

Nottingham University Samworth Academy

Bramhall Road, Bilborough, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG8 4HY

Inspection dates

19–20 September 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have been tenacious in their drive for improvement. They have successfully tackled the issues from the last inspection.
- The support from the Nova Education Trust has been crucial in bringing improvement to the school.
- All staff are determined that pupils will achieve well. The school motto of 'work hard, be kind' underpins the school's ethos.
- The specialist provision for deaf children is outstanding. High-quality support ensures that pupils make outstanding progress.
- From their low starting points, pupils make good progress across a range of subjects and year groups. Examination results in 2017 showed rapid improvement on the previous year.
- Most-able pupils performed well in examinations in 2017. Some achieved the new highest grade in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is now good. Teachers plan well and expect pupils to show positive attitudes to learning.
- Staff show high levels of care and support for pupils, especially vulnerable pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils, are excellent.
- The school is a highly inclusive environment where everyone is valued as an individual. This is much appreciated by pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site is good. Pupils are polite and well mannered.
- The curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities support pupils' personal development well.
- Pupils are being well prepared for the next stage in their education, employment or training.
- The governing body is effective and makes a significant contribution to school improvement.
- The sixth form is a strength of the school. A highly personalised curriculum helps students to achieve well and progress after school.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not intervene quickly enough if pupils misunderstand the learning. This slows their progress, especially for lower-ability pupils.
- Some of the school's and trust's policies in teaching and learning are not yet fully in place in the classroom.
- New leaders of subjects are not yet fully settled into their roles. They are receiving appropriate support from the trust.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that all teachers quickly deal with pupils’ misconceptions in lessons so that they can make rapid progress, especially low attainers
 - fully implementing the trust’s and school’s policies to support good practice
 - sharing more widely the best practice that is evident in some classes.
- Improve the leadership and management of subjects by:
 - supporting leaders new to their roles to ensure that recent improvements are sustained throughout the school in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The head of school and other senior leaders have transformed the culture of the school to one of high aspirations and expectations. They have tackled the issues from the previous inspection with rigour and tenacity. Pupils now believe they can achieve well. This is evident in the examination results in 2017.
- The support provided by Nova Education Trust has been crucial in securing rapid improvement at the school. The support has been of high quality and has focused on increasing the leadership capacity at the school. It has been particularly beneficial in improving the leadership of English and mathematics. Standards in these subjects have risen.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are not complacent, though, about the positive examination results in 2017. They have already put strategies in place to secure continued rapid improvement.
- Leaders, governors and all staff are highly ambitious for the pupils. There is an absolute determination that they will do well. Staff know each pupil as an individual and constantly reinforce the school's motto of 'work hard, be kind'.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is good. The school's internal checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are accurate and show clear improvement. Leaders have implemented detailed plans to improve teaching further. These include an effective programme of professional development for teachers.
- Leaders support teachers new to the profession well. These teachers appreciate the support they get. They particularly value the professional development opportunities that they have.
- The school is a highly inclusive environment where every pupil is valued as an individual. This is much appreciated by pupils. Support for each other is central to the school's culture and ethos. Adults model respect, tolerance and good manners at all times and this is reflected in how pupils treat each other and respond to staff.
- The curriculum has been carefully thought out to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils. It is aspirational and constantly reviewed to ensure that it is leading to good or better outcomes. A high proportion of curriculum time is devoted to English and literacy. This ensures that pupils make good progress in reading. Individualised timetables mean that pupils who need extra support receive it and achieve success. The curriculum helps all pupils make good progress.
- The leadership of support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. The specialist provision for deaf children is outstanding. It enables pupils to make rapid progress and move into appropriate education, employment or training after school.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. The difference between their achievement and the achievement of other pupils is diminishing rapidly. This is because the work is well led and targeted support ensures that they achieve well.

- There is regular communication with parents through reports and parents' evenings, which are well attended. Leaders recognise the important role parents play in their child's education. They work very hard to keep parents fully informed and involved in checking their child's progress.
- The personal development curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. It includes classes, tutor time, 'drop down days' and assemblies. These support pupils 'spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Many extra-curricular activities support both academic achievement and pupils' personal development.
- Equality of opportunity plays a full part in the school's highly positive ethos. Pupils are clear that any discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.
- Leaders of subjects are tenacious in their drive for improvement. Some are relatively new in post and the full impact of their work has yet to be seen. They are receiving significant support from the trust, which is developing their skills and expertise.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very committed to the school. They visit regularly to check on the school's work. They each have specific areas that they oversee and take these responsibilities very seriously. They are determined that the school will do well and are ambitious for the pupils.
- The governing body robustly holds the head of school and other senior leaders to account for pupils' attainment and progress. It receives regular reports on how effective their spending of extra government funding has been.
- Governors have a broad range of knowledge, skills and experience. They understand assessment information and can analyse it well. They effectively and robustly challenge any underperformance. The governing body makes sure that no one is rewarded for poor performance.
- The governing body carries out all its responsibilities effectively. These include financial oversight and safeguarding pupils. The governor responsible for safeguarding makes regular checks on policies and procedures. She is trained in safer recruitment. All governors have received up-to-date training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pastoral care is strong and staff share a huge sense of responsibility for pupils. They are highly vigilant in monitoring the welfare of each and every pupil. Staff are trained to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism.
- The open culture at the school encourages regular dialogue about any matters of concern, including with parents.
- Pupils are unanimous in their view that they are safe and well cared for at school. They know there are adults they can talk to if they have a concern or worry.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils achieve well because they benefit from good teaching and high expectations in lessons.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They show enthusiasm and passion for their subjects, which make lessons interesting.
- Teachers plan effectively to ensure that pupils learn well. They carefully match activities to pupils' needs and build on their prior learning. Teachers use the recommended strategies to support students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This helps them to make good progress.
- Teachers set clear tasks which challenge pupils to think for themselves. Teachers question pupils effectively about their learning to make sure they think carefully about their answers.
- Teachers expect and encourage pupils to work with positive attitudes and be resilient when they find work difficult. Pupils are not afraid of making mistakes. They recognise that this helps them learn.
- Other adults are used effectively in the classroom. They support pupils who need to catch up their peers and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They support pupils' understanding and help them play a full and active part in lessons. They also allow these pupils to develop their skills of independence. This helps them make good progress.
- Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills well in a range of subjects. They immerse pupils in technical language related to the subject. Reading is a regular part of lessons.
- Teachers use the school's assessment and marking policy effectively. They give pupils comprehensive feedback on their work. This means that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve it. As a result, they make good or better progress. Pupils report that all their work is marked and this is helping them do well.
- Homework is an integral part of learning. Teachers set it regularly and pupils complete it well. Teachers are clear about the school's expectations about homework and use it well to support learning in the classroom.
- Pupils say that they are taught well and that lessons are interesting. They are clear that teachers want them to aim high and achieve well. They rise to these expectations.
- Parents receive regular reports from the school on their child's progress. These take the form of written reports and discussions at parents' evenings.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not intervene quickly enough to deal with any misconceptions or mistakes in pupils' learning. This slows down the progress pupils make, especially pupils of low ability.
- Most teachers follow the trust's and school's clear policies about teaching, learning and assessment. These are not yet fully in place throughout the school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and happy and universally proud of their school. They talk with enthusiasm about their experiences at school. The school is very welcoming and this is appreciated by pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they are happy to contribute in lessons. They engage purposefully and enthusiastically in learning activities.
- Pupils are universally respectful of each other and adults at the school. They feel that the school is a place where 'you are free to be who you are' and everyone is fully included. This is particularly evident when pupils instinctively help and support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils report that bullying is extremely rare. They are confident that, if any bullying happens, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- The personal development curriculum covers a comprehensive range of topics. These contribute to pupils' good personal development. Pupils know how to keep safe and healthy, including when they go online and in relation to their mental health and well-being.
- Pupils receive high-quality careers education throughout their time at school. Information, advice and guidance help them to make appropriate choices for when they leave school. As a result, very few pupils who left last year are not in education, employment or training.
- The personal development of the pupils who receive part or all of their education elsewhere is well supported. Their attendance and progress are monitored carefully.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils value their education and all the efforts that adults make on their behalf. They know that staff have high expectations and aspirations for them to succeed.
- Pupils are punctual to lessons and arrive prepared and eager to learn. They are polite and courteous and have good manners. Pupils work and play together well.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Inspectors heard only two examples of inappropriate language during the inspection and, on both occasions, this was dealt with immediately by staff.
- Pupils mostly attend well and attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved. The number of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing. The school employs a range of strategies to ensure that attendance is good and staff are tenacious in their follow-up of any absences.

- The number of pupils who have been excluded from school for short periods of time has reduced each year. The school's effective inclusion unit works well to manage the behaviour of students who need extra support. The unit has been instrumental in improving behaviour and reducing the number of exclusions. The number of children permanently excluded from school fell dramatically last year but remains higher than the national average.
- Good relationships contribute to the warm and welcoming atmosphere of the school. They support pupils' well-being and personal development.
- Pupils look smart in their school uniforms. They respect the school building and there is almost no litter.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects and in all year groups. The GCSE results in 2017 showed many improvements on the previous year, especially in English and mathematics. Many pupils exceeded expectations, especially the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- From their low starting points, pupils are gaining in knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects. Good progress is being sustained in key stages 3 and 4. Pupils are confident in talking about their learning.
- Pupils' progress is checked across all the schools in the trust. This ensures that assessments are accurate and reliable. Leaders made accurate predictions for the GCSE results 2017, if a little cautious. Pupils are making faster progress throughout the school than previously.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress than they were. The differences between their progress and the progress of other pupils are diminishing. The extra government funding to help disadvantaged pupils keep up with their peers is spent wisely.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported and make good progress from their starting points. The school has adapted its assessment systems to ensure that these pupils' progress is monitored rigorously. This includes recognising, where appropriate, small steps of progress.
- Pupils who enter Year 7 with below average attainment in English and mathematics receive extra help so they can catch up. They make good progress. A focus on improving reading continues throughout the school and the majority of pupils who are behind in their reading make very rapid progress to catch up with their peers.
- Pupils who use the school's outstanding provision for deaf children make excellent progress, both in their academic work and their personal development. This is because of the outstanding support they receive.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The school library is well used and pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they are reading. They show good skills in working out how to read unfamiliar words.
- Standards are improving consistently in a range of subjects. The school's assessment information shows that this is set to further improve in future years. Disadvantaged

pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also reaching higher standards.

- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their education, employment or training. Almost all pupils move into further education, employment or training when they leave the school.
- A small number of pupils receive part or all of their education elsewhere. They are on appropriate courses and are making good progress. They expect to achieve qualifications which are suitable for them and will help them move on successfully when they leave school.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders of the sixth form have instilled a culture of high expectations among students. They have designed provision which supports students' good progress and skill development. This is helping students to make good progress in a range of courses.
- The curriculum is broad and carefully planned to ensure that it meets the needs of individual students, including those with complex needs. The courses offered are mainly vocational. The most able students are provided with progression routes into university. The sixth form meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes.
- Students who take English and mathematics GCSEs as part of their study programmes make good progress.
- Provision for students' personal development is strong. It helps them develop employability skills as well as skills in areas such as financial management. Good-quality independent careers advice is built into this programme. In-year retention of students is low but this is because a number of students move into the sixth form to develop their personal skills and independence. The school supports them in moving on to appropriate post-16 pathways when they are confident and able to do so. The majority of students move on to higher levels of study.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding in the sixth form. It is typified by thorough planning, a positive climate for learning and opportunities for students to develop their social and life skills.
- Students show positive attitudes to learning. They are very positive about their experiences in the sixth form. They feel safe and well supported by their teachers.
- Behaviour is consistently good in the sixth form. Learners grow in confidence as a result of the programmes on offer to them.
- Attendance in the sixth form is improving.
- Students make above average progress from their starting points. Progress is checked rigorously. Staff provide extra support and coaching if students are finding their studies hard.
- Homework is set regularly. Students say they are given good feedback by their teachers about how to improve their work.

School details

Unique reference number	135761
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10036077

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	763
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	47
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Mills
Head of school	Mark Watts
Telephone number	0115 929 1492
Website	www.nusa.org.uk
Email address	contact@nusa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 October 2015

Information about this school

- 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 part of the Nova Education Trust, which has a board of directors. The school has a local governing body.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion supported by a statement or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school runs specially resourced provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This provision accepts up to 14 deaf children referred by the local authority. Currently, 12 children use this provision, all of whom are on the school's roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- A small number of pupils receive part or all of their education at Equip, Stone Soup Academy, Jubilee House, Crisp Vocational Provision and Boston Training Enterprise.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of year 11.
- The 16 to 19 study programmes meet the minimum standards set by the government.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across subjects and year groups in 42 lessons. Several observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspection team looked closely at pupils' work in a sample of books across a range of subjects and in all year groups. They also looked at pupils' books in lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, leaders in charge of subjects and other aspects of the school's work, teachers, governors and members of the trust's executive team.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups in meetings, informally around the school and in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included senior leaders' evaluations of the school's performance, improvement plans, records of training and professional development, and information on pupils' attainment, progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the seven responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 74 responses to the online questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to the online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Denise Newsome, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Horrocks	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Hunt	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Sheppard	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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