

Holy Family Catholic Academy

Chatsworth Place, Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire, DN35 9NF

Inspection dates 24–25 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, key leaders and governors are ambitious for all students. Leaders constantly communicate high expectations about the quality of teaching and students' achievements.
- Standards are increasing rapidly as a result of significant improvements in teaching since the start of the academy.
- Most students begin Year 7 with well below average standards. While the standards they attain at the end of Year 11 are still below those seen nationally, the vast majority make good progress and achieve well.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is rising strongly. The proportions of students making more than expected progress in mathematics is close to that seen nationally.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to close achievement gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers by the time they leave school.
- Disabled students, those with special educational needs, and the few from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve equally well, overall.
- The small number of the academy's most-able students are also challenged to achieve well.
- Teaching is mainly good. Teachers benefit from regular training provided by staff in the academy, from external consultants and the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service.
- The behaviour of students around the academy, and in the large majority of lessons, is good. Students are friendly towards one another and their teachers, and highly welcoming to visitors.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure, on and off site, is good. Students are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves and others safe. Students facing intense personal challenges are especially well supported.
- The academy makes a strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. The array of visits and extra-curricular opportunities enhances students' self-esteem.
- The headteacher and Chair of Governors have managed efficiently the changes in the numbers of students on roll, as well as changes in staffing, since the start of the academy.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough students, especially those of average ability, make more than expected progress in English by the time they leave the academy.
- A small minority of teaching does not challenge all students to give of their best and respond to comments about how to improve their work.
- The progress students make in lessons is not always checked on carefully and work then adapted to meet their changing needs.
- When making judgements about the effectiveness of teaching, not all key leaders pay enough attention to the understanding and skills that different students develop in lessons and in their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons, one of which was observed jointly with a senior leader.
- Students' work was sampled informally in lessons in a wide array of subjects. In addition, English work from Years 9 and 10 was sampled separately by inspectors.
- Inspectors also scrutinised a number of documents, including the academy's own data relating to students' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors held meetings with students in Years 7 to 10, with governors and academy staff, including those with management responsibilities. Discussions also took place with a representative from the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents responding to the academy's own questionnaires, but there were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to consider. Inspectors also took account of the views of 14 members of the academy's staff through the inspection questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Hilary D'Arcy	Additional Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with a small minority from other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students who are supported through the pupil premium is well above the national average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding that schools receive to support those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- In 2014 the academy did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11 in English and mathematics.
- 15 students attend part-time or full-time education off the academy's site, in Park House and Phoenix House Pupil Referral Units, and at Newchase House, the DKM Group and CPO Media following motor vehicle, construction and media courses.
- An increasing number of students join the academy during term time.
- The school converted to an academy in September 2013.
- It is sponsored by the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service.
- Since the start of the academy, there have been significant changes in the number of students on roll, and in staffing, including middle leaders.
- The academy receives support from external consultants and the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further so that more students make good progress and gain higher GCSE grades, by ensuring that:
 - all lessons challenge and inspire all students to give of their best
 - all teachers check on students' understanding thoroughly before moving on to other planned activities in lessons
 - all students respond to teachers' comments about how to improve their work further
 - all middle and senior leaders check on the effectiveness of teaching over time, by paying more attention to how well different groups of students acquire knowledge, show understanding and develop key skills in lessons and in their work
- Increase the proportions of students making more than expected progress in English, especially those of average ability, by:
 - sharpening students' writing skills, especially their use of a wider range of specialist language and punctuation, and their sequencing of ideas into more complex sentences and extended paragraphs
 - maximising opportunities for all students to develop and apply their writing skills in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has managed the students' falling roll and significant changes in staffing since the start of the academy, including changes to middle leadership expertly. Staffing is now stable, and all leaders established in their roles.
- Under the headteacher's skilful direction, senior and middle leaders have refined procedures for gathering information about students' progress, and ensure that these are used effectively by most teachers to plan successful lessons, check on students' rates of progress, and tackle any underachievement early.
- Senior and middle leaders set positive examples for all staff. Leaders check on the quality of teaching using a range of information to assess its effectiveness on students' learning and progress over time. Leaders are equally rigorous in checking on the achievement, attendance and behaviour of students who attend off-site learning provision.
- However, not all leaders are equally rigorous in making judgements about the quality of teaching. This is because they do not all pay sufficient attention to the impact of teaching over time on individual students' progress and achievement, when they visit lessons and look at students' work.
- Well-tailored professional development provided by staff in the academy, from external consultants and from the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service, has enhanced the quality of teaching.
- Rigorous appraisal procedures ensure that the precise training needs of all teachers are continuously met.
- The headteacher makes robust decisions about teachers' movement up the salary scale on the basis of reliable information about the impact of their teaching on students' day-to-day learning.
- The academy has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. Leaders and managers produce detailed plans to improve the academy's work further. For example, they have identified the work still to be done to increase the numbers of students making more than expected progress in English, and to further improve teaching.
- Teachers know their students well. The academy is committed to ensuring that all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Overall performance gaps between disadvantaged and other students have closed notably since the start of the academy. Pupil premium funding is spent effectively in employing additional teaching staff in English and mathematics to provide additional support for students in small groups. Students who arrive part way through their secondary education are helped to settle quickly, with additional one-to-one teaching and pastoral support, as necessary.
- The curriculum is well planned to meet students' needs. Small-group work, one-to-one support, appropriate off-site learning opportunities, a broad range of subjects and strong personal, social, health and citizenship education lessons, prepare students well for life in modern Britain. Leaders promote the importance of freedom for all individuals and the significance of mutual respect, particularly for those from different faiths and cultures.
- Good independent careers education and advice, alongside Year 10 work experience, are influential in the increasing numbers of students that continue in education, employment or training when they leave the academy at the end of Year 11.
- Students access a wide array of sporting, musical and performance events and extra-curricular activities. Nationally acclaimed engineering successes and regional Rock Challenge awards; residentials at 'The Briars' and reflection days; caged football, climbing and archery; extensive charity work, all enrich students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They help to promote students' understanding of the importance of equality of opportunity.
- In providing these experiences, the academy emphasises the importance of good relations and ensures that any discrimination that may arise is tackled decisively.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet statutory requirements. Academy leaders are effective in identifying any students at risk of harm, at an early stage. Leaders engage well with the local authority's safeguarding board, and other agencies, to provide good support and care.
- Parents are supportive of the work of the academy. Staff forge useful links with families that are sometimes reluctant to come to the academy, and encourage parents to support their children's learning at home. For example, the academy's website has direct access to additional GCSE work for all subjects from individual examination boards, and mathematics homework activities for students in all years.
- The academy receives appropriate support from external consultants, and the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service, to improve further the quality of teaching and governance, as well as to provide an external check on its overall effectiveness.

■ The governance of the school:

- Under the guidance of an astute Chair of Governors, governance is effective in providing a good balance of support and challenge for the academy's leaders.
- Governors have supported the headteacher well in tackling the historic ineffective teaching successfully.
- Governors receive detailed information about the academy's work. This is presented in an accessible way and allows them to use national data to compare their academy with others. Consequently, governors have the necessary understanding that helps them to hold the headteacher and senior leaders to account for the impact of actions to improve students' achievement further.
- Detailed discussions take place in meetings about major spending decisions, in particular the allocation of pupil premium and Year 7 'catch-up' funding. For example, governors have authorised additional staffing and resources to support teaching literacy and numeracy in small groups.
- Governors have been rigorous in the arrangements that they have put into place to review the performance of the headteacher annually.
- They receive appropriate information about the performance targets set for teachers and check potential links with salary progression. They know that the headteacher will ensure that teachers receive financial reward only if students reach their challenging targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Their conduct around the academy is good. At breaks and lunchtimes, in the dining room and when moving between lessons, the vast majority of students are calm and sensible.
- Students are polite and friendly to each other, and welcoming of visitors. Most students enjoy positive relationships with the many adults who encourage their work and personal development.
- There is little low-level disruption in lessons. A large majority of students take pride in their work, keeping it neatly in books or folders. Occasionally, a few students become distracted when lessons fail to keep their interest.
- Academy council members and peer mentors take their responsibilities seriously. They help to maintain a calm and supportive atmosphere.
- The academy's information indicates that bullying and racist incidents are falling, and are now infrequent. Students say that any misdemeanours are addressed swiftly by staff. As a result, the academy's environment is clean and free from litter and graffiti. The academy's accommodation and specialist equipment are well respected by students.
- Attendance is improving and the vast majority of students arrive punctually and attend regularly.
- The behaviour and attendance of students attending off-site alternative placements is monitored closely and is good. The academy's leaders check on this by daily contact with their partners.
- Students, staff and parents report rare instances of bullying. All indicate that the academy deals with bullying effectively if it occurs. They also note that help is provided for the student responsible as well as their victim. This is fully in keeping with the strong pastoral care and restorative practices of the academy.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. This includes for those who attend alternative off-site courses.
- Students are aware of how to keep themselves and others safe. They receive frequent reminders through assemblies and personal and social development lessons about staying safe.
- Students understand the risks associated with social media and know how to keep themselves safe on line. They are conscious of potential risks posed by e-mails from unknown sources, and by surfing of unfamiliar and extreme websites.
- Sensitive teaching in religious education and citizenship addresses issues related to homophobic, racist and extremist views, as well as drugs, alcohol and substance abuse.
- Students say that they are well looked after. They emphasise that the academy's climate is one of openness in which their views are encouraged and listened to carefully by all staff and their peers.
- The academy works effectively with a range of agencies to ensure that potentially vulnerable young people are as safe as possible.
- Students relate well to one other, taking steps to ensure that peers are included in friendship groups and

in planned activities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is mainly good. Teachers communicate their good subject knowledge effectively, and readily share ideas about their teaching with other staff in the academy. As a result, students learn and achieve increasingly well.
- Most teachers plan interesting experiences to stimulate students and encourage enjoyment in learning. For example, in a Year 10 mathematics lesson, students were eager to exchange ideas about dealing with algebraic fractions, persevering very well with their calculations, and showing a readiness to justify and explain their answers. Similarly, Year 8 students were keen to find out why Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries, enthusiastically researching and categorising the main factors.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Students rise to the regular oral mathematical challenges that teachers pose, working out mental calculations with increasing confidence. In books, work over time shows opportunities for students to apply their mathematical knowledge and deepen their understanding to solve everyday problems.
- The teaching of reading is also good. Well planned use of tutor time, before the start of morning lessons, enable those who did not benefit fully from learning phonics, (the sounds letters make) earlier in their school career, to acquire skills they missed. Such initiatives are supported purposefully by the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding.
- The teaching of general literacy skills is good. In many lessons, students are encouraged to speak in full sentences, so that they rehearse what they want to say before writing. In English, teachers generally insist on the accurate spelling of common words and expressions. They show students different aspects of grammar, and how to write coherent sentences to convey key ideas and meaning.
- Opportunities are missed for students to develop and apply their writing skills in some subjects. There are some inconsistencies in the extent to which all teachers emphasise a wide range of specialist language and punctuation to achieve the required effect. Not all help students to sequence ideas into more complex sentences and detailed paragraphs.
- Relationships with students in lessons are good. Most teachers and teaching assistants know their students well. Teachers and teaching assistants generally plan well to meet students' different needs in the academy, and reinforce their learning with appropriate homework activities. As a result, the most-able learners, disadvantaged students, those with disabilities and special educational needs and the small minority from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well overall.
- There is good teaching in all subjects, especially in English, mathematics, humanities subjects and art. The academy's records indicate that teaching is equally good in all of the off-site provision.
- On occasions, teaching in some lessons does not motivate or challenge some students to think sufficiently about what they are learning and whether they can do even better. Students are sometimes moved on too quickly without having had sufficient time to make sense of what they have learnt.
- While many teachers provide regular and detailed comments on students' work, not all have high enough expectations of students' responses to their comments. As a result, a minority of students do not always challenge themselves enough to improve their initial work.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Many students start Year 7 with standards that are typically well below average. While standards attained at the end of Year 11 remain generally below average, including in English and mathematics, this represents good progress and overall achievement for many students, given their starting points.
- In 2014, the academy did not meet the government's floor standards. This was due to a minority of students who transferred to the academy late in Key Stage 4 with particularly complex problems, including limited fluency in English and who made expected, rather than good, progress.
- The academy's information and work in students' books indicate that students' general rates of progress across Years 7 to 11 are good and that present Year 11 students are working at a higher level than in 2014 at just below average.
- The proportions of students making expected progress in English and mathematics are rising rapidly, and are above national averages. The proportions making more than expected progress in both subjects are also increasing, but closer to national averages in mathematics than in English.
- Students' reading and general communication skills are honed well in many subjects. For example, in

history and geography students confidently scan written materials from a range of sources to find specific information and deepen their understanding. They read poems and plays in English fluently. A high proportion of students readily volunteer ideas in many lessons and justify their opinions. They listen attentively to the explanations of their peers and are willing to challenge each other's views in a sensible manner.

- Students' mathematical skills are equally well developed. Increasingly, they apply their mathematical knowledge to tackle problems in different subjects. They interpret data, capture information in appropriate graphs and charts, calculate orally with accuracy and measure with precision.
- Many students write fluently and convey ideas and opinions in a clear and engaging style. However, a minority do not write extensively, with a wide enough range of vocabulary and punctuation for effect. Some have not yet mastered the use of complex sentences, and well-judged paragraphs, to sequence their ideas effectively. Not enough of the average ability students challenge themselves enough to write in detail in all subjects.
- Students make good progress and achieve well in a growing number of subjects, notably English, mathematics, history, geography and art.
- Students with disabilities and special educational needs achieve well. They are well supported by the planned activities in lessons, and in small intervention groups by teaching assistants who understand their needs.
- The most-able students also achieve well overall. Increasingly, a large number are stretched appropriately in many lessons, including English and mathematics, and reach their challenging GCSE targets.
- The small minority of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, including the very few who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. Teachers and other adults support their understanding of the English language effectively and tailor work well to meet their specific needs.
- In 2014, the gap at the end of Year 11 in English between the proportion of disadvantaged students making expected progress and their non-disadvantaged peers in the academy was 31%; the gap with non-disadvantaged students nationally was 22%. In mathematics, respective gaps were each 27%.
- Disadvantage pupils are now making much better progress. The academy's information and current work in Year 11 students' books indicate that the in-academy gap in English has closed by over 15%, and is within 6% of the progress made by all students nationally. In mathematics, the progress of all students has risen considerably. As a consequence, the in-academy gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students has not closed substantially. However, the progress made by disadvantaged students is within 10% of all students nationally.
- For Year 11 in 2014, disadvantaged students' attainment in English was over one and a half GCSE grades behind others nationally, and over a full GCSE grade behind their peers in the academy. Inspection evidence indicates that these attainment gaps have closed to one GCSE grade, and just less than one GCSE grade, respectively.
- In mathematics, 2014 gaps for Year 11 students were over two GCSE grades behind others nationally, and over one and a half grades behind peers in the academy. Inspection evidence indicates that these attainment gaps have also closed to just over one GCSE grade, in both instances.
- Achievement gaps in other years between disadvantaged and other students, are largely closing.
- Good support is made available for students at risk of falling behind. For example, Year 7 catch-up funding is used to provide specialist resources and teaching. Students who join the academy part way through their secondary education settle quickly, benefitting from timely one-to-one specialist subject and pastoral support, as required. The academy's information on the impact of these measures shows good gains to date, especially in reading, writing and basic numeracy skills, for a large majority of students.
- The academy does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.
- The students who are educated off site in Park House and Phoenix House Pupil Referral Units, and who follow motor vehicle, construction and media courses at Newchase House, the DKM Group and CPO Media, achieve well. They gain worthwhile qualifications. The vast majority continue into education, training or employment at the end of Year 11.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139649
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	450280

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Krawiec
Headteacher	Louise Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01472 328888
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