

South Nottinghamshire Academy

Glebe Lane, Off Cropwell Road, Radcliffe on Trent, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG12 2FQ

Inspection dates

21–22 February 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and senior leaders have been successful in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements at the school.
- The Redhill Academy Trust sponsored the school in September 2016 and the pace of improvements has been faster since then.
- In 2016, the school's pupils attained similar standards in examination results to pupils nationally. However, disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils made less progress than others at the school. Leaders have ensured that these pupils are now making better progress in most subjects. In science and the humanities, pupils' progress is less strong than in other subjects.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the skills necessary for examination success. They use this knowledge well to prepare pupils for examinations and tests.
- Leaders and governors manage the performance of teachers effectively. They use the information well to improve the quality of teaching.
- Staff set consistently high standards for the pupils' appearance. Pupils are immaculately dressed as a result.
- Pupils behave well around the school and are attentive and focused in lessons. They are proud of the new school buildings and look after them very well.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now the same as the national average. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has not improved as rapidly as that of others.
- The school's small sixth form caters well for the students who attend it. Students enjoy their sixth form experience very much. Sixth form teachers really challenge students to achieve their best and students often exceed their targets.
- The school's curriculum matches most pupils' needs well. The curriculum is often challenging and prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. In addition to formal lessons, pupils have a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities to choose from.
- Leaders' plans for improving the school do not always set clear enough targets and deadlines. This makes the plans difficult to monitor.
- The achievement targets that leaders set for some pupils do not challenge them enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leaders' plans for improvements by:
 - ensuring that improvement targets can be measured and that there are clear timescales for achieving them
 - setting consistently high targets for pupils' progress.
- Improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils by:
 - ensuring they attend school regularly
 - providing more focused teaching and support for disadvantaged and most-able pupils in lessons, especially in science and the humanities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have made the most of the school's new buildings to help raise pupils' aspirations. The signage and displays around the buildings constantly remind pupils what they can achieve if they work hard.
- Leaders have created a culture of ambition where staff are determined to improve their teaching skills. This determination has improved pupils' learning.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching across the school very carefully and use the information they gain from this to help them plan improvements. Senior leaders have improved the quality of teaching at the school by careful consideration of each teacher's strengths and areas for development. They also use examination results to gauge the success of teaching. Leaders use this analysis to plan training that matches each teacher's needs.
- Leaders manage teachers' performance rigorously and ensure that the process leads to improved quality of teaching. Governors make sure that the school awards salary increases strictly based on performance, in accordance with their own policy.
- The Redhill Academy Trust has formally reviewed the quality of teaching at the school. Leaders and governors have used the results of this review to improve the quality of teaching, particularly for the most able pupils.
- School leaders are good at identifying talented teachers. Senior staff use these skills to help them plan for future leadership opportunities in the school.
- Leaders have made improvements to the curriculum, so that it matches pupils' interests and abilities more appropriately. Pupils now follow a stimulating programme which prepares them to take the English Baccalaureate group of qualifications and for higher education. The school also offers high-quality vocational opportunities which match some pupils' career plans. There is a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to choose from. Pupils told inspectors they value the new sports facilities that are available to them at school.
- School leaders make sure pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders ensure that pupils have the skills they need to do well in education and the workplace. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Pupils also have the chance to develop leadership skills through roles such as house captain and pupil council representatives.
- Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the dangers of extremism, through personal and social education, and through the wider curriculum.
- Leaders work well with the parents and carers of vulnerable pupils to keep them safe. Several families of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities told inspectors how well the school was supporting their children and how pleased they were with their progress. Progress information confirms this view.
- The targets leaders set for pupils' progress are not routinely challenging enough. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they should, particularly the most able.

- Leaders make good use of the extra funding they receive to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In many year groups, the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to all pupils' achievement nationally. Leaders also make effective use of the catch-up funding given to help pupils who join the school with achievement below national averages in English and/or mathematics.
- Leaders have created a leadership post with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils' achievement. School leaders did this because they recognised that disadvantaged pupils at the school were making less progress than they should. This role is beginning to have an impact on disadvantaged pupils' achievement.
- Leaders' use of the pupil premium focuses on the barriers to achievement that disadvantaged pupils need to overcome in the local area. However, leaders' targets for improving disadvantaged pupils' achievement are not specific enough and there are insufficient planned completion dates. This lack of clarity in the improvement plans means that leaders and governors cannot check the impact of the actions easily.
- School leaders encourage pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. Leaders use school assemblies well for this purpose. The curriculum offers many rich opportunities for pupils to think about equality and fairness. However, the school has not published the required information about it on its website.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body has been strengthened to ensure it has the skills it needs to challenge leaders effectively.
- Governors have a realistic view of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. They set high standards for leaders' work and make sure they tackle the main weaknesses of the school. For example, governors successfully challenged school leaders to improve pupils' attendance.
- The local governing body has made good use of reports from the Redhill Academy Trust to hold the school to account. This has encouraged improvements in the quality of teaching.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. This is because leaders have created a culture where safeguarding is a core responsibility of all adults in the school. All staff are clear about the procedures for passing on concerns about pupils' welfare.
- Staff value the training they have received on safeguarding, which they say has helped them to understand threats such as child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Staff are vigilant about the dangers faced by young people locally.
- Leaders are very aware of the need to help pupils with mental health problems. Staff have set up a programme which supports pupils experiencing difficulties. Leaders know that examination periods are highly stressful for pupils and do all they can to support pupils through these difficult times.

- Leaders manage extensive building work on the school site extremely well, ensuring the safety of all.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Almost all teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this effectively to support pupils' learning. When pupils ask complex questions, teachers answer them confidently and accurately.
- Teachers use their knowledge of examination requirements well to teach pupils the skills they need to be successful. This happens across all year groups. For example, in a Year 8 music lesson pupils learned about the importance of expression in musical pieces at GCSE. This was a sophisticated idea that pupils then used to improve their performances. This approach helped improve the work of musicians of all abilities.
- Teachers make improving literacy and numeracy across the school a priority. Staff plan activities in every subject to develop these key skills. Inspectors saw several examples of literacy and numeracy skills being successfully developed in subjects such as media and science.
- Teachers take responsibility for developing their classroom skills and they learn from each other to improve their craft. Staff have a 'teaching passport' which records and helps focus their training. Teachers work with staff from the local teaching school alliance to share their skills, and this gives them access to high-quality training in a range of subjects. Leaders expect the most experienced staff to contribute to the training of other teachers in this school and across the Redhill Academy Trust.
- Teachers offer a wide-ranging support programme to help pupils who are falling behind. Pupils of different abilities and ages benefit from these sessions. The most able pupils take part in groups focused on what they need to do to reach the highest examination grades.
- Good relationships between pupils and teachers support learning and encourage pupils to answer questions in the classroom, even when they might be wrong. However, in a small number of lessons, teachers did not pick up pupils' mistakes quickly enough and this slowed their learning.
- Homework always has a clear purpose which teachers make sure pupils understand. Pupils see the point of their homework, so almost all pupils complete it on time. Teachers discuss homework with pupils and use pupils' mistakes to improve their learning.
- In pupils' mathematics books, inspectors saw good examples of lower-ability pupils finding work difficult and then going on to succeed. The feedback given to these pupils by teachers helped them to see what they had done wrong and how to put this right.
- Pupils read enthusiastically. School staff encourage reading and pupils use the library well. Pupils who are junior librarians support the work of the library. Tutors talk to pupils about what they are reading and the choices they have made; this helps highlight the importance of reading.

- Teachers plan opportunities to enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education as part of the curriculum. During a tutor period, inspectors saw teachers challenging pupils to think about the value of education. Pupils discussed the experience of Malala Yousafzai, who was shot because she wanted to go to school. Through discussion, pupils explored global inequalities and considered the value of education. An inspector saw a history lesson that looked at examples of first world war propaganda and made pupils think about the messages in posters of the time. The teacher used the lesson to explore gender stereotypes at that time and now, promoting equality between men and women.
- Parents are happy about the quality of teaching. Some parents told inspectors of the excellent support given to pupils who have specific learning difficulties.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- School staff make sure that the physical and emotional well-being of pupils is a priority. Parents told inspectors that pastoral care at the school is excellent and gave examples of how staff had helped their children. Parents of pupils who joined the school recently were particularly happy about the care their children had received.
- Pupils trust the adults in the school and know who to turn to when they have a problem. Staff look after vulnerable pupils particularly well because they know them as individuals and understand the difficulties they face. School staff work closely with pupils facing specific risks and help make sure they are safe.
- Pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance, whether they decide to stay at the school or continue their education elsewhere. Pupils told inspectors that work experience and careers education had helped them decide what to do next. Almost all pupils from the school last year went on to post-16 opportunities that fitted their future career plans.
- Most pupils are self-confident and interact positively with each other and the adults in the school. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils know how to stay safe; this includes how to keep themselves safe from bullying. Pupils are very aware of the risks they face online and are confident about how to deal with these risks. Most of the pupils spoken to say adults at school deal effectively with bullying.
- Staff promote core British values through the curriculum and through their expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teachers reinforce the importance of courtesy and expect pupils to consider the views of others respectfully. School staff have had training on the dangers of extremism, which they use to teach pupils how to protect themselves from the risk of radicalisation.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is a harmonious feel to the school because staff teach pupils how they should behave and they follow the school's rules.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. During the inspection, extensive building work was taking place. Without exception, pupils followed the rules in place to keep them safe.
- Pupils' movements around the school are safe and self-disciplined. Pupils manage to stay focused in lessons, despite the occasional distraction caused by building works.
- Pupils know how to behave in formal situations. They came into an assembly in silence and were respectful throughout. Pupils dressed impeccably for the occasion.
- The school has a small number of pupils who find it difficult to follow school rules. A few pupils are educated at off-site placements which offer them relevant training and educational opportunities. The school's records show that the behaviour and progress of the pupils who attend these placements has improved. The school checks the attendance and welfare of pupils at off-site placements carefully.
- Staff told inspectors how much behaviour at the school has improved. Most parents agree and believe behaviour at the school is good.
- The school values good timekeeping and sees this as an important life skill. Punctuality is very good at the school because staff consistently challenge lateness in the morning and to lessons.
- The presentation of pupils' work is generally good in most subjects. However, inspectors noted that some pupils presented their work less carefully in science.
- Leaders have improved school attendance overall and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is still too low and this has a negative impact on their achievement.
- Leaders make effective use of isolation when pupils don't follow the rules. The school's records show that pupils who spend time isolated for poor behaviour tend to improve their conduct.
- School leaders infrequently exclude pupils from school. The numbers of pupils excluded for unacceptable behaviour continue to fall. However, leaders exclude disadvantaged pupils more often than other pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils join the school with attainment that is at, or above, the national average. The school's examination results have improved steadily over the past three years and pupils' attainment at GCSE is now around the national average. The school's records, and pupils' work seen during the inspection, show that attainment is continuing to rise.
- However, until recently, some groups of pupils have not made the progress they should, given their ability. The achievement of the most able pupils has been below that of pupils with similar abilities nationally. This is changing. In most subjects, high-ability pupils are now making better progress, because teaching is more challenging than in the past.

- The school has a small number of pupils who start secondary education with attainment which is below the national average. Staff support these pupils well in Year 7, using literacy and numeracy catch-up funding. The school uses this funding to plan individual programmes for each pupil, which gets their secondary education off to a flying start. Pupils who start secondary education with attainment below the national average make good progress and achieve better examination results at this school than pupils of similar starting points nationally.
- The current progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to others in the school, and all pupils nationally, in many year groups. At key stage 3, the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now better than other pupils in the school.
- Increasing proportions of disadvantaged pupils are working at the standards expected for their ages. When inspectors examined the work of disadvantaged pupils, most were making progress which was close to others in the school. This has not always been the case. This improvement is because the teaching that disadvantaged pupils receive now offers enough challenge in most subjects. However, in science and the humanities, school records show this challenge is less strong. The poor attendance of some disadvantaged pupils is slowing down their progress and stopping them from reaching the standards expected for their age.
- Pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education, training and employment. Pupils are confident and socially well developed with strong literacy, numeracy and computing skills, which prepare them well for the world of work.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The leadership of the sixth form is good. Although the numbers in the sixth form are small, leaders manage to offer students a wide range of opportunities, both academically and through the enrichment programme. Leaders do all they can to accommodate students' interests and talents.
- Students are overwhelmingly positive about their experience of sixth form life. They appreciate the exceptional new facilities they have and look after them very well.
- Strong teaching in most lessons ensures that students make good progress towards challenging targets. In lessons, teachers offer students good cross-curricular opportunities. This includes the chance to develop their mathematical skills. An inspector saw a teacher using very high-level mathematics during a physics lesson, to broaden students' mathematical understanding.
- Teachers constantly use high-level subject vocabulary. As a result, students learn to use subject-specific and technical language exceptionally well.
- The behaviour of sixth form students is impeccable. Students ensure that those who join the school in sixth form feel welcomed. Sixth form students are excellent role models for younger pupils.
- The school invests heavily in developing students' leadership potential, which helps prepare them to take an active role in modern Britain and promotes democratic values. Opportunities include house captaincy, sports leadership and participation in the Duke

of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

- Leaders support the personal development and welfare of students effectively. Staff care for each student individually and support them to achieve well. Sixth form attendance has improved and is now good. Leaders have strong procedures for following up absence because they understand the relationship between attendance and students' well-being.
- Sixth form students make a significant contribution to the life of the school and the wider community. Students support lessons, get involved in reading initiatives, volunteer at local schools and raise funds for charities that matter to them. In these ways, the school prepares them to be good citizens, who give back to the community.
- Students achieve well in examinations. Their attainment is around the national average. However, students' progress is often better than those with similar GCSE results elsewhere. This is because leaders set highly aspirational targets for students and good teaching supports them to achieve these targets. Students taking vocational and academic courses are equally successful. Students' achievement is consistently good in almost all subjects. Current students are on course to do well.
- The most able sixth form students take on further challenges to develop their potential. They get the opportunity to do an extended project on a topic of their choice, which develops a wide range of learning skills.
- Students receive independent careers advice and guidance to help them make the right choices when they join the sixth form and plan for when they leave. There is a comprehensive programme of preparation for higher education. Leaders encourage students to be ambitious through initiatives such as the Cambridge masterclass programme. The school works with the Sutton Trust to support students from all social backgrounds to aim high. One student visited Northwestern University, in the United States of America, as part of the school's work with the Sutton Trust. The school also offers education about apprenticeship opportunities, so that students can consider this choice.
- Typically, half of Year 11 pupils choose to join the school's sixth form. Once students join the sixth form, almost all complete their studies. Only seven students have left the sixth form before completing their courses during the past three years. This is because school staff give good advice to students before they join the sixth form and then support them well during their time at school.
- All students get the opportunity to learn about the world of work. They all take part in work experience during Year 12, which they value. In addition, the school supports students to find employment opportunities in the local community. The contribution of work-related learning to study programmes is therefore strong.
- The school supports the development of mathematics and English skills. Students who need to take GCSE re-sits in English and/or mathematics make good progress.
- When they leave the sixth form, students go on to a wide range of destinations, which match their career ambitions. The majority go on to university, but some go on to employment or apprenticeships. The school has a strong track record of students progressing to very aspirational higher education options. For example, in 2015, 50% of students went to Russell Group universities when they finished sixth form.

- Disadvantaged students in the sixth form are well supported. Bursaries are well used to support students with some of the costs of studying. Leaders watch the progress and well-being of students receiving bursaries very closely. These students achieve at a similar level to other students over time.

School details

Unique reference number	137112
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10023193

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
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	542
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	74
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Deborah Giles
Headteacher	Dan Philpotts
Telephone number	0115 911 0091
Website	www.southnottinghamshireacademy.org
Email address	main.office@southnottinghamshireacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	8–9 May 2013

Information about this school

- South Nottinghamshire Academy is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The school's sponsor changed in September 2016. The Redhill Academy Trust now sponsors and supports the school.
- Most pupils are White British, though pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds attend the school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- A small number of pupils from the school have alternative arrangements for part of their education through Nisai Education, REAL (Rethink Engagement and Approaches to Learning) and Buxton Training Enterprise.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school does not comply with DfE guidance on what academies should publish on their websites about: pupils' examination results; current pupil premium and equalities information.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 28 lessons across all key stages and in a range of subjects. Some lessons were jointly observed with school leaders. In addition to examining work in lessons, inspectors also examined books separately. Inspectors also undertook learning walks to evaluate pupils' progress and behaviour across a range of classrooms.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the executive principal, senior and middle leaders and a member of the governing body. An inspector also spoke to staff at units which offer off-site training for a small number of pupils at the school.
- Inspectors looked at the 79 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and 66 free text responses from parents.
- The inspection team listened to the views of pupils in key stage 3, key stage 4 and the sixth form during discussions, and considered 64 questionnaire responses from pupils.
- Inspectors considered 27 responses to staff questionnaires and talked to staff after lessons to seek their views.

Inspection team

Ellenor Beighton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clive Worrall	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Austin	Ofsted Inspector

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

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.

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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 students 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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2017