

# Berwick Academy

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137598
<b>Local authority</b>	Not applicable
<b>Inspection number</b>	387189
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ann Ashdown

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of students</b>	13–18
<b>Gender of students</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of students in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of students on the school roll</b>	801
<b>Of which number on roll in the sixth form</b>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wyndham Rogers-Coltman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Quinlan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Adams Drive Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 2JF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01289 305083
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Ann Ashdown  
Patrick Hargreaves  
Julie McGrane  
Henry Moreton

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 32 teachers teaching 32 lessons of which four were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors listened to students read, visited assemblies and observed the behaviour of students at breaks and lunchtime. Meetings and discussions were held with groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body, parents and carers and academy staff. The inspection team took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the academy's work, and looked at students' books, progress data, safeguarding information, and other documentation. Inspectors analysed 87 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from students and staff.

## Information about the school

Berwick Academy is smaller than the average sized secondary school. It has specialist status for business and enterprise and applied learning and became an academy in November 2011. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. A well below average proportion of students are from minority ethnic groups whilst an average proportion speak English as an additional language. The academy has a unit with 26 places for students with moderate learning difficulties. All of these students are integrated into mainstream education. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well below average but an above average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The academy meets the current floor standard which sets out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. It holds Healthy School status and has gained an anti-bullying award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory academy. It has a key strength in the breadth and balance of its good curriculum which ensures that students are well prepared for their future lives. Courses which are well matched to students' needs allow over 95% of students to attain five or more higher grade GCSE passes. The academy, although improving, is not yet good because students' progress in mathematics is slower than in other areas of their learning and teaching is satisfactory overall rather than good.
- Students' achievement is satisfactory. From their broadly average starting points in Year 9 students make satisfactory progress in lessons as they move through the academy. The proportion of students who achieve five higher grade GCSEs including English and mathematics is broadly average. However progress in mathematics, although satisfactory, is markedly slower than that in English. The sixth form is satisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is very rarely less than satisfactory and in some lessons it is good or outstanding. In the best lessons varied and challenging work enables students to make good progress. In satisfactory lessons students have fewer opportunities to work independently and work is less well paced and challenging.
- Behaviour and safety are typically satisfactory. Behaviour around the academy is often good. In lessons there is some low-level disruption to learning, particularly when satisfactory teaching fails to engage students' interest.
- The headteacher's sensitive and forward-thinking leadership ensures that the academy continues to improve. Leaders and managers have identified suitable priorities for improvement such as accelerating progress in mathematics where their actions are beginning to have an impact in raising attainment. The management of performance and the leadership of teaching are satisfactory. However, evaluating the effectiveness of professional development and sharing good practice in teaching and assessment have yet to be fully developed.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate students' progress, particularly in mathematics, so that it is consistently good across the academy by:
  - sharing good practice in teaching and assessment more widely
  - embedding and refining systems for assessing and tracking progress in mathematics.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment so they are consistently good or better across the academy by:
  - giving students more opportunities to work independently, practise their skills and apply their knowledge
  - ensuring the pace of all lessons is challenging for all students
  - giving all students consistently high quality feedback so they are sure about how to improve their work.
  
- Ensure that leaders and managers are fully effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - focusing lesson observations more closely on what students are learning rather than what is being taught
  - monitoring the impact of professional development on improving the quality of lessons.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Students' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Attainment is broadly average. Most parents and carers are happy with the progress their children are making and with the way in which the academy is helping students to develop reading and writing skills. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about teaching and progress in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirmed these views. In lessons all groups of students were seen making at least satisfactory progress in almost all lessons and in some lessons progress was good. In a small number of lessons progress was outstanding. Work in students' books and that displayed around the school confirmed the satisfactory progress that students are making. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers because they receive timely and constructive help from specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Students who need it receive extra help with reading which accelerates their progress. This was confirmed when Year 9 students read aloud to inspectors. Most students are keen to succeed and answer questions readily. Students were seen making particularly rapid progress in an English lesson where they confidently studied different types of texts and discussed, shared and summarised their findings. A few students are more reluctant learners, particularly if teaching fails to engage their interest. Consequently, teachers spend some lesson time managing their behaviour so progress slows. In a mathematics lesson progress slowed when work involving copying a diagram and labelling features of a circle was not sufficiently challenging for many of the higher attaining students in the class.

Students enter Year 9 with broadly average attainment although there are fewer of the highest attaining students than is usually seen. In GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 students attain particularly well in English and reach above average standards. In mathematics progress is slower and has been significantly below average for the last two years. However, results of recent examinations and the department's recently introduced tracking and assessment systems indicate that progress in mathematics is now beginning to accelerate. Students' success in a range of vocational courses, equivalent to GCSEs, contributes significantly to their overall attainment. It also reflects the beneficial impact of the academy's dual specialist status in business and enterprise and applied learning.

Students' achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory. Although there is considerable variation between subjects, students make satisfactory progress in lessons and their attainment in examinations at the end of Year 12 and Year 13 is broadly average overall.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the academy but in the majority of lessons, it is satisfactory. Most parents and carers feel that their children are well taught, however, a small minority, rightly, expressed concerns about variability in the quality of teaching across the academy. There are examples of excellent lessons where students make outstanding progress. In a Year 13 business lesson, students made rapid progress because their learning was firmly linked to the real world following a meeting with the head of the sales department of a specialist software company. Good lessons were typified by teachers who had good relationships with their students, perceptive questioning, varied and interesting activities and fast-paced, challenging work. In these lessons, teachers promote students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well by encouraging them to consider contrasting viewpoints, share ideas and information and cooperate in pairs and groups. For example, Year 11 students enjoyed learning as they explored in depth the issues surrounding sponsorship in sport. The 'preparation for life' course also makes a strong contribution to students' personal development and to their understanding of social, moral and cultural issues. In some lessons a few students began to lose interest when the teacher talked for too long and they had insufficient time to learn independently, practise their skills and apply their knowledge. In these slower paced, although satisfactory, lessons work was sometimes repetitive and tasks and resources insufficiently interesting to fully engage students in learning.

The planned curriculum is well matched to the needs and aspirations of the students and has a beneficial impact on their learning. Books are usually marked regularly and in some subjects, such as art and English, there are examples of high quality feedback being given to students. However, this good practice in assessment, like the best practice in teaching, is not yet fully shared. Consequently students are not always sure exactly how well they are doing and how to improve their work. In mathematics, newly introduced systems for assessing students work and tracking their progress have yet to be refined and become fully embedded in the department's work.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students say they feel safe in the academy. They are knowledgeable about different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and are confident that any bullying in the academy will be dealt with promptly. A parent commented that a bullying incident affecting her child had been successfully dealt with, 'within just a few hours of it being reported'. The vast majority

of parents and carers feel that the school keeps students safe. However, a small minority of those who responded to the questionnaire disagreed that there was a good standard of behaviour at the academy and felt that lessons were disrupted by bad behaviour. Inspectors followed up these concerns and found overall behaviour is typically satisfactory. Behaviour around the academy, in the dining hall and yards is mainly good with most students showing respect and care for each other, adults and visitors. Sixth form students have mature attitudes to learning. However, in some lessons in the main academy there is low-level disruption to learning by a few students and teachers have to spend time managing behaviour. Whilst most students respond promptly to teachers' direction and work cooperatively with each other, some require repeated instructions and are more reluctant to cooperate with others. The inclusion of students with moderate learning difficulties into mainstream education is well managed and is supported by a specialist study centre. Attendance is improving and is broadly average.

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory. Members of the governing body and leaders and managers share an appropriate and successful focus on providing students with a broad and balanced curriculum, which is a strength of the academy. The curriculum is good because it is closely matched to students' needs, reflects the academy's specialisms and is responsive to the lack of alternative provision in the academies' geographically isolated location. It also maximises students' opportunities to gain examination success at the end of Year 11. The curriculum is well supported by a wide range of effective partnerships with local businesses and by an interesting range of enrichment activities which contribute greatly to students' enjoyment of learning and effectively promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students in both the sixth form and the main academy speak enthusiastically about visits to places as far apart as Africa and Alnwick, sporting successes and the interesting opportunities to extend their business and enterprise skills.

School self-evaluation is accurate in some areas but is over-generous in its evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. This is partly because lesson observations are insufficiently focused on students' learning. A programme of professional development is contributing to school improvement but its specific impact on improving teaching and learning is not yet fully monitored. Recent improvements in students' attitudes to learning in mathematics and better systems for tracking students' progress are increasing students' achievement and contributing to the academy's satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Members of the governing body have been instrumental in determining the academies' strategic development and have provided support and challenge in equal measure. All groups of students are given equal opportunities to succeed and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Staff are suitably trained and well aware of child protection, risk assessment and safer recruitment policies and procedures.

## 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](http://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.
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 Berwick Academy, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2JF**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your academy this week. A particular thank you to those of you who read aloud to us, shared your views by filling in our questionnaires and discussed with us in such a balanced way the qualities of your academy. Please thank your parents and carers who also filled in our questionnaires. This is what we have said about your academy in our report.

- Your behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good around the academy and you show kindness and consideration to others.
- Yours is a satisfactory academy which is improving.
- Your achievement, the teaching you receive and the way your academy is led and managed are all satisfactory.
- The sixth form is satisfactory.
- The curriculum is good and promotes your personal development well.

This is what I have asked your academy to do to help it improve.

- Accelerate your progress, particularly in mathematics, so that it is consistently good by sharing teachers' best ideas for interesting lessons more widely and continuing to improve the tracking of your progress in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by giving you more opportunities to work independently, practise your skills and apply your knowledge, ensuring the pace of all lessons is challenging for everyone and giving you consistently high quality feedback so you are sure about how to improve your work.
- Asking school leaders and managers to make even more careful checks on the quality of lessons and how much they are improving.

All of you can help your academy become even better by working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Ashdown  
Lead inspector

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