

The Petchey Academy

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131062
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	381297
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2012
Lead inspector	Wiola Hola

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	967
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Billington
Headteacher	Olivia Cole (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 January 2009
School address	Shacklewell Lane Hackney London E8 2EY
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Introduction

Inspection team

Wiola Hola	Additional inspector
David Wolfson	Additional inspector
Pamela Fearnley	Additional inspector
Steven Goldsmith	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 39 teachers in 40 parts of lessons. Several further lessons were visited briefly. Meetings were held with four groups of students, three members of the governing body, and with staff, leaders and managers at all levels. Inspectors spoke with students in lessons and at break times and looked at samples of their work on paper or stored electronically. They listened to some students reading. The lead inspector met with about a dozen parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at documentation including: the school development plan; data on students' attainment and progress; information about how teaching is evaluated and improved; minutes of governing body meetings; curriculum and lesson plans; and a selection of school policies, especially those relating to the safeguarding of students. Inspectors also analysed 35 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with 89 from staff and 159 from students.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized secondary school. It opened to Year 7 students in September 2006 and moved into new premises in September 2007. A sixth form (University Gateway) opened in September 2011. In 2011, the academy saw its first full set of GCSE examination results. The academy meets the current floor standards for attainment and progress.

There are more boys than girls. The proportions of students known to be eligible for free school meals or who speak English as an additional language are both well above the national average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average, and the proportion of students having a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Students' mobility is a little above average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is well above average with considerable diversity.

The academy specialises in health, care and medical science. It has gained several awards including Every Child Matters (ECM) Gold, Inclusion Award and National Healthy School Status.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school with a good University Gateway (sixth form). There is a lot to be proud of for staff and students alike. Strong, unique features exist in the academy's ethos ('The Petchey Way'), the curriculum, and in work to overcome students' barriers to learning. While growing successfully, the academy is not outstanding because there is some unevenness in the quality of teaching and in students' learning and progress.
- Students' achievements are good, especially in English, mathematics and science. Girls, as a group, achieve better than boys. Progress is generally good, as seen in examination results and in students' current work. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
- Teaching is good. It includes outstanding practice but also occasional shortcomings. A wide range of very effective support and extra activities contributes to strengths in teaching. In most lessons, teachers capture students' interest and engagement and keep an accurate check on how well students are learning; sometimes, the checks are rather cursory or students' attention drifts.
- Most students have positive attitudes and rise to the academy's very high expectations of work, behaviour and dress. Students' behaviour occasionally slips in the general areas and in some lessons. Dips in behaviour and effort, linked to shortcomings in teaching, sometimes mar progress in lessons. Students feel safe and supported. Attendance is above average.
- Leadership and management have many strengths. Ambition, drive, energy and determination abound at all levels. The leadership of teaching is strong, with good features in the professional development of staff. In the management of performance, leaders' evaluations of teaching sometimes lack a firm focus on students' learning and progress. The academy promotes students' personal development well. It has good capacity to improve from good to outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eradicate inconsistencies in the quality of learning, and hence ensure students' progress is consistently good or better, in lessons and over time, by:
 - developing, where necessary, teachers' skills and accuracy in checking students' learning in lessons, in line with existing best practice in the academy, and in using this information well to plan further activities
 - strengthening some teachers' effectiveness in promoting the academy's high expectations of work and behaviour so that students' enjoyment and engagement in learning do not falter.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

In 2011, the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics was a little above the national average. Results were significantly above average in mathematics, science and religious education. In English and most other subjects they were similar to national averages. Based on their GCSE results, students made good progress overall from their very varied starting points; attainment on entry for this group was broadly average but with fewer higher attainers. In other year groups, attainment on entry is generally lower.

Good progress is seen in students' current work although this varies with the quality of teaching. In the University Gateway, progress is more consistently good and here some work of very high quality was seen showing, for example, these students' well-developed analytical and reasoning skills. Throughout the academy, students are set targets that imply progress will be better than typically expected nationally; records show many students are expected to reach these by the end of this academic year, with reservations in some places. The academy is rightly working to boost the progress of boys and is adjusting provision with this aim in mind. Attainment in literacy is being raised because of an academy-wide focus on this; teachers of all subjects play a part. Students often read out loud in lessons and most do so confidently. There are some very weak readers and, while improvements in their reading skills are visible through focused teaching, further plans are rightly being prepared to extend provision for them. Good support from teachers, teaching assistants and other professionals for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, often working with individuals or in small groups, means that they are generally making similar progress to their peers. Students whose attainment on entry to the academy is below age-related expectations are supported well to catch up quickly, and many do so, making exceptional progress. Gaps in performance between different groups of students do exist; their nature varies from year to year and group to group. The gaps are clearly identified by the academy which has very effective systems to deal with any variations.

Students develop their skills in using information and communication technology (ICT) well. Some students are highly efficient in organising and presenting their work

electronically or on paper; others show weaknesses in this. Many students are highly articulate. Others need encouragement to present views cogently. Impressive examples of students' speaking skills, and their spirited and moving singing, were seen in a Year 8 assembly. Students gain a First Aid qualification and grow in understanding of health and care issues through work under the academy's specialism. The vast majority of parents and carers, based on a small sample, feel their children are making good progress, and rightly so.

Quality of teaching

While good overall, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Lessons are almost universally well planned and incorporate a range of teaching and learning styles with generally good use of ICT. Across the curriculum, they often include activities that promote students' literacy skills. For example, teachers routinely ask students to read out loud, and require them to write in different genres and for a range of purposes. Teaching is often lively and engaging so that students' participation is high and enjoyment great. It is sometimes pedestrian, however, with tasks that are undemanding; students then mostly work passively, turning sometimes to chatting or other distractions. The pace of work is mostly good but sometimes students cover too little new ground. Fast pace, astute questioning, judicious use of praise, accurate pointers for improvement all characterise the best teaching, as seen in mathematics, law and dance, for example. Marking is mostly sound and includes diagnostic comments, but it is not always clear how these are followed up. Teaching in all phases is good overall but more consistently so in the University Gateway where challenge and expectations are particularly high. Much good work goes on outside of the main lessons to support teaching, in the seminars for example, where targets and progress are discussed with individual students as well as determining solutions to any problems related to learning. This provision contributes significantly to students' progress and also to their enjoyment of school life, general well-being and greatly to their personal development. Most parents, carers and students feel teaching is good and inspectors agree.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils are respectful, courteous and behave sensibly in lessons, around the academy and in the 'Family Service' lunchtimes. Most strive to do well. Students relate well to each other, in the main, and value the presence of so many different cultural backgrounds. Some contribute in many ways to academy life, acting as school council members or members of the PLATO (pupil learning and teaching observers) group, for example. Punctuality is good. Attendance is above average and improving. Attitudes and approaches to learning vary. Some students display a sense of enquiry, pose questions, show initiative and explore widely but this is not routinely the case. Care for, pride in and quality of written work also vary from very well crafted and displayed to untidiness and with apparent lack of effort.

Students' views, in conversations and in questionnaires, are very largely positive about enjoyment of school, their sense of safety, and the care and support they receive. They mostly praise staff for their fairness and firmness. They know how to keep themselves safe. Students say bullying, such as name-calling or teasing about differences in appearance, does exist; they add that staff act swiftly to deal with it.

Most students feel that behaviour is good. Some concerns, however, about disruption of lessons and management of behaviour were expressed by students, parents and carers, and staff. These concerns are justified. While most lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of good work and concentration, in a significant minority, students either make little effort, albeit quietly, or cause minor but troublesome disruptions.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers, together with staff, have successfully built up a new academy and maintained the 'high degree of emotional intelligence' concerning evaluation and further development mentioned in the last inspection report. They seek ardently to prepare students well for life and learning, and for progression onto higher education, where possible. The governing body is highly effective in setting targets, keeping the academy's work under review, and contributing in other ways to the richness of students' educational experiences. Arrangements for safeguarding students are entirely secure. The academy's specialism gives it a unique dimension and adds to the many strengths in the curriculum in the form of themed days, First Aid courses and work experience opportunities, for example. Much attention is given to the promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and tackling discrimination. Visiting speakers play a significant part in inspiring students to make the most of their opportunities and talents, and to tackle adversity. Teaching and non-teaching staff understand the vital roles they each play in the pursuit of excellence. Many act as House Lifestyle Consultants, mentors to a small group of students. Students value this highly effective guidance and support. The care taken to provide the right broad and balanced curriculum for each student's needs is a reflection of the academy's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity.

Many strong management systems exist, such as: the analyses of students' performance data; professional development programmes for staff (many of whom are newly or recently qualified); and processes for monitoring and reviewing the academy's effectiveness. The academy states its procedures and high expectations in 'The Petchey Way' and through other means. Staff and students adhere very largely to these but some require further support to achieve complete consistency in application. Leaders and managers have yet to ensure teaching is consistently of the high quality expected, so that students are fully interested and engaged, and signs of disaffection are rare or non-existent.

The Principal, with her colleagues, has strengthened the partnership with parents and carers. The academy has instigated a good range of strategies for working with parents, carers and other partners to the benefit of its own students and others in the local community. Partnerships with higher education establishments and other organisations contribute to curriculum enrichment and offer valuable experiences for students. Taking account of the strengths in leadership and management, together with the good quality of teaching and learning, the academy has good capacity to improve and become outstanding.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 March 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of The Petchey Academy, London, E8 2EY

Thank you for your welcome and helpfulness when I visited the academy recently with three other inspectors. We valued greatly our conversations with you in lessons, break times and in small groups. I write to let you know our findings.

The Petchey Academy is a good school. You are greatly encouraged to fulfil your ambitions and show of your best. There is a lot to be proud of. Good teaching and the valuable support you get in seminars and in other ways help you to achieve well. GCSE results in 2011 showed outcomes in mathematics, science and religious education to be above national averages. In English and most other subjects, they were similar to averages. The new sixth form, University Gateway, is already good. Most of you have high levels of attendance, are very punctual to lessons, work hard and behave well. Your progress is good overall but not consistently so. We saw some lessons where your learning was outstanding. You told us, however, that there are times when some students' attitudes or behaviour slip and lessons do not go smoothly. We agree with you. Many of you spoke very positively about the way you feel safe in the academy. While bullying does occasionally occur, you told us teachers deal with this swiftly. You enjoy many aspects of school life, such as the 'Contagion' day. The academy supports you well in developing as responsible and thoughtful citizens, aware of the needs of others and their values and beliefs.

The academy's leaders and governors have very high expectations of you, captured in 'The Petchey Way'. They know very clearly what is going well and what needs to be improved further. They are providing you with a rich curriculum, unique in many ways, that is tailored very well to meet your needs. Systems for promoting good learning and behaviour are very good but sometimes they are not applied rigorously.

We have asked the governors, the Principal and staff to make sure that your learning and progress in lessons are consistently good or better. They can do this by helping some teachers improve their skills in checking exactly what you are learning, and by ensuring that your behaviour, enjoyment and interest do not falter.

We ask you to help in every way you can to ensure you learn well at all times.

Yours sincerely

Wiola Hola
Lead inspector

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