

Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology

93 Abbey Street, Dunkirk, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG7 2PL

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have high aspirations for pupils and a clear vision to support them to succeed.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further development. They take swift and effective action to bring about improvements.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students make extremely good progress and are very well prepared for the next steps in their education, training or employment as a result of the strong teaching and care that they receive.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils are generally enthused and interested in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving. Leaders continually drive further improvements through a range of support and challenge.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in a range of subjects.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. Pastoral support is strong and pupils appreciate the care and guidance they receive.
- Pupils' conduct around school and in lessons is good. They are polite and well mannered.
- Leaders have developed strong partnerships with other educational providers and employers. Pupils benefit from working in a range of contexts.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. However, teachers do not always ensure that work matches the needs of all pupil groups, including the least able pupils, to encourage them to make rapid progress.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge all pupils in following agreed expectations and whole-school policies in their work.
- Girls' progress in 2016 was weaker than that of boys. However, girls are currently making much stronger progress throughout the school.
- Overall attendance has improved, but disadvantaged pupils' attendance needs further improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils participate in regular physical activity to promote their health and well-being.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - consistently meet the needs of all pupils, including the least able, to make good progress by matching work to the range of abilities
 - embed strategies to support and challenge girls to make rapid progress
 - routinely challenge pupils to follow presentation expectations and feedback policies.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to engage in physical activity, and are encouraged to do so.
- Further improve attendance, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have a clear vision for continued improvement. They have high aspirations for pupils' success and have equally high expectations of staff performance. Staff and pupils are committed in supporting leaders to realise these aims.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and take effective action to bring about improvements. Development plans are extremely detailed and regularly reviewed to ensure that improvements are rapidly and efficiently implemented.
- Leaders ensure that they use the robust performance management processes effectively to hold staff to account, challenging and supporting staff to improve as appropriate. Reviews of staff performance inform the planning of staff training.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is effective in securing continued improvements. Leaders have a good understanding of relative weaknesses. They are aware, for example, that not all teachers consistently ensure that all pupils respond to feedback in accordance with agreed expectations. Leaders have established a strategic approach to whole-staff training which is further supported by personalised coaching and mentoring. Clear plans are in place for sustained improvements.
- Leaders have ensured that additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. They have implemented a clear strategy of support which they regularly review and adapt accordingly. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Leaders are proactive in developing links with local employers and other educational providers. This supports pupils' learning and contributes to the preparation for their next steps.
- The curriculum is designed around science and technology. Leaders review the curriculum in response to the needs and interests of changing cohorts. Leaders have ensured that pupils experience a wider range of curriculum opportunities through the pastoral and enrichment programmes. However, opportunities for physical activity are limited.
- The daily tutor programme and 'drop down days', where the regular timetable is temporarily suspended, cover a range of topics, including relationships, healthy living and British values. This has ensured that pupils have developed a good understanding of diversity. They demonstrate tolerance of, and respect for, others.
- Leaders promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. For example, pupils have participated in various fundraising activities as well as community activities, such as work to improve the local environment.

Governance of the school

- Members of the governing body are committed to improving standards in the school and are passionate about supporting pupils' achievements and personal development.

- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further improvement. They ensure that they are in receipt of regular, up-to-date information about the school's work.
- The governing body has a wide range of experience and expertise. Governors are knowledgeable and have the skills to hold leaders to account. They are appropriately supportive and challenging.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have established a culture of safeguarding where all staff recognise and understand their responsibility to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. Staff genuinely care about the safety and well-being of all pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that staff receive appropriate training. As a result, staff have an up-to-date understanding of current safeguarding issues. They recognise potential risks that are pertinent to the context of the school.
- Leaders take appropriate action if they have concerns over a child's safety or well-being and follow up referrals in a timely manner. In so doing, leaders work closely with parents and engage well with external support agencies.
- Safeguarding records are detailed and of high quality. These support leaders' capacity to monitor and ensure pupils' well-being.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. This leads to a purposeful atmosphere in lessons.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are enthusiastic and passionate about their subjects and use this to interest and engage pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. This leads to good progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers ensure that activities are closely linked to subject assessment criteria. This ensures that work is meaningful.
- Teachers provide effective oral feedback. Pupils respond positively to this and say that this supports their learning.
- Teachers share high expectations of participation in lessons. Pupils generally focus well as a result.
- Pupils are encouraged to learn from their mistakes. The majority are committed to improving their work.
- Leaders have established 'teaching and learning communities' to support improvements in teachers' practice. Teachers say that this has helped them to develop strategies to target key groups, including challenging and supporting girls across the curriculum.
- Leaders have ensured that parents are provided with accurate information about their

children's progress. Considerable work has been undertaken to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate. The majority of parents who made their views known to inspectors said that they receive valuable information about their children's progress.

- Teachers give feedback in line with the school's policy. Where this is most effective, teachers ensure that pupils respond and this supports their learning.
- A key focus of the school is to increase levels of challenge in lessons. Many teachers do this well, but inconsistencies remain. This rightly continues to be a school priority.
- Teachers have a good understanding of individual pupils' needs and identify them in their planning. However, they do not always use this knowledge to plan appropriate activities. This means that sometimes pupils, including the least able, do not receive effective support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and that when it does occur it is swiftly and effectively dealt with. They say that they would happily seek assistance and support from any member of staff and they also recognise and understand the school's safeguarding systems and who the designated staff are.
- The well-developed tutor programme ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, pupils discuss being safe online and how to live healthy lifestyles.
- The school has well-developed partnerships with local businesses and higher education providers which it uses to supplement careers advice and guidance. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and feel that they stand them in good stead for their next steps in education and employment.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunities that are provided to develop their leadership skills, for example the 'student leadership group'. They are keen to benefit from further opportunities.
- Leaders have ensured that the specialist science and technology curriculum is supplemented through extra-curricular activities to develop pupils' wider growth. Pupils appreciate activities such as Spanish. However, pupils do not receive enough opportunities for physical activity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders have developed robust systems to support pupils to manage their behaviour through a clear system of rewards and consequences. Pupils understand these and most respond well to staff's expectations.
- The school is a well-ordered community. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards one another and towards staff and visitors. They are polite and courteous; for example,

holding doors open for others and offering help.

- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and in lessons. The relatively rare instances of disengagement in lessons are generally as a result of activities not being matched to individual pupils' needs.
- Pupils appreciate the ethos and expectations of positive behaviour throughout the school. They feel that this prepares them well for the next stages in their education.
- While generally positive about their learning, not all pupils consistently take pride in their work. School policies regarding the presentation of work are not always followed, with some books indicating a lack of care.
- Rates of exclusion are low. Leaders are keen to deal with behaviour concerns internally and use exclusion as a last resort. Where appropriate, they work with other agencies to support individual needs, for example for mental health support.
- Attendance is improving. However, disadvantaged pupils' attendance remains lower than for others in the school. This remains a priority for further improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils join the school in Year 10 and teachers undertake rigorous assessments to establish pupils' abilities. These tests indicate that, prior to their arrival at the school, pupils have made less progress than would typically be expected.
- Pupils make rapid progress throughout key stage 4. In 2016, pupils' progress was in line with national averages in a range of subjects. Their progress in science was particularly strong.
- Leaders have ensured that they use the funding to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. There are clear strategies in place which leaders regularly evaluate. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than other pupils in the school, and progress that was in line with other pupils nationally.
- In 2016, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made particularly strong progress in mathematics and science.
- Girls' progress in 2016 was considerably slower than that of boys. Leaders have taken effective action to support and engage girls in their learning. Current performance information indicates that girls are now making rapid progress in a range of subjects, including English and science. However, their progress in mathematics remains slower than that of boys.
- Pupils, including girls and disadvantaged pupils, make particularly strong progress in engineering design.
- Pupils in the sixth form make very good progress in most subjects. Leaders celebrate their successes, for example through displaying their work in public areas.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- The sixth form is a strength of the school. Leaders share high ambitions for students' success. Students feel that staff, particularly the head of the sixth form, support them well.
- Leaders have ensured that students follow a personalised programme that is highly appropriate to their needs and interests. This means that students are extremely motivated and work hard. They make outstanding progress as a result.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Students appreciate the specialist skills that staff use to support and enthuse their learning.
- Leaders track students' progress with precision and detail. Teachers use their understanding of students' individual needs to plan activities that challenge students and support their progress. Leaders ensure that intervention strategies are highly effective in promoting outstanding progress for all students.
- Although very few students need to resit GCSE English and mathematics, the proportion making sufficient progress in level 2 qualifications in these subjects is high.
- Conduct in the sixth form is excellent. Students are confident and self-assured. They act as positive role models for younger pupils in the school.
- Students' progress in academic and vocational subjects is rapid. In 2016, outcomes for students were considerably higher than national averages. Current performance information indicates that students will make equally strong progress in the 2017 examinations.
- The school meets all of the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programme. Through a wide range of partnerships and strong relationships with local universities, leaders have provided students with a range of opportunities to develop their employability skills and gain access to appropriate and high-quality work experience and work shadowing.
- Pastoral support is strong. Leaders have developed a robust tutor programme to support students' wider development and their personal and social skills. This is further supported through enrichment activities, for example public speaking. Students also participate in whole-school activities such as the recent 'inter-faith' day.
- Through its many business and higher education partnerships, leaders have ensured that students receive high-quality, impartial careers advice and guidance. Students also participate in a workshops and training events that employers provide.
- Retention is high. The few students who do leave before they complete their courses do so to undertake appropriate alternative courses or to take advantage of excellent opportunities that arise elsewhere. They are well supported through this process.
- Leaders track students' destinations and support them to move onto their next steps. In 2016, all students moved onto appropriate destinations; the majority went onto higher education placements.
- Attendance rates are in line with the national average. Punctuality is very good.

School details

Unique reference number	140984
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10031133

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

Type of school	Other secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Saunders
Principal	Robert White
Telephone number	0115 8592040
Website	www.nuast.org
Email address	b.white@nuast.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology is an academy free school which specialises in science and technology. It is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than average. No pupils have an education, health and care plan. Consequently, the school receives no additional special educational needs funding.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is larger than average.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is sponsored by The Djanogoly Learning Trust and the University of Nottingham. It has been receiving support from The Nova Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 14 lessons, some jointly with senior and middle leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and a sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at break and lunchtime and between lessons.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning and behaviour during the morning tutor session.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in discussion groups and informally around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plans, information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour and safeguarding, and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the 10 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the eight free-text responses from parents. Inspectors also considered the results from surveys of parents' views conducted by the school.
- Inspectors considered the 23 responses from staff to Ofsted's survey.

Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Russell Barr

Ofsted Inspector

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