

The Excel Academy opened in April 2014 as a converter academy. It is a rapidly growing 11-16 academy situated in Stoke-on-Trent and is part of the Alpha Academies Trust. The Academy is the school of choice for an increasing number of local parents and, consequently, it is now oversubscribed and has large cohorts in most year groups. It is the most popular school in the city for applications to year 7 in 2018, being the first comprehensive to receive and have to turn down more applications than the local grammar school.

The academy maintained a good Ofsted judgement in November 2016 and all leaders are now focused on achieving outstanding standards and outcomes. Progress 8 has been close to 0 for the past two years which confirmed the academy performance as 'average' with regards to DFE performance tables.

The core values of 'pride and respect' permeate through all areas of academy life and there is a drive to develop a growth mind-set with all stakeholders. The Principal and all leaders 'expect excellence' and promote an ethos of high standards of behaviour as a key driver to further raise standards. The SLT team are supported by a Group Chief Executive who operates across the Trust. The progress and impact of the work of the leadership team continues to be monitored closely by a very experienced and knowledgeable Governors' Executive Board, which meets every half term to hold senior and middle leaders to account.

Whilst the vast majority of students are white British, there is a small but increasing number of children from ethnic minority backgrounds. The ability level on entry is generally below national average but is moving towards a profile around national average. The proportion of students eligible for Pupil Premium is around 38%, well above the national average. 14% of students have an EHCP or are SEN K.

Characteristic	National	Excel	Comparison
Number on Roll	957	984	Average
% Disadvantaged	28.5%	38%	Above average
% students from minority ethnic groups	25.6%	17%	Below average
% students with first language not English	14.4%	10%	Below average
Deprivation indicator	0.22	0.29	Above average
Average point score KS2	28	27.7	Below average

The Trust and the Principal have set a vision to become an outstanding provider by 2019, a strategy outlined in the 2016-2019 Strategic Ambitions document. The mission is to make a lasting impact on the community with a language for learning that promotes 'growth mindset' with all stakeholders. The Academy 'expects excellence' in every aspect of academy life and this culture is clearly evident with students, staff and parents. Leadership has significantly increased the level of expectation and ambition required from all stakeholders within the Academy.

Procedures for self-evaluation, both at whole school and faculty level are now firmly embedded and work effectively. Leaders at all levels feel empowered and regular middle leader and focus group meetings ensure that all staff are engaged in the review and improvement process. Targets are SMART and challenging and the appraisal process provides clear accountability and expectations for all staff. Underperformance is addressed quickly. New leaders are now in place in previous areas of underachievement.

Improved communication with parents and carers continues and feedback from parents indicates that the vast majority now feel that the school is 'well led and managed'. The website, regular newsletters and the increased use of text messaging and emails to communicate with parents has resulted in parents feeling more engaged and involved with the life of the school, and changes to arrangements for parents' evenings have resulted in improved attendance at such events.

The academy has an above average cohort studying an EBacc curriculum which ensures students can access a good, well balanced and meticulously planned curriculum, providing a broad and interesting range of activities which meet their needs. The personalised nature of the curriculum provides well for all groups and abilities, and progressive skills in all English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects are being mapped for years 7-11, to support improvements in student outcomes.

Staff are given fortnightly briefings on relevant and up to date safeguarding issues and then these are also devised for parents and published on the website. The website is well developed with guidance for students, staff and parents in all aspects of safeguarding. E-safety is given high regard with regular assemblies, PSHE sessions advice and guidance and the drive to achieve accreditation for the work through 360 safe.

Indicated by:

- *Governors provide very effective support and challenge to leaders. They scrutinise data about achievement, attendance, behaviour and teaching and ask leaders searching questions as a result. Members of the 'oversight and scrutiny committee' have the expertise to interrogate assessment information and identify key strategic issues. They regularly visit the school to check on the impact of leaders' actions, and they use external expert advice well in areas where they feel they need it. (Ofsted 2016)*
- *Leaders at all levels understand their roles and responsibilities very well. Senior and middle leaders know that they are accountable for standards in their areas. Senior leaders are effective and respected by other members of staff. Middle leaders, several of whom have worked at the school for some time, form a united team who are committed to seeing their areas continue to improve. Leaders are meticulous and strategic in their use of data about all areas of the school's work. Data about progress, attendance, teaching and behaviour is collected regularly. Leaders then analyse it carefully to identify trends or areas of weakness. They also use it very effectively at an individual pupil level to identify when pupils are falling behind with their work. (Ofsted 2016)*

- All students are provided with effective information, advice and guidance on subjects to study from Year 9 onwards to ensure they have a progression pathway beyond Year 11. The Academy engages with a range of external stakeholders to deliver impartial Information Advice & Guidance and careers.
- *All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Policies, procedures and systems are highly effective, very well understood and followed diligently by staff. The high-quality leadership and attention to detail present elsewhere in the school are also evident in this area. (Ofsted 2016)*

Academy Improvement Priorities to become outstanding:

- Review and refine the leadership and staffing structure to ensure maximum effectiveness and value for money
- Succession planning - Embed leadership development opportunities for leaders at all levels
- Continue to offer support and challenge to leaders and staff at all levels maximise outcomes, particularly in underperforming areas.
- Determine a strategy to further rewards effective learning as well as good behaviour.
- Develop a detailed questionnaire for use with all parents/carers to inform current position and future planning
- Continue Parent Forum/Community engagement opportunities

Area: Outcomes

Grade: 2 Good

The academy's assessment information, confirmed by inspection evidence, shows that pupils in all years make increasingly strong progress from their starting points because of effective teaching in the majority of subjects including English and mathematics. Despite national changes to English & Maths in 2017 both departments have strong teams that have ensured that a favourable number of students attained Grade 4 and Grade 5 thresholds compared to national comparisons. Both departments collaborate well with each other and through trust associates to seek best practice and ensure assessment information is accurate.

The EBACC suite of subjects remain a focus area for the academy although there have been good improvements in the Science results in 2017. The quality of teaching is improving through changes in staffing and greater leadership capacity.

Performance of disadvantaged students is impressive with negligible difference in progress compared with their peers throughout the majority of year groups. This is due to a relentless focus on disadvantaged students progress through targeted spend on staffing and resources and regular key worker meetings to quality assure provision and evaluate impact. Key workers are also relentless in engaging parents and are showing emerging signs of impact with hard to reach parents.

The academy would like to improve the outcomes for the students who entered the academy as higher ability to ensure the progress made by the end of the key stage compared with that made nationally by similar students is at least achieved. A higher ability entitlement plan has been introduced this year, aimed at supporting all higher ability students from Y7-11. This is seen as a major focus area for the academy and much of the schools CPD and resources have been targeted to address this issue.

Indicated by:

2017 results:-

- 60% Grade 4+ in English and Maths, with 36% of students attaining Grade 5+ in English and Maths

- 26% Grade 4 EBACC certificate in 2017, showing a continued improvement from 18% in 2016
- Progress 8 score around national average
- Progress 8 disadvantaged gap is 0.1 and well above disadvantaged students nationally
- 63% and 72% respectively achieved a C+ in Science Core and Additional
- Only 1% of students achieved Grade 7+ in English & Maths

2018 Projected results:-

- 69% Grade 4+ in English and Maths (National average 59%) with 48% of students attaining Grade 5+ in English and Maths (National average 40%)
- 33% Grade 4 EBACC certificate
- Positive Progress 8 score
- Sustained Progress 8 disadvantaged gap of 0.1, with disadvantaged students achieving in line with other students
- EBACC Baccalaureate Pillar residuals of – Science 0.0, Humanities -0.22

Intervention is strategically planned and shows improving evidence of student progress. Year 11 are provided various interventions including a study room which was open until 5pm daily; daily tuition in EBACC subjects; holiday revision programme, and this together with reformed curricular with an emphasis of content recall and skill development provides a good structure for students to achieve. Students in other year groups are also supported by intervention programmes (eg.Y7 catch up) which result in students largely being on target in the majority of subjects in each year group.

Indicated by:

- Over 50% of students in Y11 are involved in at least one tuition per week, with over 80% of these being higher ability students
- The Y11 study room is attended by approximately 15% of the Y11 each day
- Maths Tuition students improved $\frac{1}{2}$ grade on average from the mock to final exam in 2017
- Tuition programmes in English; Maths; Geography and Science helped to improve students achievement by over half a grade from Sept '17-Dec' 17.

Strong assessment processes such as the introduction of termly Spiral assessments have increased the rigour and accuracy of assessment and allowed leaders and teachers to identify appropriate provision to support students in achieving aspirational targets set by the academy. Question Level Analysis following each spiral assessment supports teachers planning to address weak areas. To complement subject areas the pastoral team help students to identify subjects students may need to target, through the completion of 'Student Action Plans'. These are revisited on a half termly basis so that students can reflect on their progress and adjust their plans if necessary.

Indicated by:

- Projections in 2017 were accurate for many areas including:-
 - Grade 4+ in English & Maths, which were identical to outcomes
 - Actual expected Progress 8 was less than 0.1 from projections
 - Subjects such as 3d Design; Art; Photography; Textiles; English Lit; Maths; Spanish; Performing arts and most Sciences were less than 1/5 of a grade difference to projected
 - All subject areas are now using Question Level Analysis after each Spiral Assessment with every year group.
- Moderation reports show little or no mark adjustment from external moderators
- SLT Quality assurance of Student Achievement Action plans show student awareness of strengths, weaknesses and actions to support improvements in a range of subjects from students across a range of subjects

The curriculum offered is refined annually to reflect the cohort and meet external demands. The academy has a strong record of supporting the uptake of the EBACC suite of subjects for a large proportion of the students and this has placed us as the second highest attaining

academy in Stoke-on-Trent for EBACC attainment, whilst ensuring we are in a good position for government expectations in regards to student take up in the future. Just under half of our students take the EBACC suite of subjects which is well above the national average. The arrival of new curriculum 1-9 courses has been strategically planned across the trust and the academy has worked well with our partner schools and external support such as PIXL to ensure students are prepared for the new style exams. The academy works hard to ensure there is a wide mix of subjects which students can enjoy and achieve in, such as:- BTEC's; academic GCSE's; VCERTs; specialist BTEC's delivered externally, and this is reviewed each year during the KS4 Pathway process.

Indicated by:

- In 2018, over 50% of students are entered for the EBACC suite of subjects,
- Our curriculum offer encourages the uptake of EBACC for the high and middle ability through a pathway students are expected to follow
- Schemes of work, from long term planning to topic planning are reviewed as good practice by external reviewers such as St Josephs Academy.

Academy Improvement Priorities to become outstanding:

1. Improve and refine the curriculum, through opportunities for challenge and engagement, especially for higher ability students
2. Improve accuracy of summative assessment information through collaboration across the CAT
3. Improve outcomes for higher ability through effective Higher ability Intervention entitlement plan in all areas of the academy
4. Explore and develop effective teaching strategies and processes for preparing students for summative assessments and supporting students with areas of improvement
5. Accelerate progress of Y7 on entry, through transition projects between Y6 & 7 in English & Maths
6. Reduce gaps between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged students through effective entitlement package
7. Build a culture of Achievement success by exploring key growth mindset characteristics of successful students/people

Area: Learning and Teaching

Grade: 2 Good

Teaching over time across the academy is good with the vast majority of staff demonstrating sustained good practice. Lesson observation data confirms teaching and learning is good, however work scrutiny and outcomes show that a small number of areas require improvement. The vast majority of teachers have high expectations of students and plan and deliver lessons which ensure good outcomes. Stretch and Challenge, particularly of high ability students is a focus and staff have accessed training since September on this area and will continue to be supported in developing strategies that will extend our high ability students to bring their achievement in line with national achievement for these students. Formative assessment is used in lessons to identify under performance and misconceptions quickly and to plan for future lessons.

Indicated by:

- Learning walk evidence from both HoF, T&L team, external partners and SLT
- Lesson observations – including developmental observations completed by peers addressing focusing on stretch and challenge.
- Student voice completed by HoF and T&L team focusing on stretch and challenge

CPD sessions are created using a detailed diagnostic of all teachers' teaching practice. The diagnostic is visible for all middle leaders, supporting staff collaboration and support. Staff are encouraged to use the CPD not only to develop their practice but also to share best practice. This is also used to identify staff strengths and these staff are then employed to support peers across the Academy. Staff access external CPD largely through partnership with PiXL. However, Andy Griffiths provided training for staff in January on 'Teaching Backwards' with a focus on planning with the end assessment always in mind. Internal CPD and collaboration through the Trust has been considerably thorough and has reduced the need for external courses. The Teaching and Learning team support the development of teaching and learning by offering CPD opportunities according to whole school needs as well as coaching teachers to sustain good practice. They have been integral to the delivery of CPD across the academy.

Indicated by:

- Morning CPD sessions, in particular, have proved successful with attendance rising to 22 members of staff in January (from an average of 7 staff in Autumn term).
- Internal CPD sessions on stretch and challenge, questioning and improving student responses to SWANs have all seen an improvement of over 30% in the diagnostic.
- The cost of external CPD in 2016-17 was £1500 and there was a decrease in costs from 2015-16 to 2016-17 of over £5000.

Teachers frequently mark students' work and are becoming increasingly aware of how to evidence and support progress over time. Students are provided with strengths, weaknesses and next steps using a criteria based methodology. Moderation of work has developed to include moderation at department and Trust level to ensure that work is standardised and accurately assessed. This also includes moderation from external agencies. Feedback to students is generally timely and there is evidence of a dialogue between staff and student within the books which demonstrates that progress has been made. Staff and students are familiar with 'Excel Time' and the Academy is moving towards greater consistency in the application of this improvement time. Students respond in green pen to teachers' comments and this subsequent work is then checked against targets set. The quality of staff feedback is improving in consistency after considerable CPD focus. All staff have accessed training that focused on writing purposeful comments that students could respond to. Further training on this will continue in 2017-18.

Indicated by:

- Student voice indicates that staff mark and return work on a regular basis within the 8-10 lesson time frame.
- Work scrutiny by SIP identified areas for improvement within the Science Faculty. Training was given during the Summer term and whole staff training in September. Further work scrutiny in this area has been completed at department and SLT level. In the Science Review, in December 2017 an external reviewer commented on the consistency of how students receive feedback – an area that had required improvement.

Teachers set homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning and prepares pupils well for work to come. The use of Show My Homework has further developed this area and made it easier for parents and carers to support students. Homework has been developed to incorporate the use of Knowledge Organisers at Year 7 and 11 with a view to rolling this out across the school. This is to support students in developing their long term memory and teach them self-quizzing and revision skills from September of Year 7. All subjects have produced Knowledge Organisers and these are easily available for both students and parents to find on the website.

Indicated by:

- Reports from SMHW indicate that use of the website by staff has been above national average for SMHW use in each month since September 2017.
- Use by parents is largely in line with national average
- Use by students needs to improve by around 10% to bring it in line with the national use.

Literacy is supported in the Academy through regular training for staff. A consistent approach to marking for Literacy is embedded and there is a focus on developing oracy – in particular to stretch the top ability. Students who are below chronological reading age are identified when they enter the Academy and all students are tested twice a year to ensure that Reading intervention is timely and that all staff can support with Reading. All students in Year 7 and 8 have an hour a fortnight of Accelerated Reader and also access this in form time and in one lesson per week for 15 minutes. A buddy system is in place to support weaker readers and there is further intervention carried out in small groups to support disadvantaged students.

Indicated by:

- Learning and teaching diagnostic indicates that staff are using the Literacy codes when marking books. This needs to be extended to ensure that extended writing is taught consistently across the Academy.
- STAR reading test data.
- Accelerated Reading quiz data

Academy Improvement Priorities to become outstanding:

- Ensure all Teaching is good or better (with the exception of NQTs and those training to become teachers) with increased proportion of outstanding teaching
- Developmental T&L training driven by middle leaders and quality assured by SLT
- Students below expected chronological reading age to access intervention (TA intervention groups / Accelerated Reading lessons / form tutor support / Reading buddies) to support rapid progression
- High ability students are consistently challenged in lessons (through challenging lesson outcomes, effective feedback and focused homework) to allow them to make improved progress.

Area: Personal Development and Welfare

Grade: 2 Good

Attendance and Punctuality

Students value their education and are proud to attend the Academy. Attendance is above national and local average. Clear procedures are in place to monitor attendance and effective intervention strategies have led to a downward trajectory in the percentage of PA students. The attendance of Disadvantaged students is higher than the national average for similar students, whilst EAL and LAC students have an excellent attendance level, which indicates the value they place on education and is testament to the support structures in place for these students to ensure the Academy is a place they enjoy attending.

Punctuality to school is on an upward trajectory with a robust monitoring and sanction system in place. The new sanctioning process introduced during 2016-17, had an immediate impact on the number of students arriving late to school. In the few cases of lateness Heads of Year intervene swiftly, ensuring the issue is addressed and the student rectifies the problem. Stronger sanctions are put into place for repeat offenders and parents are asked in for a meeting to address the issue.

Indicated by:

- The whole school attendance puts the school in the top 35% nationally.
- The attendance of Disadvantaged students has risen to 94.34% which is 2.84% higher than similar students nationally.
- The attendance of the Academy's EAL students is 96.57% which is above the national average for all students.
- The attendance of the Academy's Looked after Children is 97.52% which is also much higher than the national average.
- The attendance of students with SEN has also improved to 94.15% which is 1.65% higher than SEN students nationally.

- Punctuality to school records show there has been a dramatic decrease regarding students late to school since the same day detention system was introduced.
- The number of students who were repeatedly late, has now decreased.

Behaviour & Exclusions

The behaviour and safety of students at The Excel Academy is Good. Students' conduct and behaviour reflects the Academy's effective strategies to promote high standards. The Academy's key values of Pride and Respect are integral to all aspects of Academy life, and have been the driving force in improving standards. The Growth Mindset principles introduced last year have now become embedded in the hourly register scores, thus we monitor the 'Mindset for Learning' of every student in every lesson. These principles are part of our weekly assembly themes and are taught explicitly via our SMSC programme for all year groups.

The Academy looks to reward positive behaviour at all times and uses its 'Order of Merit' system to celebrate and reward positive behaviour in the classroom and beyond. Immediate reward ie Praise Postcards, Merit stamps are very well received by students and enhances the relationship between the Academy and parents.

Behaviour outside lessons is good. There is a calm and orderly environment where the students' pride in the Academy is shown by their excellent conduct, manners, punctuality and smart appearance. High visibility of staff at lesson changeover and during break ensures students move with purpose to their next lesson and socialise maturely during break and lunch. In some year groups form tutors are working collaboratively to provide further extra-curricular opportunities for students during lunchtime to engage the students in an enriched provision. This supports existing provision and helps to manage the growing number of students on roll during unstructured time.

Pastoral systems are well embedded and are appreciated by students and parents. The Academy is empowering students to take more responsibility for their learning equipment and a new system has been introduced to reduce the level of dependence on staff to provide equipment in lessons.

Students have a vast range of leadership opportunities at the Academy and are supported in these roles to ensure the skills they require are developed to good effect. The students contribute fully to discussions about their Academy and are able to input into the development of initiatives within the Academy.

Exclusion rates for the current Academic year are much reduced when compared with last year and are below the national average for secondary schools. This is despite the Academy having seen an influx of challenging students directed to us, some of whom have struggled to meet the standards and expectations of the Academy. Excel will not compromise on its high standards and continues to deal with poor behaviour swiftly and appropriately. The Academy has introduced strategies to help reduce repeat exclusions, and has strengthened its Behaviour Support provision with the employment of a Behaviour Support Manager, who works with some of our most vulnerable students who are considered to be at risk of exclusion.

Indicated by:

- Feedback from learning walks including a recent Governor Learning Walk with a focus on Behaviour for Learning and Corridor Standards.
- The launch of the Mindset for Learning poster which is the fundamental guide combining Growth Mindset and positive behaviour.
- The findings of Ofsted during their most recent inspection (November 2016).
- Weekly behaviour data analysis, shows the number of low level behaviour incidents are rare and daily analysis of students' uniform and equipment ensures standards are continually high.
- The number of students eligible to take part in Rewards activities has increased significantly indicating the increase in behaviour standards across the Academy.

- Observed behaviour of students around the Academy during unstructured times.
- Visitors to the Academy comment on the attitudes and behaviour of our young people. In a similar way, we receive many positive comments following school visits and trips.
- A growth in the Student Leadership programme, in conjunction with the Pixl Edge programme, has provided further opportunities for the development of Prefects, Peer Mediators, Ambassadors, Reading Ambassadors, Form Captains, Sports Captains, Student Executives and Year Councils.
- Fixed term exclusions have reduced significantly with a much lower percentage of students having received an FTE this year.
- Exclusion events have reduced by over 50% compared to last year.
- Excellent parental feedback received relating to the work of the Behaviour Support Manager.
- Improved behaviour data of students working with the Behaviour Support Manager.

Safeguarding and student welfare

Students report that they feel safe around the Academy. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Policies, procedures and systems are highly effective, very well understood and followed diligently by staff. Bullying is rare and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Students are offered a wide variety of support if they are identified through referral meetings or through the self-referral process. The Academy is committed to celebrating equality and diversity to ensure all students feel included in the school community. Families are supported by the school through Early Help action plans, parental support groups, useful links on the Academy website and Safeguarding briefings.

Indicated by:

- Student voice – 97% said they feel safe in school.
- Reporting systems such as 'My Concern', Student help button and the blue Bullying button
- Number of students accessing support internally or via external agencies
- Student leadership groups for equality and diversity, anti-bullying ambassadors and peer mediators
- Number of CP, CIN and Early Help plans

Personal Development

The Academy assembly schedule, in addition to constructive form time routines and increased curriculum time for SMSC, ensures students are acutely aware of how good attitudes and behaviour contribute to school life, adult life and life in modern Britain. Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural learning is part of the daily routine of every student and the profile of SMSC across the curriculum has been developed during 2016-17, leading to more lesson time added to the Year 9 curriculum. Academy values are discussed explicitly on a weekly basis in form time across all year groups. The Academy actively promotes British Values which are taught implicitly in all curriculum areas and Year 7 continue to receive the Game On programme of study from Reveal Theatre, which dissects the Prevent agenda in an interactive, age appropriate way, encouraging community cohesion through tolerance and respect. All students understand the necessity to follow rules, show respect for others and their opinions, and they embrace the beliefs and cultures of others.

The Careers co-ordinator has completed a comprehensive audit of CEIAG across the Academy as part of our move towards Quality Award accreditation. Liaison with the BITC, LEP and CEC is ensuring that a comprehensive package of CEIAG is being received by every year group.

Indicated by:

- SMSC values of the Academy displayed in every classroom and discussed regularly in form time and during Assemblies.
- Students being involved in a range of activities within the Academy designed to raise understanding of life in Modern Britain (mock elections, a range of charity fundraising events and activities, external speakers, enrichment activities, World Women's Day etc).
- Collaborative work between the SMSC lead at the Academy and the lead across the Trust.

- Completion of a Health Related Questionnaire in association with the LA to steer SMSC provision to meet the needs of the school.
- Challenging and thought provoking PSHE sessions addressing essential topics such as drugs and alcohol awareness, anti-social behaviour and its dangers, child sexual exploitation, internet safety.
- Successful integration of Game On into the Academy calendar for Year 7.
- Movement towards achieving the Quality Award accreditation.

Academy Improvement Priorities to become outstanding:

- To reduce the number of fixed term exclusions and ensure that they are more effective in improving the behaviour of those students.
- To improve the Attendance of key sub groups, bringing all students closer to the National Average, and ensure the Academy's attendance as a whole remains in the top 30% of schools nationally.
- To further reduce the level of Persistent Absenteeism for key sub groups.
- To ensure punctuality to lessons is outstanding.
- To further increase Student Leadership opportunities across the Academy, developing an ethos of personal responsibility and ownership amongst students.
- To enhance careers guidance by working in association with the BITC and LEP, and providing opportunities for students to work alongside businesses and local enterprises.
- To ensure the SMSC provision for all students is outstanding.
- To ensure that any form of bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively, so that all students feel safe and happy.
- To ensure unstructured time is calm and safe in all areas of the Academy.
- To review the behaviour culture within the Academy to contribute towards the next steps in ensuring students, staff and parents continue to be committed to creating an outstanding learning environment.

The Overall Effectiveness of The Excel Academy is

Grade 2: Good

Summary Judgements

Key Aspect	Judgement
• The quality of leadership and management	Good (2)
• The outcomes of students at the school	Good (2)
• The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good (2)
• Personal development, behaviour and safety	Good (2)

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The Principal, supported by highly effective senior leaders, know the school very well, including its many strengths and fewer weaknesses. When issues arise, through thorough analysis of data and careful attention to detail you tackle them swiftly and successfully. For example, you quickly identified and remedied the reasons for some pupils' disappointing GCSE English results in 2015. Consequently, there was a sharp improvement in 2016, with pupils making very strong progress in English. (Ofsted 2016)

Achievement and progress in 2016 and 2017 in most subjects met national expected progress and progress 8 was close to 0. This confirmed the academy performance as 'average' with regards to DFE performance tables. There is a clear focus on improving outcomes in Ebacc subjects with a particular focus on Humanities and also the achievement of higher ability students. Current projections suggest progress 8 should be above 0 this year.

Performance in the Basics has been in line with national for the past two years. Performance in the EBACC is above national average and is improving. The academy is well aware of strengths and areas for development and has clear actions plans to address areas for improvement.