the quality of teaching between subjects. The most able pupils do not make equally strong progress in all subjects. This is because they are not provided with the same high level of challenge in some subjects as in most others. Leaders have identified this as a priority for the school.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that any variability in the quality of teaching is addressed so that teaching is of a consistently high quality across all subjects
  - ensuring that the most able pupils are appropriately challenged in all lessons so that they achieve the outcomes of which they are capable
  - ensuring that questioning is used effectively in all lessons to check and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Since 2016, when the school moved into the United Learning multi-academy trust, the school has improved rapidly, led by the inspirational and dynamic principal. The Totteridge Academy now enjoys a very positive reputation in the local community and pupils, parents and carers, and staff are rightly proud of their school. Every parent who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, said that they would recommend the school.
- The principal has a clear and ambitious vision for the school which is understood by all staff. He is supported by a strong leadership team, united in their desire to provide all pupils with a high-quality and broad education. Leaders motivate those around them and hold staff to account effectively.
- Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve further. They were rightly pleased that 2018 examination results confirmed their own evaluations of pupils' strong progress in a range of subjects, including mathematics. Leaders are now working to remove any variance that exists so that pupils achieve equally well across all subjects. They have clear plans in place to improve the quality of teaching in the areas that are not as strong, for example in modern foreign languages. These plans are working.
- The curriculum is thoughtful and well planned. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. The school's roll is growing quickly and, as it does, leaders are keen to develop the richness of the curriculum further. Pupils receive appropriate careers advice and guidance throughout their time in the school. Pupils are therefore well prepared to make subject choices for key stage 4 and they receive effective guidance on pathways at the end of Year 11.
- Currently, the school does not have a sixth form. Leaders plan to open a sixth form in September 2020. In the meantime, leaders have developed strong relationships with other post-16 providers locally. They help every pupil leaving the school at the end of Year 11 to choose a course that is right for them.
- Leaders are constantly seeking ways to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school. Staff are provided with high-quality training which helps them to become even better teachers. All teachers who spoke to inspectors, including those at an early stage of their teaching career, said that they felt supported by leaders.
- Leaders have clear plans in place to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. These plans are scrutinised by governors and communicated clearly to staff. Staff monitor how well this group of pupils is doing carefully and intervene quickly when they identify any underachievement.
- In 2018, pupils at the end of Year 11 with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) made strong progress. This is because leaders are quick to identify pupils' needs and to put plans in place to support them. Staff are taught the strategies they should use in lessons to help pupils with SEND. Leaders check that the strategies are being used through regular classroom visits and scrutiny of the work in pupils' books.

- Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand what it means to live in a democracy including the role of government. Pupils wrote to their local Member of Parliament recently about a range of issues including waiting times for child and adolescent counselling services and the shortage of housing in London. Pupils were excited and proud to receive replies to the concerns they had raised.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. In lessons, pupils explore and consider each other's views and beliefs. Leaders provide pupils with rich cultural experiences, including trips to museums and galleries and days dedicated to learning about different cultures and faiths. As a result, pupils are quick to celebrate difference and are excited about the world around them.

### **Governance of the school**

- The local governing body was constructed after the academy moved into the United Learning Trust in 2016. While all governors are, therefore, relatively new in post, they are experienced and knowledgeable. They share the principal's determination for the school and are committed to providing all pupils with the highest standard of education.
- Governors hold school leaders to account robustly. They provide support and challenge in appropriate measure.
- Governors and leaders are supported well, and are held to account appropriately, by the trust board. The trust's regional director works closely with governors and leaders, brokering support where necessary.
- Governors understand their financial responsibilities and take them seriously. They know how the additional pupil premium funding is being spent and the impact it is having. They also have a good understanding of how well pupils with SEND are supported. Governors check that the additional funding received for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans is used appropriately and is having a positive impact.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a school environment where pupils are safe and feel safe. They have taken sensible decisions to make the school site more secure, such as relocating the reception area to the front of the school.
- Leaders ensure that all staff appointed to work in the school are suitable to work with children. They carry out rigorous pre-employment checks and maintain accurate and up-to-date records.
- Leaders are knowledgeable about current safeguarding issues affecting children and take great care to ensure that all staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training.
- Staff know the warning signs that may suggest a child is at risk from harm. They are vigilant, and report concerns immediately to the appropriate member of staff. Leaders respond to safeguarding concerns with speed by referring them to appropriate

agencies and obtaining early help where appropriate.

- Pupils are taught how to stay safe through a comprehensive support programme delivered through daily tutor sessions. Pupils are aware of the potential dangers of communicating online. They are taught to make sensible decisions to keep themselves safe.
- The pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel very safe in school. They told inspectors that they enjoy positive relationships with each other. This view is supported by the parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. They were overwhelmingly positive about the school's work to keep pupils safe in school.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers plan lessons effectively. They use their strong subject knowledge and precise understanding of what pupils are capable of to ensure that they are challenged appropriately. Planning is particularly strong in mathematics and art.
- Teachers teach with enthusiasm. As a result, pupils remain focused throughout their lessons and they are keen to learn.
- Teachers ask particularly probing questions in mathematics. They frame and direct questions effectively to check that pupils understand what they are doing, and to challenge them to think deeply.
- Teachers consider the needs of pupils with SEND very carefully. They plan with their needs in mind and engage them in lessons by making a range of sensible and effective adjustments. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively. They know the pupils they are working with well and what they need to help them learn.
- Pupils say that they are taught well in school and this view is echoed by parents. Every parent who responded to Parent View agreed that their child is taught well at the school.
- Pupils are given advice on improving their work. In English, pupils are encouraged to redraft their work, taking into account the advice their teachers have given them. Pupils respond well to these opportunities.
- Teachers set homework regularly. It is typically meaningful and well planned. Teachers use homework to develop pupils' understanding of what they have learned and to help prepare for the next topic.
- Pupils take pride in their work. They maintain well-presented exercise books, and, in most subjects, they are quick to catch up if they miss any work. In some subjects, however, pupils do not take as much pride in their work and their work is left unfinished.
- The teaching does not provide the same high level of challenge in some subjects as in most others. This is particularly the case in modern foreign languages. In these subjects, teachers do not routinely use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding and move them on in their learning.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

## **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are taught how to be successful in their learning. This is because teachers take time to teach them how to learn. Pupils are taught about the importance of preparing well for lessons and planning effectively for examinations. As a result, pupils approach lessons and examinations with confidence. Moreover, they learn well and achieve well.
- Pupils have access to a wide range of support including one-to-one counselling, individual mentoring and a range of support groups. Leaders are imaginative in their approach to supporting pupils and offer a range of programmes including equine therapy.
- There is a rich programme in place to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Every day begins with either an assembly or tutor period. Assemblies are well planned and are used to deliver important messages to whole year groups, including how to stay safe online.
- Leaders plan intensive personal development days. The normal school routine is suspended for the day and pupils are taught, for example, about different cultures, how to stay healthy, employability and democracy. This programme is effective. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy and they make sensible choices.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities that enhance their school experience and prepare them for adult life. Pupils join various sports clubs, including karate and netball. There is also a drama group, a board games group and a debating club.
- Leaders are keen for pupils to develop their cultural knowledge by visiting museums and galleries in and around London. Pupils are also given opportunities to travel overseas. The pupils who spoke to inspectors were particularly excited about the opportunity to visit the United States of America.
- Bullying is very rare. When relationships do break down, leaders are swift to deal with it and positive relationships are quickly restored.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders and teachers manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. They have a clear and consistent approach to supporting pupils, which is understood by all staff. Leaders continually encourage respect for self and others. This results in a harmonious and peaceful learning environment. Pupils' strong relationships enhance learning.
- Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. They respond quickly and appropriately to instructions. During the inspection, pupils in Years 7 to 10 had a whole school assembly from a visiting author; pupils engaged superbly with the visitor and their behaviour was exemplary. This was typical of the behaviour pupils displayed around the school.
- Leaders exclude pupils from school only when all other avenues have been exhausted. Fixed-term exclusion from school has been below the national average for the past

three years and is continuing to fall year-on-year. There have been no permanent exclusions in the past two years.

- Pupils attend school regularly and are very rarely late. They are eager to arrive to their lessons on time. This is because they do not want to miss out on their learning. The number of pupils persistently absent from school is significantly below the national average and this is decreasing further over time. Leaders are tenacious in following up any absence from school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In 2018, pupils at the end of Year 11 achieved well in a range of subjects. Their progress was particularly strong in mathematics, with pupils, on average, achieving more than a grade higher than their peers with similar starting points nationally.
- Pupils currently in the school are making equally strong progress in mathematics. This is because of the high-quality teaching they receive. Lessons are well planned, and teachers use effective questioning to challenge pupils.
- In 2018, the most able pupils in Year 11 made stronger progress than their peers nationally with the same starting points. However, this group of pupils did not achieve as well as their peers in English and humanities. Leaders have identified the achievement of the most able pupils as a priority for the school.
- Pupils at the end of Year 11 with low prior attainment made strong progress in a range of subjects in 2018. This group of pupils is still making strong progress over time.
- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 11 made strong progress overall. However, there was some variability between subjects. Leaders are addressing this, and the current picture is strengthening. The disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making stronger progress in a range of subjects, including English and science. They are making particularly strong progress in key stage 3.
- Pupils with SEND made strong progress in 2018. This group of pupils is still making strong progress because of the high-quality support they receive. This results from strong leadership and teachers' careful planning.
- In 2018, although pupils at the end of Year 11 made strong progress overall, there was significant variability between subjects. Pupils achieved particularly well in mathematics and in science. However, in modern foreign languages, humanities and in vocational subjects, including business studies, they did not achieve as well as their peers nationally with similar starting points.
- There is still some variance in outcomes between subjects. However, leaders are addressing this quickly. Pupils currently in the school are now making stronger progress in English and music and there is an improving picture in modern languages and history.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. At the end of Year 9, pupils are given helpful advice and guidance about their GCSE options. Pupils choose subjects that are appropriate for them. At the end of Year 11, pupils move on to a range of post-16 providers. Leaders have developed strong relationships with neighbouring schools and colleges and they help pupils to choose appropriate

pathways once they leave the school.

## School details

Unique reference number	144502
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10058937

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

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	502
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Bronwen Tumani
Principal	Chris Fairbairn
Telephone number	02084 459 205
Website	<a href="http://www.thetotteridgeacademy.org.uk">www.thetotteridgeacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@tta.org.uk">office@tta.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The Totteridge Academy is a smaller-than-average sized secondary school. It converted to an academy in 2011 and joined the United Learning Trust in November 2016.
- There are currently pupils in Years 7 to 11. Leaders plan to open a sixth form in 2020.
- There are significantly more boys on roll than girls.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly above that of other schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan is slightly above that of other schools.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is significantly above that of other schools.
- A very small number of pupils attend the Pavilion pupil referral unit (PRU) in Barnet. No

reference is made to them in this report because to do so would risk identifying them.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons to observe teaching and learning across a range of subjects. The majority of these observations were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' learning over time through the scrutiny of pupils' books in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in key stages 3 and 4 about their experiences at the school.
- Inspectors met with middle and senior leaders to discuss their evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the impact of their work. Inspectors also met with teachers at the early stages of their teaching career.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing body and discussed aspects of the school's work with a representative from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, procedures for keeping pupils safe and records of governors' meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 110 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and 41 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Niall Gallagher, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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