

Nottingham Academy

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135881
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	381948
Inspection dates	1–2 March 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Cook HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2281
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	228
Appropriate authority	The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust
Chair	David Shelton
Headteacher	Jacqueline Simpson (Executive Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	Greenwood Road Nottingham NG3 7EB
Telephone number	0115 8228555
Fax number	0115 8228555
Email address	admin@nottinghamacademy.org

Age group	3–19
Inspection date(s)	1–2 March 2012
Inspection number	381948



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.

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 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 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Cook	Her Majesty's Inspector
Robert Pritchard	Additional inspector
Joe Skivington	Additional inspector
Michael Sheridan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carol Worthington	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Approximately 27 hours were spent observing 70 lessons, and 70 teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, with senior staff, the Chief Executive of Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, the Chair of the Academy Council and one other academy council member. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to use in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the academy's self evaluation documents, monitoring and tracking data, questionnaires completed by staff and pupils, and the 195 parental questionnaires that were returned.

Information about the school

The sponsor of the Nottingham Academy is the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust. The academy is separated into three 'schools'. There is a primary school for 3–11 year olds, the Greenwood secondary school for pupils aged 11-16 and the sixth form, and Ransom Road secondary school which is also for pupils aged 11-16. The Ransom Road School was formally known as Elliott Durham School. In 2007, Ofsted judged the Elliott Durham School to be satisfactory. The number of pupils attending the school was falling and the proportion of pupils achieving 5 GCSE passes A* to C was significantly below the national average. The former Greenwood Dale School was judged to be outstanding in 2009. There is an Executive Principal who has the overall responsibility for leading and managing the academy with each school having a head of school.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just over double the national average. Around half the pupils are White British and half are from a number of different minority ethnic backgrounds with around 20% being Pakistani. Just over a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is approximately 40%, which is well above average. Pupils from a number of local primary schools join the academy in Year 7. Pupils' achievement means that the school meets the government's current 'floor standards'.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This academy is a good school. The progress Year 7–11 pupils make in English and mathematics is improving faster than the average for that age group nationally. However, by the end of Year 11, pupils’ attainment in these subjects needs to improve further and teaching needs to be consistently outstanding across both secondary schools if the academy is to be outstanding overall.
- Pupils in the primary school make outstanding progress and their attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 7–9 are making accelerated progress. The sixth form is good. Students make better progress in vocational courses compared to academic A levels.
- Teaching in the primary school is outstanding. The most significant improvements in teaching have taken place at the Ransom Road school where a growing proportion of good and outstanding lessons is beginning to match the quality of teaching found at Greenwood Road School. Opportunities are sometimes missed to improve pupils’ literacy skills and to ensure work is suitably challenging for the most able and those with learning difficulties.
- Pupils’ behaviour in the primary school is outstanding. Overall, pupils’ behaviour is good in the Greenwood Road and Ransom Road schools. The view of most parents, carers, pupils and staff is that behaviour is good. Pupils’ attendance at the Greenwood Road school is good. Attendance at the Ransom Road school has improved dramatically.
- Senior leaders strive for excellence, wanting every aspect of the academy to be outstanding. A constant focus on raising standards across all aspects of the academy has seen transformational change especially at the Ransom Road school. There has been a very successful drive to improve the quality of teaching, underpinned by high expectations and rigorous monitoring of teachers’ performance that has always been a hallmark of the Greenwood Road school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' literacy skills so that they achieve higher standards in English and all other subjects by ensuring that:
 - the work of the literacy steering group and the Middle Years Programme are consolidated in order that the outstanding ways of working in the early years and primary phase become an underpinning structure throughout the academy
 - teachers use every opportunity to encourage improvement in literacy skills through the tasks they give pupils, oral feedback throughout the lesson and written feedback on completed work.

- Raise the quality of teaching so that outstanding teaching is typical across the academy and in all subjects by ensuring that:
 - in all lessons, teaching is adapted to the different abilities of pupils
 - teachers always respond to how well pupils learn throughout the lesson and, if necessary, amend lesson plans to ensure pupils consolidate learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment, including in reading, at the end of Year 6 is the equivalent of at least one term above the national average as a result of outstanding progress throughout the primary school. Pupils start in Nursery with skills below, and sometimes well below, those expected for their age. Adults work well with children in Nursery, developing their language, number and social skills so that they join Reception nearer to the expected levels for their age in all areas of learning. Reception prepares children well for Key Stage 1, developing early language skills very effectively. Standards are rising in Key Stage 1, largely as a result of the consistently high quality focus on developing pupils' understanding of the links between letters and sounds. This is promoting higher achievement in reading and writing. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average including in reading and writing.

At 93%, the proportion of pupils who attain five passes at GCSE A* to C is well above the national average. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is below the national average. For the last two years, examination results show that less than half of the Year 11 pupils achieved five GCSE passes grade C or above when including English and mathematics. However, for those pupils who have not gone through the primary school and had very low starting points in English and mathematics, the progress they make is at a faster rate than pupils nationally. Pupils in the sixth form make good progress in vocational courses. Progress in more

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

academic courses varies but is satisfactory overall. In vocational subjects, and in applied A and AS level courses, attainment is above the national average. But at A level, standards are broadly in line with national averages.

Pupils' achievement overall is good. Therefore, the view of the vast majority of parents and carers who completed the Ofsted questionnaire who believe that their child makes good progress at the academy, is accurate.

Quality of teaching

Virtually all parents and carers who completed the Ofsted questionnaire expressed the view that their children are taught well at the academy. Pupils themselves feel that they learn a lot in lessons. The evidence inspectors found supports these views.

Teaching is outstanding in the primary school. Teachers have an exceptionally thorough understanding of pupils' strengths and areas for development and plan very precise activities to enable outstanding progress. There is a notable consistency of approach throughout the school in terms of guiding pupils in improving their work. This is successful because pupils know exactly what is expected of them and teachers have a very clear understanding of how to use success criteria to allow pupils to see where they can improve their work. Lessons observed were almost always excellently paced and pupils worked hard to meet their teachers' expectations. Teachers provided constant feedback, often pausing to reflect on how to improve an individual's work or to offer additional guidance to enhance pupils' understanding. Lessons are interesting and engage pupils in learning themes that motivate and capture their imaginations.

The quality of teaching in lessons in the secondary schools and the sixth form is good overall. The majority of teachers have very high expectations and manage pupils' behaviour very well. All lessons start with a clear learning objective and, when teaching is good or outstanding, teachers continue the lessons with a constant focus on keeping pupils actively learning. For example, in a music lesson on polyrhythmic drumming, outstanding teaching ensured pupils not only thoroughly enjoyed what they were doing but also learned extremely quickly how to hold a beat against others. Likewise, in a science lesson, outstanding teaching brought to life nanoscience and, as a result, pupils made very rapid progress increasing their scientific knowledge and understanding. When teaching is most effective, teachers check on how well pupils understand the work they are doing and give pupils time to evaluate their own progress, either individually or in discussion with their peers.

A key weakness in some secondary school lessons is the missed opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, teachers do not always capitalise on opportunities to reinforce pupils' understanding of punctuation and spelling when explaining writing tasks. In some lessons, teachers do not effectively adapt their teaching and the tasks to match pupils' different abilities.

In all lessons, teachers are aware of the need to foster pupils' cultural and spiritual

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

development. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson, pupils were encouraged to explore what makes up a person's culture and looked at, for example, dress, language and religion.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of pupils in the primary school is outstanding. For example in the lessons observed, pupils demonstrated an impressive resilience in class. They thrived on working hard and increasingly pushed themselves to complete challenging tasks. Across the rest of the academy, behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils feel safe at school.

Parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were generally very positive about pupils' behaviour at the academy. Inspectors' observations of lessons confirmed parents' views. Pupils who responded to an Ofsted questionnaire were positive about behaviour although a small number said that behaviour in lessons was not always good.

There are good systems for tackling racism and bullying. The academy takes very seriously the issue of homophobic bullying and, when necessary, has taken appropriate action. Exclusions have fallen dramatically.

Pupils' attendance has improved. This is the case for all groups, including pupils learning English as an additional language and Gypsy/Roma pupils. Attendance overall is now in line with the national average. Attendance at the Ransom Road site has improved dramatically, although there remain some year groups, for example Year 10, where persistent non-attendance is above the national average. The effectiveness of the academy's work to improve attendance is powerfully demonstrated through the stories of some pupils who, through very effective support have raised their own personal attendance, for example, from around 40% to 95%.

Leadership and management

The work of senior leaders is driven by a pursuit of excellence to provide every pupil with the best education possible in a calm, controlled environment. Monitoring performance, planning for improvement, responding to any issue that might prevent success is robust, rigorous and highly perceptive. This is the case for all three schools that form the academy. All leaders, including the Trust Board and Academy Council are highly ambitious for the academy.

The improvement of teaching and pupils' learning lies at the heart of all action. Initiatives and working groups, for example the literacy steering group and the Middle Years Programme, are all set up to improve teaching and learning. As a result of the academy's work, and the collaborative approach across the three sites, there is undeniable evidence that the quality of teaching has improved and continues to do so. This is most evident at the Ransom Road site, where the extremely high expectations of the academy vision have resulted in impressive improvements in

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

pupils' attitudes towards learning and the quality of teaching. This work at Ransom Road is an example of the academy's work to promote equality and tackle discrimination; it is also evidence of the academy's outstanding capacity to improve further.

The curriculum in the primary school is outstanding because every opportunity is taken to very effectively develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. No opportunity is missed to encourage learning for example the innovative approach to homework called 'Passion posters'. This involves pupils creating a poster demonstrating what they know. These are frequently highly creative, exceptionally well presented and demonstrate a real sense of pride in their work. The curriculum for Year 7–11 pupils is good, well managed. The curriculum at the Ransom Road school now mirrors that of the Greenwood Road school providing every opportunity for pupils to achieve. For example, pupils at the Ransom Road school can now take triple science at GCSE level. There is still a need to develop the provision for religious education. A full range of extra-curricular activities take place for all pupils. In all three schools, pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered through topics and lesson content. Opportunities are taken to encourage pupils to empathise, experience and appreciate multi-cultural Britain.

Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nottingham Academy, Nottingham, NG3 7EB

Your academy was recently inspected and was judged by inspectors to be good. I would like to thank all of you for being so polite and welcoming to inspectors and to those who spoke with us. You were very positive about your academy. You told us that it is a safe place to be and you have seen many improvements. You are proud to be in a school that aims for excellence.

The Executive Principal and the team of leaders are doing an excellent job. They are working with you so that you achieve your best. They have made sure that the three schools work together and that everyone aspires to the same standards.

Pupils in the primary school are making outstanding progress. Those of you who are older are making good progress, with some of you making outstanding progress. By the time you reach Year 11, there are still too many who do not attain high enough standards in English and mathematics. Your behaviour is good and, for many of you, your attendance has improved to what it should be. There are still some of you that need to improve your attendance; we know it can be done because we spoke with pupils who have improved their attendance dramatically.

Inspectors found many things about your academy that are improving. We have asked the senior leaders to focus on two areas to improve which are:

- your skills in literacy so that you all reach higher standards
- the quality of teaching so that more is consistently outstanding across the Greenwood Road and Ransom Road schools.

You can help with these two areas for improvement by always concentrating in lessons, speaking clearly and checking that your work is your best.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', 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.**