

The Sir Robert Woodard Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135744
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	381917
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Alan Taylor-Bennett HMI

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	1150
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Prichard
Principal	Carole Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	Upper Boundstone Lane Lancing West Sussex BN15 9QZ
Telephone number	01903 755894
Fax number	01903 755848
Email address	enquiries@srwa.woodard.co.uk

Age group	11–19
Inspection date(s)	23–24 November 2011
Inspection number	381917

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 48 lessons, some jointly with senior staff, and the work of 47 teachers. In addition, meetings were held with groups of students, representatives of the governing body and staff, and a telephone conversation and subsequent meetings were held with the main sponsor's representative. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including the academy's development plans, its self-review, analyses of the attainment and progress of its students, records of lesson observations, and policies. Inspectors took account of the responses in the 151 questionnaires received from parents and carers, and other questionnaire responses from staff and students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors looked at current and recent trends in attainment and the progress and quality of learning of students.
- They evaluated the success of the academy's work to support students who are at risk of significant underachievement by the end of Key Stage 4.
- The team assessed how well information about the current achievement of students is being used to steer teaching and learning, and special interventions.
- Inspectors checked the extent to which the vision of the Principal is leading improvements in provision and outcomes in classrooms, and specifically the role of middle leaders in translating this vision into outcomes for students.

Information about the school

The Sir Robert Woodard Academy opened in September 2009. It has specialisms in performing arts and mathematics. The lead sponsor is Woodard Academies Trust and West Sussex County Council is a co-sponsor. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly below the national average but the local context is one of relatively high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average; these needs are mainly moderate learning difficulties, and behavioural, emotional and social issues. The majority of students are of White British heritage and there are very few who speak English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection the academy was using the buildings of the predecessor school but was on the point of moving into its new accommodation.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this academy requires special measures because it is failing to give its students an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the academy are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is also inadequate, and substantial improvement is required in relation to this aspect of the academy's work.
- Some aspects of the work of the academy have improved significantly. It is a safe environment for students. They behave satisfactorily and attendance is above average. Although students' aspirations are still low, many show a willingness to learn. This dramatic shift in ethos over the time the academy has been open represents substantial progress in some key outcomes.
- Too much teaching, however, has failed to respond to the opportunities presented by this considerably better culture for learning. A significant proportion is inadequate because it fails to provide sufficient challenge for students. Neither does it use an accurate evaluation of students' existing knowledge and understanding, and specific needs, to match provision to individual and collective requirements. Too much teaching is no better than satisfactory because objectives for the learning are not clear and there are too few checks on students' understanding and progress throughout lessons. Although some good teaching was seen during the inspection, none was seen to be driving outstanding progress.
- A range of mechanisms supports the development of the quality of teaching and some pertinent work is being done. However, the work lacks coherence and effectiveness. A major factor in this is the lack of capacity of some middle leaders to drive good or better teaching because their own teaching is no more than satisfactory. The capacity for the monitoring of teaching to drive improvement is diminished by the lack of any clear, agreed definition of what constitutes good or better teaching in the context of the academy.
- Weak teaching means that the quality of students' learning and the progress they make are both inadequate. As a result, low attainment shows little sign of improving.
- The vision and commitment of the Principal and the senior team have driven the significant improvement in students' attitudes. However, because the quality of information generated by the academy about students' attainment and progress has been inaccurate for too long, no positive impact has been made on

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

- achievement. This inaccurate information has also compromised the governing body's ability to provide the constructive challenge that they, the senior team and the sponsors would wish for. The academy is honest about the extent to which the poor examination results this year took them completely by surprise.
- Students in the sixth form make inadequate progress overall, and the variation in the quality of their learning and the provision across subjects is considerable. They are loyal members of the academy but feel frustrated by a lack of opportunity to contribute to its work. Insufficient leadership and management time is allocated for the sixth form to provide the high level of monitoring and intervention required to support progress that is at least consistently satisfactory. Many of the same issues surrounding the use of achievement data and the quality of teaching in Years 7 to 11 are holding back the quality of provision and outcomes for sixth-form students.
 - Staff show care for their students and want the best for them. They are securing improvements in students' personal development and work effectively within the chapter groupings to ensure students' well-being. However, the lack of valid and reliable information about achievement denies them the opportunity to intervene and support good or better progress for every individual. The proportion of students who underachieve significantly by the end of Key Stage 4 is not reducing quickly enough because the clear identification of the complex needs of this minority, and the challenges they present, are not translated into strong and consistent responses. This is an example of the way in which the academy has not capitalised on the resources and freedoms it has to develop imaginative and novel solutions to serious issues.
 - The quality of teamwork, and therefore the success with which the vision for the academy can be delivered successfully, is compromised by the lack of a shared sense of direction across senior and middle leadership. Many middle leaders have a desire to generate improvements in outcomes for young people, some have clear ideas about how this may be brought about, and a few are being successful. The quality of some leadership is good. However, this lack of common purpose weakens accountability and communication between all levels of leadership, and prevents the appropriate and well-targeted actions detailed in the various improvement planning documents from being delivered effectively.
 - The capacity of the academy to drive improvement is therefore inadequate. The main sponsors are aware of this through their own monitoring procedures.
 - The performing arts specialism is adequately developed but work in the mathematics specialism is still at an embryonic stage.
 - Students have opportunities to make contributions to the work of the academy. Parents and carers are provided with regular information: developments and changes are publicised and explained. Both have their views sought through a variety of means. Neither, however, have any way to contribute to the academy's strategic development so that it can be more responsive to students' and their families' needs, including by identifying how learning can be improved.

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

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 to at least in line with the national average by summer 2013, and secure better teaching that capitalises on recent significant improvements in behaviour and attitudes to learning, by:
 - ensuring that clear learning objectives drive appropriate activities in all lessons, and that these result in provision which suits students' needs
 - gauging students' understanding throughout a lesson, and continually using this feedback to adjust the pace and style of learning
 - developing the capacity of leaders at all levels to improve the proportion of good and outstanding teaching
 - monitoring the quality of teaching rigorously and judging it accurately
 - involving students and their parents and carers in developing strategies to improve the quality of everyone's learning, and in monitoring the effectiveness of these strategies.
- Make effective use of performance data to improve achievement by:
 - ensuring that the information about the attainment of individuals and groups available to all middle and senior leaders is accurate, informative and easy to access and use
 - using this information to plan lessons that meet the needs of individuals and groups.
- Improve the effectiveness with which leaders in the academy work together to exert a strong and positive influence on the quality of learning, by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels work closely and coherently to clearly stated common objectives, continually monitor progress towards them, and work together to remove barriers to improving learning
 - strengthening the capacity of governing body to challenge and support the work of senior staff.
- Improve the progress made by students in the sixth form so that it is at least satisfactory across all subjects by summer 2013, by:
 - ensuring there is sufficient capacity in the senior team to lead the sixth form effectively
 - ensuring that teaching in the sixth form is good by autumn 2012.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Students enter the school with low attainment and this does not rise sufficiently because of weak provision. Learning in lessons is affected by students' low aspirations and their lack of confidence, and too often the teaching does not address these issues effectively. When it does, learning improves and is more enjoyable, demonstrating clearly that students have the potential to relish appropriate challenge. For example, in a food technology lesson students confidently prepared their quiches, paying close attention to the detail of the process and working from a good understanding of the main ideas. They were absorbed in what they were doing, and keen to do it well. The quality of learning in the performing arts specialist

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

subjects of music, drama and dance is very variable, but there is satisfactory and better progress in some of these lessons. In the other specialist subject of mathematics, the quality of learning is inadequate. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities currently make progress which is inadequate but there are signs of improvement due to the impact of changes to the organisation of provision for them in the special needs department.

Students behave well around the site, and say they feel very safe in the academy. There is a calm and happy atmosphere, and many students offer support and show respect for each other. Behaviour in a few lessons is less than satisfactory, especially when the teaching does not stimulate or challenge, but this is becoming the exception. Students’ understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle is adequately developed and some, but not a majority, have adapted their behaviour in response. The uptake of sporting opportunities is limited and the lack of monitoring of this prevents the academy from intervening to encourage individuals and groups. Students take part in a range of community activities, often through the work of the performing arts specialism which has long-established links with the local community. These include a dance club and the junior band which both involve students working with pupils in local primary schools.

Students are adequately prepared to meet the challenge of transitions. The information advice and guidance offered gives them confidence to tackle new challenges, but it does not always manage to get them to raise their sights and aspire to demanding courses of study in further education. Although many students’ levels of numeracy and literacy are underdeveloped, they can use their skills with some success in new contexts and develop a range of useful personal skills. Students’ spiritual development is well provided for by the academy’s chaplain, a programme of assemblies and work in tutor time. Although the range of opportunities in the curriculum to broaden their cultural experience is not extensive, students enjoy and benefit from a number of purposeful experiences.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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

The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The small proportion of teaching that is good promotes an enjoyment of learning and supports the academy's priority of improving students' ambition and levels of aspiration. Too little teaching is like this, however, because the point of the lesson is often not clear, and this means that activities do not focus on essential ideas and processes. Teaching often offers insufficient challenge, and fails to take advantage of the better behaviour and readiness to learn now prevalent in the academy. Students sense the low expectations of staff and express a desire for more challenging tasks and work. Recent improvement in the work of teaching assistants, including a refinement of their roles and specialisms, is improving the quality of their contribution in lessons, but teaching remains largely unaffected by these developments.

There is an appropriately broad range of courses at Key Stage 4. The integrated curriculum in Key Stage 3 offers the potential for students to develop stronger personal and thinking skills, and experience more coherence in their learning, but it is not making a significant contribution to improving progress in the core subjects. There is a range of special intervention strategies to address underachievement for older students. The translation of some potentially good opportunities into practice at subject level is, however, of very inconsistent quality. Some schemes of work are of limited usefulness and do not contain sufficient guidance on effective teaching and learning strategies. This limits the quality of the curriculum to no more than satisfactory.

The chapter structure in the academy has been successful in providing students with a sense of being in a 'school within a school', enabling them to feel part of something with a distinctive character and to get to know and work with students in other year groups happily and successfully. Staff exercise good levels of care for all students and liaise effectively with a range of outside agencies to support students' welfare, but they are not always able to intervene in a timely or effective way to accelerate learning due to problems with the quality and nature of the data on individuals' attainment and progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where	3

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

relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The improvements in some important outcomes for students are the consequence of good planning and the expenditure of considerable energy on the part of senior staff. They have transformed the academy into a safe and secure environment in which students have the potential to develop their confidence and enjoy working together. Processes to safeguard students are followed with rigour and staff training to support the safety and well-being of students is up to date and very effective.

Senior staff recognise the considerable challenge of raising students’ aspirations from their current low level and have prioritised this appropriately. However, ambition has not been embedded and there has been little improvement in achievement because of a number of failures in key aspects of the academy’s work. Senior staff have not secured the wholehearted commitment of middle leaders to the key priorities necessary to drive improvement. The quality of teaching is improving but too slowly, and despite the fact that many senior leaders judge teaching accurately, overall there is an inaccurate picture of this provision. Teachers’ assessment of students’ attainment has been inaccurate for too long and this has severely compromised the capacity of the academy’s achievement monitoring systems to provide information that is good enough to indicate and drive appropriate strategies. The quality of middle leadership is very variable; some is inadequate and, as a consequence, students are underachieving in those areas. These serious problems with the accuracy of the academy’s self-evaluation mechanisms deplete its capacity to generate improvements in these vital areas of work.

For similar reasons, the governing body has, despite its best intentions, been unable to secure a good enough grasp of the nature of the strengths and weaknesses of the academy. Governors have relied too heavily on regular reports from the Principal rather than acquiring a detailed knowledge for themselves by probing, and asking detailed, challenging questions.

The quality of partnerships is satisfactory because useful links with neighbouring colleges of further education and schools make important, well thought-out, contributions to the curriculum for some older students, and such curriculum partnerships offer good value for money. Partnerships to support care, guidance and support are well developed and contribute strongly to improvements in some important outcomes for students. There is an appropriate concentration on providing equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Diversity is celebrated and opportunities are taken to challenge prejudice. Despite the shortcomings in the quality of data, a good knowledge of individual students’ needs and circumstances often leads to appropriate responses to support their welfare. For example, the closely targeted work on improving attendance has led to a reduction in the proportion of students who are persistently absent, and students with special

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

educational needs and/or disabilities are now supported more effectively due to an improved awareness of their individual needs, and better mechanisms to support them. The new sense of community identity in chapters and throughout the academy is a strength, and there are long-established links with the wider local community, often through the performing arts specialism. However, these external links are not sufficiently well-targeted to ensure that specific aspects of community cohesion are improved rapidly and effectively.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Sixth form

Outcomes for sixth-form students are inadequate because a significant number of students do not make the progress expected of them, given their starting points, in at least one course of study. There is no significant trend of improvement. Students make appropriate contributions to the life of the academy, including fund-raising for charities and assisting younger students to develop their literacy skills. However, their roles as sixth-form council members and student ambassadors are underdeveloped and there is some disappointment amongst students about the extent of opportunities they have to show leadership in the academy community.

In too many courses, the teaching and the curriculum are insufficiently well-developed to support satisfactory progress. In art, for example, students do not have the opportunities to learn necessary techniques at a high enough level. The curriculum does not offer a broad enough range of courses for students, particularly at level 2. The academy has recognised this and has begun to address this need. Students find the transition to the sixth form difficult because they do not feel well supported to meet the demands of the different approaches required to work at this level. They speak highly of the tutorial support and the personal support of the

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

chapter mentor, however.

There is too little leadership time available for the sixth form. The leaders of the sixth form show an astute understanding of the issues, but time and resources are often redirected to meet the needs of students at Key Stage 4 as a higher priority. As a consequence, there is insufficient attention given to addressing the important weaknesses in outcomes and provision.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	4
Taking into account:	4
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	4
The quality of provision in the sixth form	4
Leadership and management of the sixth form	4

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers returning questionnaires was broadly in line with that seen nationally. Most are happy with their children’s experience at the academy and feel that their children enjoy being there. A very large majority feel that students are safe at the academy and inspection evidence confirms these views. Inspectors were reassured by students’ views and the securely satisfactory behaviour around the site and in many lessons. Inspection evidence endorses parents’ and carers’ relatively lower levels of satisfaction with the quality of leadership and management, and the degree to which the academy involves them by learning about, and taking account of, their views and enabling them to support their children’s work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Sir Robert Woodard Academy to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The Inspection team received 151 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	27	97	65	11	7	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	30	20	112	75	7	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	26	17	97	65	21	14	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	18	96	64	20	13	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	16	11	112	75	14	9	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	19	13	101	67	25	17	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	9	94	63	31	21	4	3
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	12	98	65	16	11	4	3
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	14	101	67	22	15	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	15	74	49	28	19	13	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	9	89	59	27	18	6	4
The school is led and managed effectively	16	11	96	64	20	13	9	6
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	25	17	101	67	17	11	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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 academy.

25 November 2011

Dear Students



Inspection of The Sir Robert Woodard Academy, Lancing, BN15 9QZ

Thank you for the welcome you showed to the inspection team when we visited your academy recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking with you about your work and how well you are supported. You can read the full report on the Ofsted website, but I have provided a brief summary here.

We judged that the quality of education provided by your academy is inadequate. This is true throughout Years 7 to 11, and in the sixth form. The academy needs additional support to help it make improvements and so it has been placed in 'special measures'. However, it is important to recognise that some aspects of the academy have improved significantly since it opened. For example, your behaviour is satisfactory and the way that you approach many of your lessons is a credit to you: we saw you supporting and showing real friendship and respect for each other. You feel very safe in the academy and attendance is above average. Many of you enjoy a range of activities, including those in the performing arts, and making a useful contribution to your academy and to the local community. Despite all of this, the progress towards improving levels of attainment, which have been below the national average over recent years, is insufficient. This is because too much teaching is not good enough and the quality of information about the progress you are making is not accurate enough to support your learning effectively.

I agreed four main areas for improvement with the academy. In summary, they are:

- helping you to learn more effectively and achieve higher standards by improving the quality of teaching
- improving how information about your progress is used to help you to make better progress
- developing better ways for leaders at all levels to work together
- ensuring that students in the sixth form make better progress.

I know that you will all want to contribute to the improvement of your academy, and I would encourage you to reflect carefully on what you can do to help it to meet your needs as learners better. I would like to extend my best wishes to all of you for your future happiness and success.

Yours sincerely

Alan Taylor-Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**