Short inspection of Chapeltown Academy

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 October 2024

Outcome

Chapeltown Academy continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Chapeltown Academy is a 16 to 19 academy in Sheffield. In 2020, it joined the Minerva Learning Trust, which also includes four secondary academies and one primary academy. The academy provides A levels in over 20 subjects, with biology, chemistry, psychology and mathematics being the most popular. It also offers applied general qualifications in health and social care and engineering. At the time of the inspection, there were 302 students on fulltime study programmes. Eight students were in receipt of high needs funding.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Students enjoy learning in a supportive and inclusive environment, where they immerse themselves in their chosen subjects and work towards their future career goals. Staff balance successfully their high expectations for students' achievement with care for their personal growth. Students value the high expectations placed on them by staff. They meet these by attending well and demonstrating very positive attitudes to their learning.

Students receive good-quality careers information, advice and guidance to make informed choices about their next steps. They meet with qualified on-site careers advisers to understand the routes into their chosen careers. They use the insights of visiting speakers from universities and employers, and complete additional courses which enhance their university and job applications. All students take part in purposeful work experience placements through which they gain a thorough insight into the careers to which they aspire.

Students feel safe at the academy. They receive helpful information through the tutorial programme, which enables them to gain a deeper understanding of topics, such as healthy relationships, coercive control and the risks of harm when working online. They discuss these matters maturely and appreciate the forums that teachers create to explore topics sensibly and safely. However, too many students are not aware of the risks they may face in their local communities.

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

Leaders have selected an ambitious range of courses and qualifications that enable students, including those with high needs and additional learning needs, to move on to degree-level study and increasingly into apprenticeships. They have selected a range of A level and applied general qualifications from which students build coherent study programmes that support progression towards a wide range of careers.

Teachers are highly qualified in their disciplines and teach well the technical knowledge and skills required of advanced-level courses. They sequence each curriculum carefully so that students' knowledge and skills develop progressively over the two years of study and embed specialist content that is relevant to students' next steps. For example, teachers of A-level mathematics relate concepts in mechatronics and decision mathematics to industries, such as engineering and computer science.

Teachers use a range of effective teaching and assessment strategies that build and deepen students' understanding. Teachers of A-level psychology test students' recall of prior learning at the start of lessons, enabling students to relate and apply new learning to concepts they already understand. Teachers of A-level mathematics ensure that students practise repeatedly the concepts they find difficult to grasp, such as logarithms and vectors, to cement their learning before moving on to the next topic. This helps students to become increasingly fluent in their knowledge and understanding.

Teachers provide helpful feedback that students use to improve their work. They use techniques such as live marking in lessons so that students resolve quickly the gaps in their knowledge and refine the coherence of their answers. Teachers use the outcomes of formal assessment to modify their teaching and to provide effective support so that students do not fall behind. This helps students to produce work of a good standard and to know how to achieve well in assessments and examinations.

Teachers help students to develop the skills that they need in readiness for higher level study and work. Teachers of A-level mathematics require students to problemsolve and find their own solutions to complex tasks. Teachers of health and social care include structured written tasks early in the course and gradually remove these as students master the skills needed to evaluate an argument thoroughly. Teachers of A-level psychology use mnemonics to help students remember what they have been taught when answering examination-style questions. This contributes to students developing strong independent study habits and written communication skills. However, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities to develop students' confidence to articulate what they know and understand or to take part in discussions about the topics they are studying.

Teachers provide appropriate support for students with additional learning needs so that they achieve in line with their peers. They adapt their questioning for those students who require more time to process a response and use seating plans to ensure that students with high levels of anxiety feel at ease in the classroom.

Leaders have made considerable changes in the last twelve months to raise standards so that more students achieve well and teachers thrive in their roles. The appointment of a new principal and senior team has resulted in very swift and effective action being taken to make improvements.

Leaders have developed new systems to understand the experience of students and to be assured of the quality of teaching. They make effective use of the data they gather to resolve quicky areas of weakness and work effectively with teachers to ensure that actions are clear and implemented effectively. These actions are having a positive impact on the quality of education that students receive.

Leaders support teachers to reflect deeply on their professional practice. They link this support to high-quality training and development that enhances teachers' skills. Staff take part in weekly training sessions to develop their teaching expertise. They also work with subject specialists in the trust's primary and secondary phases to explore best practice in the development of students' knowledge and skills.

A knowledgeable and experienced board of trustees and governors support the achievement of leaders' ambitious priorities. They afford leaders the autonomy to lead and manage change well while providing constructive support and challenge to see improvements realised. Leaders have improved the quality of reports that they provide for the board so that trustees and governors understand the academy's strengths and areas for development.

Most students, including those with high needs, achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. Almost all students move on to positive destinations, with most going on to university and a smaller proportion into apprenticeships or employment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that newly developed quality processes are fully embedded and their impact monitored.
- Develop students' confidence to articulate, present and debate their knowledge and understanding well.
- Ensure all students are aware of local risks.

Provider details

Unique reference number	140940
Address	Hydra Business Park Nether Lane Sheffield S35 9ZX
Contact number	0114 2454803
Website	www.chapeltownacademy.com
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Dominic Pinto
Provider type	16 to 19 academy
Date of previous inspection	26 to 28 September 2018
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Chapeltown Academy was judged to be good in September 2018.

The inspection team was assisted by the principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the further education and skills inspection handbook and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Alison Dennis, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Steve Hailstone	His Majesty's Inspector
Anne Tyrrell	Ofsted Inspector

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