

Inspection of BOA Digital Technologies Academy

47 Barrack Street, Birmingham B7 4EU

Inspection dates:	4 and 5 March 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Paul Averis. This school is part of BOA trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Kate Tague, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jonnie Turpie.

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils enjoy attending BOA Digital Technologies Academy. They value their project work in digital technology lessons and the visits they receive from different businesses and employers. Staff are committed to ensuring that pupils see the connection between what they learn in the classroom and the potential jobs of the future.

Pupils generally behave well. In lessons, they are keen to contribute their views and ideas. At social times, pupils sit together sensibly in the dining hall and enjoy playing table tennis in the courtyard. Pupils say that if incidents of bullying do occur, they are confident that staff will take action to resolve these.

The school has high expectations of pupils and has put in place a broad range of subjects for pupils to study. However, in some subjects, pupils are not securing the necessary knowledge and skills they need. In addition, the work that some pupils produce in their exercise books is not of a good quality.

A range of different visits extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. These include annual trips to the theatre, as well as trips for science and art. Pupils are also involved in the 'BOA's Got Talent' competition each year.

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

The school has put in place an ambitious curriculum for pupils to study. In each subject, the school has set out the broad topics they want pupils to learn over time. However, in some subjects, the school has not identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This means that some pupils' knowledge and understanding is not secure as it should be.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, the curriculum is taught very well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and regularly revisit and check pupils' learning. This ensures that pupils build on what they know and enables teachers to spot and address errors or misconceptions quickly. However, in some other subjects, checks on pupils' learning are not as effective. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not being addressed well enough. In addition, pupils are not clear what they do well and where they need to improve.

The school identifies accurately the needs of any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have ensured that all pupils with SEND have a learning plan which outlines the strategies to help staff support them in the classroom. Pupils with SEND follow an equally ambitious curriculum as their peers.

The school has taken steps to ensure that all pupils are assessed on their reading ability. This helps staff to know pupils' reading ages and what additional support, such as phonics, is required. Much of this support is at an early stage of being implemented and therefore some older pupils still have gaps in their reading knowledge.

The school has an effective personal, social, health and economic curriculum. Pupils learn about topics such as consent and healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. Pupils are also taught about different religions and the importance of tolerance and respect. The school has recently introduced a school council so that pupils are able to contribute their views.

Pupils benefit from a range of meaningful encounters with industry experts and companies. Through their work on digital technology projects, pupils learn about various careers and routes into employment. Pupils appreciate the talks they receive in assemblies about careers in the digital, media and technology sector.

Trustees and local governors are keen advocates for the school. They carry out their statutory duties effectively. However, trustees are not always provided with sufficient information about pupils' progress. This means that trustees do not have the information they need to support their strategic oversight.

Leaders have worked hard to help establish the school and put in place new systems and processes. Many staff appreciate the support they receive for their workload and well-being. The school's strategic oversight of some aspects of its work is not sufficiently robust. This means that the school is not always clear about the impact of its work, including what is working well and where things need to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not outlined the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember over time. This means that pupils struggle to build on what they know and link ideas together. The school should take steps to ensure that the key knowledge in each subject is clearly defined.
- In some subjects, assessment strategies are still being developed or are not used sufficiently well. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge and/or errors and misconceptions are not identified and addressed in a timely way. The school should ensure that it strengthens its approach to assessment.
- The school has not maintained sufficient oversight of some aspects of its work. As a result, the school is not clear about the impact of its work, including where improvements need to be made. The trust should strengthen this aspect of the school's strategic work.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	149042
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10369414
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	362
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jonnie Turpie
CEO of the trust	Kate Tague
Principal	Paul Averis
Website	www.boa-digital.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- BOA Digital Technologies Academy opened in September 2022. The school specialises in creative and digital technologies.
- The school is one of three schools in the BOA trust.
- At the time of this inspection, there were pupils on roll from Years 7 to 9. The number of pupils on roll has been increasing every year since the school opened in September 2022 as it moves towards capacity.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 of the school.
- Inspectors met with four members of the trust and local governing body. Meetings were also held with the chief executive officer, principal, assistant principals, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, and digital technology. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also looked at other subjects to check how they are planned and taught.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Mark Howes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Epton	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Godden	Ofsted Inspector

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