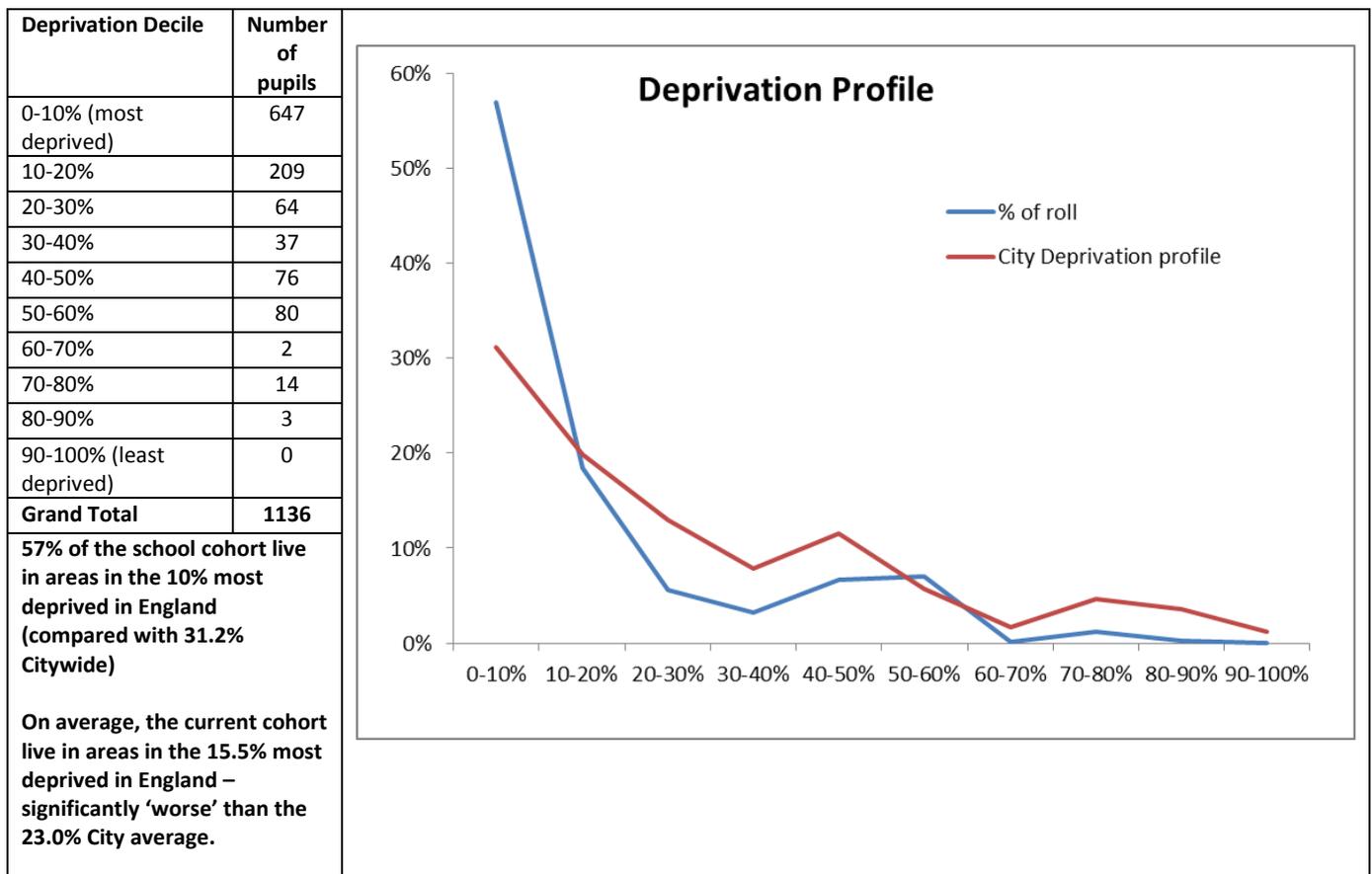


Position Statement and Characteristics of the Discovery Academy

The Academy is part of the College Academies Trust, a Multi Academies Trust sponsored by Stoke-on-Trent College. The Discovery Academy was created in 2011 from the merger of two predecessor schools, Edensor Technology College and Mitchell High School. The Academy relocated to a new purpose built school in September 2013. It is a larger than average 11-16 academy situated in the Bentilee area of Stoke-on-Trent, an area of very high deprivation and unemployment with an IDACI rank of 511 (see below).

Current Academy Cohort by Deprivation Characteristic



Whilst the vast majority of students are from white British families, there is still a significant number from ethnic minority backgrounds although this number has steadily reduced since the move to the new site in September 2013. The ability level on entry is significantly below average and the proportion of students eligible for Pupil Premium has risen steadily to 59%, well above the national average of 28.5%. Over 15% of students have a special educational need (SEN), statement education health and care (EHC) plan or are SEN support.

Significant restructuring of staff has taken place since 2011 and during the period from September 2013 – July 2015 a number of weaker staff have left the Academy to be replaced by good and outstanding teachers – significantly improving the standard of teaching across the Academy. The introduction of the new Behaviour for Learning system, revised curriculum and an extensive CPD programme raised standards considerably. Reports from external consultants and DfE advisers has confirmed the transformation in culture and ethos. These improvements have been highlighted most recently in the Ofsted inspection (Oct 2016), where teaching, Personal Development Behaviour and

Welfare, and leadership were all graded as good. Outcomes is set to improve as students spend more time in the improved provision.

The Principal took up position in January 2016 with a proven track record in Senior Leadership by helping move a school to good from special measures in less than two years. Other additions complemented a renewed SLT team and include a new Vice Principal (Maths) and an Assistant Principal (English) who both led outstanding Maths and English strategies at their previous schools. The new SLT Team are supported by a Group Chief Executive that operates across the College Academies Trust (CAT) and the impact of the work by the leadership team continues to be monitored closely by a Governors' Executive Board, which meets every 2 weeks to hold senior and middle leaders to account.

Figure 1. Basic Characteristics of Discovery

Characteristic	National	Discovery	Comparison
Number on Roll	957	1030	Above Average
% free school meal eligibility	28.5%	31%	Above average
% students from minority ethnic groups	25.6%	12.9%	Below average
% students with first language not English	14.4%	8.5%	Below average
Deprivation indicator	0.22	0.39	Well above average
Average point score KS2	27.9	26.7	Below average

“Leaders have created a positive ethos, have identified the right priorities and are tackling weaknesses robustly. As a result, the school is improving”

Ofsted inspection October 2016

Leadership since 2014 has significantly increased the level of expectation and ambition required from all stakeholders within the Academy. The relentless focus to raise standards, supported by effective processes has driven a strong 3 year improvement trend. The Trust and the Principal has 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.

Summary

Leadership is not yet outstanding because we need to:

- Secure substantial improvement in progress for disadvantaged students
- Ensure the effective deployment of staff and resources including the Pupil Premium and SEN funding to secure excellent outcomes for students
- Develop closer links with parents and use their views, along with those of students and staff to gain a deep, accurate understanding of the Academy’s effectiveness
- Develop outstanding Teaching and Learning where all staff are deeply involved in their own professional development

Governance of the Academy

The Academy is part of the College Academies Trust (CAT) which has established a Trust Board and local governing bodies. The Chair of the Discovery Academy local governing body is a Director of the Trust Board. The Trust has commissioned reviews of Pupil Premium, Governance and annual external reviews of Learning and Teaching/Faculty standards. The Governors are ambitious for all students and have a strong strategic vision for the Academy. They understand the role and bring a wide range of high-level skills and expertise, undertaking regular training to ensure their ability to fulfil the role. Governors visit the Academy regularly conducting learning walks, Governors’ Executive Board meetings and holding leaders to account through performance management. Governors are confident in analysing the detailed data available and as a consequence they have a clear understanding of the Academy’s strengths and weaknesses. The Ofsted inspection evaluated “governors are relentless in their drive for higher standards. Their support and challenge are effective in improving current standards” *Ofsted Inspection October 2016*

Leadership Team

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team have a clear understanding of the issues at the Academy and have implemented strong and effective systems to monitor performance, improve outcomes and create a calm and orderly community to support effective teaching and learning. HMI monitoring inspections and external reviews from outstanding Trusts validate leadership judgments that teaching, Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare, and leadership are good. Outcomes are showing clear improvement and will compare more favourably by the summer 2017 results.

There has been a major CPD focus over the past 18 months on developing all leaders at every level. In addition a number of staff are currently engaged in or have completed the NPQML and Future Leaders programmes. The Middle Leadership Team has been strengthened by appointments of a new Head of Maths (September 2015), Head of English (September 2016), Director of Humanities (January 2017).

Teaching

DfE and HMI/Ofsted reports have consistently reported on the rapid improvement in the quality of teaching. Performance management is used effectively to impact on outcomes and linked to a set of ‘non-negotiables’, which is supported by an extensive programme of personalised CPD highly valued

by staff. Teaching staff have developed a growth mindset and are always seeking ways to improve their practice and share good practice.

Curriculum and Information Advice & Guidance

A good, well balanced and meticulously planned curriculum provides students with 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.

Good partnership arrangements with the local colleges - particularly the Trust Sponsor Stoke-on-Trent College - have had a positive impact on students attending college based courses. In addition the integration of the Studio Colleges offering vocational pathways in Construction & Engineering, and Manufacturing & Design provides academy students with a broad range of options at Key Stage. 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

The Academy focuses heavily on the key values of Pride and Respect and this is reinforced regularly and links closely to fundamental British values. The PSHE programme is detailed and well planned, successfully linking a daily tutorial session, subject lessons and academy assembly programme. Ofsted have reported that this approach “successfully fosters good relations and makes sure that any discrimination is robustly tackled”. Students understand bullying and feel that incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Ofsted reported “Students feel safe, are safe and know how to keep themselves free from danger in a range of situations, including in relation to radicalisation and extremism” *Ofsted Inspection October 2016*

Behaviour and Attendance

The Behaviour for Learning strategy has raised standards of behaviour significantly to the point where the Academy is a calm and orderly environment, students dress smartly and are polite and helpful. Students behave well and have good attitudes to learning so that low level disruption in lessons is rare. All students take care and pride in the Academy and behave sensibly, ensuring a calm and orderly environment, and students feel safe and secure in the Academy. Changes implemented since 2014 have resulted in significant improvements in attendance which is now at the City average. However, the number of students who don't regularly attend is still too high and is a key improvement focus for the Academy.

Parental engagement

The Discovery Parent Voice has been a focus for improvement and in January 2016 the Academy launched a parent forum that meets regularly to discuss key issues. From this the Academy has developed a clear strategy for improving parental communication and involvement. In March 2016 the Academy introduced regular evening sessions to support parents and provide information that will help them support their children at home.

Community Engagement

Once a month the Academy hosts a community meeting which involves a wide range of community organisations consisting of councillors, community members, primary schools, local housing associations, the church, charities, youth workers and students. The group meets to discuss all issues arising and sub groups work together on a variety of projects to help deal with issues in the community, raise awareness and to run community events. Students in the school also create a community newsletter that is distributed throughout the community using social media. The aim of the groups is to raise aspirations and to connect more directly with the issues the community faces.

Safeguarding

Comprehensive checks are carried out to ensure that the Academy's arrangements for safeguarding are robust. Arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory arrangements. “The well-being and safety of pupils are given the highest priority.” *Ofsted 2016*

“The work being undertaken to strengthen and enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the Academy is impressive” DFE visit January 2016

Teaching at the Discovery Academy was judged ‘Good’ by Ofsted October 2016. This follows a teaching and learning profile which has been recognised for its continued improvement year on year. Historically, the Academy has strived to overcome a legacy of poor teaching, as a consequence adopting a systematic approach, where ‘non-negotiables’ were embedded into teaching by staff. Non-Negotiables in place, the Academy has continued to improve the profile of teaching and learning to raise standards further by ‘Expecting Excellence’, through enhanced subject knowledge, bespoke planning, in-class intervention, challenge, targeted questioning; all supported by a culture of Growth Mind Set.

Quality of Teaching is not yet outstanding because teachers need to demonstrate:

- Continued enhancement of knowledge and deeper understanding of the subjects / syllabus they teach, in order that they may stretch and challenge students even further
- Use ‘language for learning’ (growth mindset) which guides and motivates students to become resilient to failure in order for them to thrive in lesson and increase confidence
- That homework deepens understanding

Ofsted acknowledged significant improvements to the teaching and learning within the Academy, where *‘higher-quality learning and outcomes’* were evident and teaching staff have *‘good subject knowledge’* Ofsted 2016. Indeed, a continued focus on ‘high -challenge’ within the classroom has increased levels of engagement and thinking, not only through active learning (Kagan) but also through effective differentiation and directed questioning. *‘Tasks challenge pupils to deepen and extend their knowledge, skills and understanding... stretching the learning of the most-able pupils. Good quality questioning... is clearly evident.’* Ofsted 2016.

In addition, a ‘Growth Mind Set’ approach underpins our ‘Expect Excellence’ culture. Staff deliberately tailor their language to support learning and change the mindset of our students to succeed and increase their confidence to *‘challenge themselves to excel’* Ofsted 2016. Continued CPD supports the focuses on ‘Language for Learning’ providing strategies to encourage challenge, engagement, motivation and resilience so that *‘Positive relationships between teachers and pupils foster good attitudes to learning.’* Ofsted Oct 2016.

Homework is embedded and regularly set and extending the learning of the classroom. Lead Practitioners support staff and have focused CPD on setting challenging and targeted homework, which aims to consolidate and deepen the independent learning of the student.

Similarly, Literacy is a successful continued focus of the Academy and is embedded well across school. Indeed, Literacy marking features significantly in our marking policy and is executed thoroughly by all staff, across all subjects. *‘Marking continues to be strengths of the school’s work’* HMI June 2016. Typically, 70% of students join the Academy with very low literacy skills (reading). Students have frequent reading opportunities and targeted literacy interventions have resulted in students quickly improving their reading ability, with many students now reading at chronological age and above, in both KS3 and 4. *‘Pupils benefit from a good range of opportunities to extend their reading and writing skills across subjects. More pupils are now making better progress as a result.’* Ofsted 2016

The Lead Practitioner for Numeracy frequently continues to raise the profile of Numeracy across the whole academy to ensure it features firmly as a learning expectation. In addition, whole academy challenges, regular CPD and departmental support is quickly changing attitudes to numeracy and increasing confidence levels, whilst a number of strategies are now embedded across the Academy. *‘Departments are aware of the role they play in improving pupils’ confidence in numeracy.’* HMI June.

Staff are expected to know their students; plan and target accordingly, ensuring the school ethos of 'Expect Excellence' is reinforced '*Pupils are expected to challenge themselves to excel*' Ofsted 2016. The 'Approaches to Teaching and Learning' booklet, details changes, challenges and expectations within the classroom and is a point of reference to for staff. In addition, a programme of regular CPD workshops and 'drop-in' forums (Created for the teacher by the teacher) continues to develop a sharing culture and improve teaching standards "*Teachers have good subject knowledge*" Ofsted Oct 2016. Faculties have calendared 'Faculty Inset' to enhance further, the provision of CPD, led by Lead Practitioner's. The investment and deployment of the Lead Practitioners, is key to driving up standards and improve the depth and breadth of subject knowledge within faculties, across the academy and the Trust.

In June 2016, a number of strategy groups were created across the Trust to support CPD and raise standards in Teaching and Learning, Maths and English. The Teaching and Learning Strategy Group has a proactive and growth mindset approach to the improvement and consistency of teaching, learning and assessment across the Trust and have met termly to share good practice and evaluate processes. Indeed, recently a 'Learning Directory' has been created to identify where CPD can be exchanged across the Trust. This concept is also extended to departmental support and reviews.

In the continued drive to improve further, the Discovery Academy values external input from other practitioners. Every faculty has been reviewed by either an SLE or Ofsted Inspector. The outcome of these reviews evaluated a more bespoke picture in the quality of teaching. Where development areas remain or advice to enhance further, faculty action plans have been updated with actions supported by specialist SLE's and follow up reviews scheduled. The George Spencer Academy, an outstanding school, conducted a whole academy review / health check in March 2016 and November 2016 and confirmed rapid, secure progress had been made against recommended actions and the overall picture of Teaching and Learning across the Academy. The report stated "*Teaching and Learning at the Discovery Academy are characterised by an achievement culture focused on high aspiration*" and this was supported by 80% of observations (validating internal monitoring) that showed good or better learning over time.

Improvements to teaching, learning and assessment have ensured the Academy has not only reversed declining standards significantly over the years to now having received a 'good' judgement, but also relentlessly endeavours to raise standards further. Indeed, there has been an improving trend demonstrating a sustained consistency to the improvement of the teaching and learning across the Academy. Current achievement analysis combined with lesson observation and work scrutiny triangulates that over 80% of teaching is now good or better.

“Pupil’s have good attitudes to learning. They are good ambassadors for the school” Ofsted, October 2016

Student personal development, behaviour and welfare is good, there have been no permanent exclusions since the 2011-2012 academic year and fixed term exclusions are reducing year on year. The 2016 Ofsted report, subsequent HMI monitoring and DFE visits have recognised the positive impact of the pastoral systems. There is in evidence a higher standard and expectation of behaviour at the Academy. The students move around the Academy in an orderly and calm manner which has been developed by a ‘Pride and Respect’ ethos and enhanced further by ‘Expect Excellence’. The students behave well in lessons and show a good level of engagement with an ownership of their own learning. The students are confident, self-assured and take pride in their work, uniform and environment. Students speak confidently about their positive attitude to, and enjoyment of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is not yet outstanding because:

- Continue to take steps to reduce absence, and particularly the number of pupils who are regularly absent, to ensure that overall attendance of pupils is closer to the national average.

Discovery students show respect for the Behaviour for Learning system that tracks both conduct and quality of work in every lesson. This is underpinned by growth mind-set and an updated Behaviour for Learning policy has been launched for the 2016-2017 academic year. Every student receives individual feedback about their lesson performance, which produces rewards and sanction information. Staff set the tone for a high standard of behaviour by ensuring that the small things are consistently attended to e.g. shirts tucked in, adherence to academy uniform rules etc. This is supported by a ‘meet and greet’ policy so that students enter classrooms prepared, equipped and engaged.

Consistency is the key and frequent checks are made on corridors and in lessons to ensure that all staff are rigorously enforcing the behaviour policy. Senior staff are assigned a day to patrol, and departments support the system through a tiered approach to both sanction and reward. This has become part of academy life so that the more severe behaviour issues are dealt with extremely seriously and, as a result, are very rare indeed. As a result of high expectations and high student engagement, rewards have become a key part of academy life. The ‘Principal’s Awards’ are nominated and distributed weekly which has raised the bar and reinforced ‘Expect Excellence’. Along with praise texts, phone calls home and celebrations of outstanding class and homework there is a real culture of excellence that the student body strive for.

Attendance has improved and is now at the City wide average. Significant improvements have been made. There is a rigorous system of attendance tracking and an extensive reward system to incentivise good attendance. There is a good foundation on which to build upon to push attendance to national benchmarks by the end of the 2016-2017 academic year. Attendance gaps between students eligible for Pupil Premium and those that are not have also closed.

Persistent absence has dramatically reduced over the last 4 years, from 18.5% (85%<) in 2012/13 to a projected figure of 9% (85%<) in 2016/17. The Trust and the Academy have had, and continue to have, a relentless focus on reducing the persistent absenteeism of a hard core of students. The Trust has appointed an Education and Attendance Officer and led strategies to combat this through implementing a range of strategies, for example the use of an attendance mini bus, use of ‘Attend EDC’ an external attendance company, coffee mornings, clinics and visits. This is a city-wide issue and we are actively engaged with the LA and relevant agencies to try to break down barriers to secondary education and to raise aspirations.

A post Ofsted plan has been established to tackle the ongoing issue of persistent absenteeism, this includes personalised phone calls home from senior leaders, ‘return to academy’ interviews with students and a relaunch of the ‘Catch Up Card’ for Year 7 and Year 8 students in the core subjects. The

challenge of persistent absence is the main area for development that the Academy faces due to the impact that attendance has on student outcomes.

Student's safety in the Academy is good. Students say they feel safe and know who to talk to if they don't. "Pupils feel safe, are safe and know how to keep themselves free from danger in a range of situations, including in relation to radicalisation and extremism." *Ofsted 2016*

The DASH (Discovery Academy Safeguarding Hub) service has enabled students to access high quality advice and guidance on safety and safeguarding issues, and these are rectified or actioned immediately. Incidents of bullying are very low and students say this is dealt with efficiently and effectively. The curriculum, assemblies and form times are used to teach students how to stay safe. Areas such as cyberbullying / e-safety, extremism and radicalisation, and sexual exploitation are discussed with students regularly in line with the Academy's work on '360° Safe'.

SMSC is led by an SMSC Co-ordinator working across the Trust to establish best practice. The delivery of SMSC and British Values is driven through the form time programme and the dedicated Citizenship / PSHE lesson. Understanding of, and reflection on, the key British Values is further enhanced by our SMSC themed assembly programme and visiting speakers and events to all year groups. Staff training ensures our whole school approach to the development of SMSC and classroom posters and displays ensure awareness of SMSC across the Academy.

The establishment of a strong and robust student leadership is in place which enables our vision of growth mind-set and expecting excellence for all. A new Student Council involving 10% of students has been elected with representatives from all year groups. They are now active in meetings with key decision makers across the Academy and immediate improvements have been made. Action Teams for further improvement projects have been set up to develop future priorities, this includes working with our local community to foster a closer relationship. A newly elected Prefect Team has also raised the profile of student leadership across the Academy, and is helping to raise standards and embed a community ethos.

The academy now has a wide range of extracurricular activities which over 50% of the student body access. The clubs range from sports clubs, which are mainly run by external providers, through to creative and academic clubs covering a wide range of areas. There are also clubs run by students themselves which are well attended and give students the opportunity to plan and lead in areas where they are themselves highly skilled.

The Academy has now established a new "community council" team of students who meet and work together with leaders in the community, sit on local housing committee boards and work with other community organisations, such as the primary schools, youth clubs and community sports clubs to help deal with local issues and organise a range of community events and embed the Academy in the heart of the Community.

Parents are becoming more involved in the Academy through a newly established Parents' Forum, and the Academy undertakes surveys of parents' views.

“Teachers make use of a range of strategies and activities to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making more rapid progress than others in the school in English and mathematics, and catching up with their classmates” *HMI monitoring inspection May 2016*

Outcomes are judged as requires improvement. In 2016, significant improvements have been made across a range of progress and attainment measures. Progress 8 has shown a significant improvement with all groups of learners including PP and SEN showing improving progress from 2015. The Progress 8 score for Maths, Science and the open element were at national, with Languages being significantly above national. Progress in the Humanities element remains significantly below national. Due to historical curriculum design, outcomes in the EBacc element were significantly below national. The curriculum for Year 11 in 2017 has been better designed around the EBacc subjects with a much lower proportion of students having empty EBacc baskets. The progress of middle and high ability students remains a focus for the Academy. With new leadership and the recruitment of specialist teachers, Maths has seen significant improvement in progress and attainment of students across the range of abilities. EBacc showed good improvement to 9% from 2% in 2015. Students performed well above national average for the cohort in Languages, Art, Expressive Arts, Psychology, PE BTEC, Science, IT, and Health and Social Care. Progress in other year groups across a range of subjects including English and Maths shows a pattern of students meeting challenging targets. The Academy remains committed to improving literacy skills and reading ages. Students reading at chronological age has risen in each year group by around 30%.

Outcomes are not yet good because:

- Progress 8 for disadvantaged students, middle ability and high ability is not yet at national

Standards of Attainment & Progress

Despite cohort 2016's attainment on entry being significantly below national and weaker than the previous cohort, performance across a range of progress and attainment measures showed good improvement.

Progress 8 showed significant improvement in 2016 at -0.38, compared to -0.7 for 2015, this is despite the curriculum not being designed around EBacc selection. Projections show a continued improvement in 2017. All groups of learners including PP and SEN with a statement showed improved Progress 8 scores from 2015. With a much weaker cohort in 2106 Attainment 8 actually improved to 4.0 from 3.8. The average points score across all groups is close to or at the corresponding national average for the cohort.

The Progress 8 element for Languages show that students' progress in Languages is significantly above national, with Science and Maths remaining close to the national. However, the Humanities element remained significantly below national expectations. With a new teaching team in place for Humanities from September 2017, results are expected to improve rapidly. Significant improvement was seen in 2016 in the progress and attainment across a range of abilities in Maths.

Maths has seen a significant improvement in progress and attainment of students across the range of abilities in 2016. This is due to a change in leadership, recruitment of specialist teachers, and focussed interventions. Significant improvements at A*-A from 4% to 10%, 3 levels of progress from 48% to 59%, 4 levels of progress from 7% to 20%, and a value added score of -0.08 compared with a value added of 996 (bottom 5% nationally) in 2015. Further rapid improvement is expected for 2017.

The percentage of students achieving A*-C in English and Maths in 2016 has remained stable at 47%, despite a weaker cohort than 2015. The percentage of students achieving A*-C in English decreased from 63% in 2015 to 57%, with a progress 8 of -0.24, and Maths remained at 54%. EBacc showed significant improvement from 2% in 2015 to 9% in 2016. Students performed well above national average for the cohort in Languages, Art, Expressive Arts, Psychology, PE BTEC, Science, IT, and Health and Social Care.

The expected progress gaps in Maths and English both closed in 2016. Although the progress of middle and high ability students in Maths and English is improving over time, it is not yet at national. Overall progress in other year groups across a range of subjects, including English and Maths, shows a pattern of students meeting challenging targets.

In 2016 Pupil Premium students made an improvement on the previous year for 5A*-C and an 11% improvement over the last 2 years. The gap for 3 levels of progress narrowed considerably in Maths from 23% in 2015 to 11% in 2016. Progress 8 showed a score of -0.53 for Pupil Premium students, improving from -1.1 last year. Non Pupil Premium Progress 8 score was -0.22. This is a significant improvement on last year's results, closing the gap between PP and non PP from -0.7 to -0.31. The PP gap with national non-disadvantaged is -0.65.

The progress of statemented students and SEN support improved in 2016. An increased percentage of statemented students made expected progress in English and Maths. In English 80% of statemented students made expected progress compared with 60% in 2015. In Maths 60% made expected progress in 2015 compared to 20% in 2015 and 0% in 2014. Overall Progress 8 was 0.33 for SEN support with positive scores in the English, Maths and open elements, this compared with -1.4 in 2015. Overall Progress 8 for SEN with a statement or EHC was -0.18, with positive scores in Maths, English and the open elements, this compared with -1.0 in 2015.

Attendance continues to impact on progress. Both PP and Non-PP students with good attendance made expected progress, with a progress 8 of -0.04 and 0.04 respectively. The impact of the 24 students with attendance below 90% had a significant impact on overall progress 8 from -0.17 to -0.37.

All faculties have designed a new GCSE and KS3 (Years 7-11) curriculum within a common framework with integrated assessment to ensure progress throughout all years. SWANs and spiral assessment have been incorporated to assess new learning and cumulative knowledge over time.

In Year Progress

Students join the Academy with very low literacy skills and reading ages well below their chronological age. The Academy has a well devised reading strategy which develops the reading abilities of all types of readers. Students read often, having daily form time reading opportunities as well as reading sessions every week as part of the curriculum. Both teachers and support staff are determined and enthusiastic about improving the reading abilities of students. This was evident on a recent consultancy for Literacy from Phil Beadle, who commented that 'I have not seen an institution that is more serious about moving literacy forwards for their students'. Academy records show that as a result of intensive literacy interventions students are quickly improving their reading ability. Students told Inspectors they enjoy reading and are now more willing to read. Students reading at chronological age has risen in each year group by around 30%. More specific focussed intervention takes place for the 40% of each year group whose reading abilities are still being developed, which is showing significant impact termly.

In addition, Communication lessons at Key Stage 3 focus on reading, writing and oracy for students, allowing students to make rapid progress and better access the whole curriculum.

Levels of progress in Maths and English are above challenging academy targets in Year 8 and Year 9 with strong performance across a range of subjects including Science and Languages.

The introduction of the Maths Mastery programme has resulted in accelerated progress in Maths for all groups of learners in the current Year 8, with small group intervention catch-up targeted at underachieving students (first implemented in 2015/16 in Year 7). In Year 10 there is strong in-year progress in Maths, English, Languages, Business, IT and Performing Arts.

The progress projected in Year 11 across all subjects is expected to show improvement in 2016/2017 due to improved teaching, an established specialist team in Mathematics, a new lead in English and Humanities and a programme of tailored interventions with a focus on exam preparation and revision; see Achievement Report for levels of progress across all years, groups and subjects.

As a result of the decisive action taken by the Trust and the Leadership Team to address the areas identified in the January 2015 Section 5 inspection, significant improvements have been made in all areas of the Ofsted framework. The Ofsted visit in October 2016 evaluated the Academy's own rigorous self-evaluation and consequently removed the Academy from 'Serious Weaknesses' and judged many areas as good.

In its self-evaluation the Academy's key judgements agreed with Ofsted that all key areas are good with the exception of outcomes Graded 3. Senior Leaders have clearly identified why outcomes are not yet good and secure evidence from judgements in teaching and learning, in-year attainment / progress measures and the projections for the new Year 11 cohort, indicate that the Academy is swiftly improving towards grade 2 in this area that will also secure overall effectiveness as good.

Figure 3. Summary Judgements

Key Aspect	Judgement
The outcomes of students at the school	Requires Improvement (3)
The quality of teaching in the school	Good (2)
The quality of leadership in and quality of management of the school	Good (2)
The behaviour and safety of students at the school	Good (2)