School report

Inspection of Trinity Academy

Church Balk, Thorne, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN8 5BY

Inspection dates:	20 and 21 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	**Requires Improvement**
The quality of education	**Requires Improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Sixth-form provision	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. Older pupils who have attended the school for a number of years consider it to be much improved. Members of staff, parents and carers also share this view. Many accredit these changes to the school's new senior leaders.

Many lessons are purposeful and delivered in line with subject leaders' plans. However, the quality of teaching and learning is more consistent in older years, especially in the sixth form. Pupils stop studying some subjects at the end of Year 8. This means that some subject content is rushed and pupils do not remember as much new learning as they should.

The school provides a safe environment for pupils to learn. Pupils' behaviour, in and out of lessons, is courteous. Movement around the site is calm and well supervised. Pupils and staff respect the behaviour code of conduct. When incidents of poor behaviour occur, leaders take effective action in supporting pupils to address their wrongdoings.

Pupils are rewarded for positive behaviour, conduct and attendance. They know who to speak to if they have concerns and are confident they will be listened to. Instances of bullying, when they occur, are dealt with quickly and effectively.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

School leaders, including a new lead principal and a new head of school, have worked rapidly to improve many of the shortcomings they faced when taking over this school. They have been supported by other senior leaders from the Emmanuel Schools Foundation multi-academy trust. Members of the governing body also know the school well and have helped to provide stability during a period of transition at the school.

Almost all staff consider the school to be improving. They are proud to work for the school. Parents, carers and pupils speak positively about many of the changes implemented over time. The proportion of parents who would recommend the school has doubled since it was last inspected.

A new system for managing pupils' behaviour and attitudes has been launched. This is working well. The number of incidents of poor behaviour have reduced, as have the number of exclusions. Strategies to improve pupils' attendance, some of which are in their infancy, are already having a positive impact. The number of pupils accessing alternative provision is reducing.

The school curriculum is not always as ambitious as it could be. Although subject plans ensure all required topics are covered, some of this content is unnecessarily rushed because pupils do not study all subjects in Year 9. As a result, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for future learning. Although governors have

recently questioned leaders about pupils' curriculum entitlement, plans in place do not go far enough in acting on these concerns.

Leaders have introduced personalised support to help teachers improve the quality of their practice. Although pupils' experiences in lessons are improving, there remains some variability. Some teachers continually assess pupils, constantly helping to build a picture of what has been remembered. The intended end points in topics are clearly defined, and misconceptions are quickly identified and overcome. However, this is not consistent, especially in key stage 3 classes.

Teachers are provided with information and training to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many of these pupils' barriers to learning are addressed. However, not all staff have the same ambition for all pupil groups. For example, in English, there was a markedly lower level of ambition for pupils with lower levels of prior attainment.

Leaders' ambitions for sixth-form students are more evident. Students have access to a broad range of subjects. Sixth-form lessons have a sharp focus. Teachers consistently meet the needs of students and help prepare them for their next steps. There is mutual respect between teachers and sixth-form students throughout the school.

Pupils who need support to read fluently receive appropriate help. However, this is sometimes at the expense of fully studying all subjects in the national curriculum, notably modern foreign languages. This decision affects too many pupils, currently about a fifth of all pupils in Years 7 and 8. Leaders have more work to do to raise the profile of reading for pleasure for all pupils. This school priority is less well developed.

The school's work to strengthen pupils' personal development is well structured and is delivered effectively. Pupils have a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils and their families rate this aspect of school life. One parent of an older pupil commented, 'This is a school that has continued to provide many opportunities for my children since they joined in Year 7.' The school's careers programme, running from Year 7 to 13, is also well designed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are proactive in their approach to keeping pupils safe. They respond rapidly to concerns as they arise and engage with external support where appropriate. Leaders regularly check that pupils are safe, and feel safe, at school. They are committed to making improvements when opportunities arise. For example, the designated safeguarding lead has recently worked with sixth-form students to establish a lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans support group. All pupils are taught about important issues such as the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Leaders make all appropriate checks on staff working at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' ambitions for pupils in years 7 to 11 are not always as high as they should be. Some aspects of the school's curriculum are not well thought through. As a result, not all pupils have the same opportunities as each other. Pupils stop learning some subjects too soon, and some pupils do not have regular lessons in all subjects. Leaders must review the curriculum provision to ensure that it is appropriate and ambitious for all pupils.
- Since their appointment in summer 2020, senior leaders have reviewed the quality of teaching and taken action to address concerns. However, there remains some variation in teachers' implementation of subject plans, particularly in key stage 3. These differences mean that some younger pupils are not as well prepared for future learning. Leaders at all levels should ensure that the content of all subject plans is delivered as intended.
- Leaders have implemented systems for supporting weaker readers. However, the wider programme to promote reading to all pupils is less well developed. Many pupils do not read regularly. Leaders must now widen the scope of their reading programme to inspire all pupils to read for pleasure.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	135007
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10200639
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1305
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stewart McKinlay
Principal	Wendy Adeniji
Website	www.trinity-academy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 March 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Emmanuel Schools Foundation multi-academy trust.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of pupils at this school who are disadvantaged is above the national average.
- The school uses a small number of alternative providers to provide educational placement for some pupils. These include Journey Ed, Tute, St Wilfred's, YMCA, Dev Futures, Vega and Tao Activities.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders from the school and from the Emmanuel Schools Foundation multi-academy trust. Inspectors also met those responsible for governance, including representatives from the multi-academy trust's board of trustees, and the school's local governing body.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in English, mathematics, geography and art. As part of this, the inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, talked to pupils and reviewed their workbooks. Inspectors also met with several other subject leaders and visited lessons in a variety of subjects.
- The inspection team met with pupils from key stages 3, 4 and 5 to discuss their experiences at this school. This included some single-gender meetings. Inspectors also spoke to pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes and observed several extra-curricular activities. One inspector also met with the school's reading leader and observed reading intervention sessions.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors scrutinised records and the actions being taken to keep pupils safe. One inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed the support being provided to pupils with SEND.
- The inspection team took into account the 78 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 103 responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View, including all free-text comments.

Inspection team

James Duncan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector
Julian Appleyard	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Jones	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sue Vasey	Ofsted Inspector

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