

Farnborough Academy

Farnborough Road, Clifton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG11 8JW

Inspection dates

19–20 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders, including the local governing body and the Trent Academies Group, have not ensured that pupils attend school regularly and achieve as well as they should.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is too generous about some features of the school. Aspects of school improvement activity lack rigour.
- Standards are too low. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and the most able pupils, do not make the progress they should. Pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 4 is well below the national average.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly. Pupils' attendance continues to be below the national average. The number of pupils that are persistently absent from school is too high.
- Too many pupils, and a greater proportion than found nationally, are excluded from school.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent, particularly in key stage 4. This means that some pupils make slow progress across the subjects that they study.
- Teachers' expectations of what some pupils can achieve are too low. The most able pupils do not regularly receive enough opportunities to develop their talents fully.
- Some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not consistently have their needs fully met.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' efforts to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are beginning to bear fruit. Teachers take care to plan learning that motivates and engages pupils. Pupils say that their lessons have improved.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' employability and experience of local business is valuable. It is increasing pupils' aspirations about their future once they leave school.
- Extensive and high-quality inclusion support is available and is extremely beneficial for the pupils in school that require it.
- Middle leaders are checking more regularly that pupils are making the progress they should in the faculties that they lead. They are enthusiastic and committed in their mission to improve the school. Senior leaders are holding them to account more successfully.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of the leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the trust and governing body provide sufficient leadership capacity to rapidly improve pupils' achievement and attendance, and to reduce the number of pupils excluded from school
 - leaders focus their plans for improvement on the aspects of the school that need urgent improvement
 - leaders evaluate the impact of key actions regularly to check they are making the required difference
 - the trust and governing body check closely the impact of leaders' actions.
- Use the funding to support disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, to raise their achievement rapidly.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - eradicating the inconsistencies in teaching quality, particularly in key stage 4
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and provide them with work that is appropriately challenging and meets their needs.
- Improve the quality of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - reducing the number of pupils excluded from school
 - ensuring that all pupils and groups of pupils attend school at rates similar to national averages, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Urgently improve all pupils' attainment and progress, particularly at key stage 4. Ensure that disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the most able pupils achieve as their starting points indicate that they should.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' actions have not brought about the improvements in pupils' achievement that were needed, particularly in key stage 4.
- Leaders' actions have not brought about improvements in pupils' attendance, particularly the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Too many pupils fail to attend school.
- Leaders' actions have not brought about the improvements needed to rapidly reduce the proportion of pupils that are excluded from school.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is too generous about some aspects of the school. For example, the quality of teaching was judged by leaders and by the trust as good. This is not yet the case. Too many inconsistencies remain.
- Plans for improvement are not sufficiently focused. Leaders have not evaluated the actions taken to assess the impact they are having. This means that time and energy has been spent on actions that have not had enough impact on pupils' achievement and their attendance.
- Leaders' capacity to improve the school was reduced in the academic year 2016. A variety of issues, including highly complex budgetary constraints and staffing challenges, led to a reduced leadership team. Leaders accept that, at times, they were 'stretched'. The trust agreed to add additional funds to increase leadership capacity. These changes did not have sufficient impact. The pace of school improvement slowed at that time.
- The external funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has not had the impact needed. Some of these pupils are making better progress in key stage 3 but have not had the support that they require in key stage 4.
- Leaders' actions have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers are taking care to plan learning that engages pupils' interests. They produce high-quality resources and the learning environments are often extremely positive. Some teachers follow whole-school policies to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, but some do not.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic about the support senior leaders and the trust have given them to help them develop the skills they need to be effective. They said they appreciated the training they had received, and particularly the leadership development opportunities. Middle leaders now assure the quality of work in their faculty and deal with any issues. They said that they are now held to account more rigorously by senior leaders.
- The management of the pupil premium funding is weak. The school's use of the pupil premium does not ensure that it makes enough difference to the attainment and progress of the pupils it supports. Although there are improvements in key stage 3, disadvantaged pupils underachieve. They do not attend school regularly enough. They are more likely than other pupils are to be excluded from the school.

- The pupils in Year 7 supported through literacy and numeracy catch-up funding are making good progress and are catching up. The funds have supported pupils to develop the literacy and numeracy skills that they need in their future learning.
- Performance management is used well to improve the quality of teaching. The trust provides good human resources support.
- Leaders and the trust are keen to ensure that pupils experience a curriculum that prepares them for their next steps once they leave the school. Employability is a key theme and is a focus across the curriculum. Links with national and local businesses are strong and pupils gain a range of extremely positive experiences. It is clear that leaders 'go the extra mile' in order to ensure that this happens.
- Leaders are determined to create a positive ethos within the school and that pupils 'do the right thing'. Extensive actions take place to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The tutor programme is effective and pupils are well informed about different cultures and faiths. Pupils have a range of opportunities to voice their opinions and influence change. They are given roles of responsibility and take these extremely seriously. Pupils value highly this aspect of their school life.
- Much happens to extend pupils' experiences outside of their own community. Exchange visits take place and pupils are involved in visits to France and Holland. Pupils gain many chances to meet external visitors, including authors and sportspeople. Recently a group of pupils were involved in 'Creative Connections', a collaborative arts project. Pupils visited London and then produced an exhibition of photographic portraits inspired by the National Portrait Gallery's collection.
- Since September 2017, an extended leadership team has been in place. This leadership team has already had an impact to improve the school.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders have shown great commitment to improving the school and the life chances of the pupils within their community. Pupils said that the school is 'much better' under their leadership.

Governance of the school

- Those responsible for governance have not ensured that leaders' actions have had sufficient impact in improving pupils' achievement and attendance. They have not ensured that fewer pupils are excluded from school.
- Governors have made sure that external funding to the school effectively removes some of the barriers to learning for some pupils. The pupils in Year 7 supported through literacy and numeracy catch-up funding are making better progress in key stage 3. Many disadvantaged pupils benefit from specialist support from the inclusion team. Too many disadvantaged pupils, however, underachieve, are excluded or do not attend school.
- Recently, governors have challenged leaders about the pupils' poor standards in key stage 4. They have commissioned a review of leaders' actions. The findings from this review have formulated an action plan that governors have agreed to implement.
- Those responsible for governance are committed to the school. They are ambitious to ensure that the school improves and that pupils from within the community achieve

well and move successfully to the next stage in their employment, education or training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The most vulnerable pupils receive high-quality support and guidance from an effective specialist inclusion team.
- The school's policies and procedures fully meet statutory requirements. Leaders ensure that staff receive the right training and log this carefully. All staff know exactly what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare.
- Leaders make good use of external services to support pupils who may be vulnerable to harm. They follow up referrals to social care tenaciously to ensure that timely and appropriate action is taken to protect children at risk. Links with external agencies are extremely productive.
- Robust arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils who receive part of their education elsewhere attend well and are protected from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies within subjects and across subjects. As a result, not all pupils and groups of pupils make the accelerated progress in lessons that is needed. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Teachers' planning is not yet sharply enough focused on making sure pupils of all abilities in a class are making good progress. The pitch of learning is sometimes wrong and the work is too easy for some pupils and too difficult for others. As a result, pupils make inconsistent progress within some lessons.
- At times, the work set for the most able pupils is too easy. It does not fully develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. These pupils are not challenged to achieve the highest levels possible, given their starting points.
- Teaching of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not yet good enough. Pupils' needs in lessons are not always accurately identified and then met.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils, are positive. There is generally an upbeat atmosphere for learning in classrooms. When pupils find their work too easy, however, they lose concentration and engage in low-level disruption.
- When expectations are high, pupils are keen and motivated and show a real love of learning and an aspiration to do well. In these situations, teachers promote effective learning through lively discussion and skilful questioning. Inspectors saw evidence of this within science and in art.
- The school's focus on improving the structure of pupils' learning and the classroom environment is evident. The whole-school policy of teachers planning to 'connect, activate, consolidate, demonstrate and model' was noticeable in many classrooms. Increasingly, teachers plan activities that ensure that pupils are engaged and motivated to learn.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils have access to a full range of services to support their needs. This includes specialist support from a social worker, a school nurse and a counsellor. Some of this support is funded by the pupil premium. The range of available support is impressive. Too many of the most vulnerable pupils, including the most vulnerable disadvantaged pupils, however, are absent from school and are therefore unable to benefit fully.
- Leaders use their knowledge of potential local risks to pupils' well-being effectively to ensure that pupils understand how to stay safe. A comprehensive tutor programme is in place and pupils have regular opportunities to learn about the possible risks to their safety and well-being. This includes political extremism and child sexual exploitation.
- Pupils said that their school had improved and that they felt safe. They said that bullying was rare and that, if it did happen, they had confidence in their teachers to deal with the problem effectively. Pupil anti-bullying ambassadors have been appointed and their work is appreciated by their peers.
- Staff listen to and take account of pupils' views. Leaders offer opportunities for pupils to mentor younger pupils and to take on responsible roles, for example as part of the student council.
- The Orchard centre is a relatively new provision for pupils experiencing difficulties with their learning. Pupils receive the support they need so that they can reintegrate into their usual classes. Some of this support is beginning to have a positive impact.
- Pupils have access to high-quality careers advice and guidance. A careers fair improves pupils' knowledge of the range of opportunities that exist. Links with local employers are strong.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. The proportion of pupils excluded from school is much greater than the national average and is too high. Too many pupils miss their learning due to their poor conduct.
- A disproportionate number of disadvantaged pupils are excluded from school.
- Pupils' attendance is too low. Far too many pupils regularly miss school. Too many of the disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities fail to attend school.
- Pupil premium funding allocated to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is having limited impact. Many more disadvantaged pupils than other pupils nationally are absent from school.

- Some teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy in a consistent manner. In some lessons, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently clear and some pupils take advantage of this and misbehave.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities that are excluded from school has reduced but remains high.
- The number of pupils that are removed from lessons because of their poor behaviour has reduced. The number of times that senior leaders are called to support teachers in their management of pupils' behaviour has reduced greatly.
- Pupils are beginning to show care and pride in their work. Pupils' work in books is neat. Pupils discuss their achievements with pride.
- Leaders have focused much of their attention on improving the ethos of the school. The school is generally calm and well ordered. Pupils are smart in their uniforms. The many pupils that spoke with inspectors were bright, polite and articulate young people.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- In 2016, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the most able pupils, underachieved significantly across a range of subjects.
- In 2016, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, underachieved significantly and were in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally in English, mathematics and humanities at the end of key stage 4. They underachieved significantly in science.
- Disadvantaged pupils, who make up a large proportion of the pupils, do not make the progress they should. This means they do not achieve as well as others within school or when compared with other pupils nationally.
- The unvalidated examination results at the end of key stage 4 in 2017 indicate that pupils underachieved. Pupils' attainment in a range of subjects was once again extremely low, and particularly in mathematics and humanities subjects.
- Too many of the most able pupils did not achieve the grades in GCSE examinations that their starting points would indicate they were capable of achieving.
- Leaders' information indicates that the attainment of current pupils is improving in key stage 4. The difference between projected attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school is beginning to diminish. Disadvantaged pupils continue to make limited progress in a range of subjects, however.
- Leaders' information indicates that more pupils are achieving as they should in key stage 3 English and mathematics. More pupils are gaining the skills they require to move successfully to the next stage of their education.
- More of the current pupils in key stage 3 are achieving at a greater depth and are gaining the higher grades in English and in mathematics.
- Pupils that receive their education off-site and within alternative provision are being well supported and are making good progress.
- Leaders have more confidence in the accuracy of teachers' assessment than they previously had. Teachers have received training and support from the trust. They have

been involved in moderation activities to improve the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' examination work.

School details

Unique reference number	141335
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10035953

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Sponsored academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	719
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Simon Massarella
Headteacher	Ben Chaloner
Telephone number	0115 974 4444
Website	www.thefarnboroughacademy.co.uk/
Email address	admindept@thefarnboroughacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

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 Trent Academies Group.
- Some pupils receive their education at the alternative providers: Channelling Positivity, Thorneywood Education Base and Buxton Training Academy.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much higher than the average, at almost half of pupils.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- In 2016, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 37 lessons, some of which were seen jointly with senior leaders. During lesson observations, inspectors sampled pupils' books and talked to pupils to evaluate the quality of their learning. Inspectors also made short visits to tutor time and an assembly.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and as pupils moved around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised, in detail, a sample of pupils' books in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors held a number of meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer from the Trent Academy Trust. Telephone conversations were held with staff from the centres which provide alternative education for a small number of pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in meetings, in lessons and around the school at breaktime.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, its action plan, data on pupils' attainment and progress, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding procedures, evaluations of the quality of teaching, minutes of the governing body and school improvement reports.
- Inspectors took account of seven responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 32 responses to an online questionnaire for staff and 13 to an online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Russell Barr	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Sweeney	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Lyn-Cook	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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