

John Whitgift Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	137464
Local authority	Not applicable
Inspection number	386098
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2012
Lead inspector	Clive Moss 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	631
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Vessey
Headteacher	Mark Rushby
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

Inspection team

Clive Moss

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Jonathan Woodyatt

David Thompson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 31 lessons taught by 30 teachers, which was every member of the teaching staff present at the academy during the inspection, including two lessons observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. They made a series of shorter visits to lessons to look at particular aspects of the academy's work. In addition, they observed tutorials and other occasions when students were learning. Meetings were held with the Chair of Governors, the Chief Executive of the SPTA in which the academy is a partner, members of staff, and groups of students, and many informal conversations were held with the students. Telephone conversations were held with parents and carers. The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the academy's records and data in relation to students' achievement, the quality of teaching, behaviour, and attendance. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line (Parent View) survey and 83 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. They looked also at questionnaires completed by students and members of staff.

Information about the school

The academy is smaller than average and the number of students on roll has declined since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free academy meals is above average and increasing. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, but increasing. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is approximately one sixth of the national average. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is twice the national average; most of these students have moderate learning difficulties, or behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties. The proportion of students entering or leaving the academy at times other than the usual is above average. The academy did not meet the government's floor standards in 2011, which are the minimum standards expected. Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing, particularly in relation to key posts and within the English and mathematics departments. Also, the academy has changed its status, opening as an academy in September 2011, and changed its name. The academy has achieved the Healthy Schools award and Sportsmark for the quality of its work in these areas.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- The academy provides the students with a satisfactory standard of education. It is not yet good because there is insufficient good teaching to ensure that the students are consistently well-motivated to learn and make better progress than might be expected, given their starting points, in order to raise their attainment above the current levels. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Students’ achievement is satisfactory overall. Generally, the students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons. The proportion of students making at least the expected levels of progress over the course of their time at the academy is increasing, particularly amongst younger year groups, due to improvements in teaching. However, the students’ attainment, though improving, remains low overall.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The academy’s records show that the amount of good practice is increasing and inspectors saw examples of good teaching. The inspectors saw also a small proportion of teaching that was inadequate.
- Generally, the students behave sensibly and reasonably. The inspection evidence showed that behaviour is improving and the inspectors saw very few examples of disruption to lessons. It was clear, nevertheless, that there are still instances of poor behaviour.
- Effective leadership and management have increased the amount of good teaching practice, so that the rates of progress made by the students and their levels of attainment are improving. The pace of change since the last inspection has been affected by a period of instability concerning the future of the academy and staffing difficulties within key departments. The rate of improvement at the academy has increased in the current academic year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - providing topics and tasks that increase the students’ levels of interest

- ensuring that lesson-planning identifies clearly and consistently how the work will provide for the particular needs of all individuals and groups of students and enable them to meet their individual targets
 - increasing the range of opportunities in lessons for the students to develop their social, moral, spiritual, and cultural understanding
 - providing more opportunities for the students to develop the skills and attitudes for learning independently, both in lessons and through consistent and meaningful use of homework.
- Improve the pupils' motivation for learning by:
- raising their aspirations, so that they want to work at their best in lessons routinely
 - ensuring consistently clear and precise guidance to students about their work, verbally during lessons and through marking, in order to increase the level of challenge for the students
 - establishing more-effective partnerships with parents and carers, so that they are able to support their children's learning fully.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Students' attainment on entry to the academy is consistently low. Most of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire think that their children are making good progress. The inspection evidence shows that, generally, the students make the progress that might reasonably be expected, given their starting points. The proportion of students achieving five or more good grade GCSEs is broadly average, but it is low when English and mathematics are included. There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups at the academy. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers at the academy. Students known to be eligible for free school meals make slightly less progress, although not significantly. The amount of progress made by students who are with the academy for the full period of their secondary education is greater than for those who join much later than usual.

The majority of students believe that they learn a lot most or all of the time. Inspectors found this to be the case on the occasions when the teaching was good or better. The students do not routinely work to produce their best, however, and often lack the skills and motivation to sustain high levels of effort when working independently. This was apparent, for example, because their oral contributions in lessons were often of a higher standard than the written work they produced.

Quality of teaching

Most of the parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire think that their children are taught well. Overall, however, the inspection evidence shows the quality of teaching is more satisfactory than good. The examples of good and outstanding teaching were characterised by:

- the teachers' good knowledge of course requirements
- use of high-quality resources

- the teachers' good questioning techniques
- effective use of assessment criteria to indicate to the students what is required to reach particular levels
- adaptations to the lesson to take account of how learning was progressing and of students' needs
- activities that were matched to the students' needs well
- well-planned opportunities for students to develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- good opportunities for the students to be involved in assessing their own and each other's work.

For example, in a Year 7 lesson on climate change, the teacher's excellent questioning techniques, which included allowing the students sufficient time to think, to check understanding and push the students to higher levels of thinking, ensured both pace and challenge within the lesson. These features, in conjunction with the use of high-quality resources, appropriate emphasis on literacy skills, a safe and secure learning environment for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and effective support from learning support assistants, ensured the lesson resulted in rapid progress being made by the students.

In the lessons where the teaching was less than good, often the students did not understand why they were doing the tasks, even though they were clear about how to do them. Also, the guidance they were given about how well they were doing, both verbally and through the marking of work, was too general. Overall, the quality of marking and guidance to students during lessons is too varied. The teachers have detailed information about the students' attainment and progress and, routinely, lesson plans include reference to the students' targets. The plans do not, however, always identify how the teaching will enable the students to reach those targets, or indicate what adaptations will be made to the work to meet particular needs. Not enough teaching provides for carefully-considered opportunities to develop the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and capture the students' interest. Approaches to the use of homework are inconsistent.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The students say that they feel safe in the academy, a view that is confirmed by the parents and carers. They report that bullying, though it happens, is not particularly an issue for them and is usually dealt with effectively. There are few recorded instances of racist behaviour. Most examples take the form of name-calling. The students are aware that bullying takes different forms. They responded well to a thoughtfully-constructed assembly about racism and misuse of the Internet and other social networking opportunities, which made good use of actual, current examples of events that captured the students' interest. The assembly was an occasion on which the students demonstrated that they are fully capable of exemplary behaviour. The students say that behaviour has improved this academic year and that view is confirmed by the academy's data, which show substantial reductions in the levels of fixed-term exclusions, very few permanent exclusions, and reductions in the use of internal sanctions. The provision made by the academy for Key Stage 4 students who are at risk of permanent exclusion provides successfully for their academic, social and emotional needs, keeping them in full-time education. The inspectors saw mainly calm and sensible behaviour around the academy, even when the students' patience was tested, such as whilst waiting for lunch, although individual students could be voluble when complaining. In lessons, when the teaching does not capture the students' interest or the structure of the lesson gives more time to organising activities or listening to

instructions, so that the lesson progresses slowly, the students' behaviour deteriorates and they learn very little. That, along with reports by students, parents and carers, and in the staff inspection questionnaire of unsatisfactory behaviour, means that behaviour is no better than satisfactory overall.

The academy uses a broad range of approaches to promote good attendance and has intervened successfully in individual cases of poor attendance. It has good-quality data to show the impact of attendance on individual students' progress and attainment and ensures that regular attention is paid to attendance. Attendance has improved, but it is currently below average.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders and managers have a detailed knowledge of the academy and are under no illusions about current levels of student attainment and the general quality of provision. The arrangements for checking the quality of the staff's work, analysing the progress of the students, and using the evidence both to bring about improvements in teaching and to manage the performance of individual members of staff are comprehensive and implemented diligently. Robust action has been taken when necessary to improve the quality of teaching. The students' attainment has improved since the last inspection, including in English and mathematics, and faster than nationally on some measures; senior leaders and the academy's trust partners are acutely aware that the challenge to raise it further remains. The trend of improvement has been sustained, although it faltered in 2011. Nevertheless, the academy has demonstrated sufficient capacity to improve and important enhancements to leadership and management through the association with the academy trust partnership have resulted in much more rapid rates of progress by students this year.

The improvement of the academy is supported effectively by the governing body, whose members engage actively in evaluating the work of the academy, including the quality of teaching. The academy's arrangements for safeguarding meet the current requirements. Detailed policies are in place to promote equalities.

The curriculum is broad and being adapted and developed rapidly as the academy identifies students' needs and more and less effective practice. For example, the English department has focused increasingly on improving the students' reading skills and the academy has made a significant investment to develop a new literacy centre. The curriculum provides numerous opportunities for work-related learning and various additional activities support the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, a kitchen garden project allows students to work closely with a local employer. The project has received plaudits from a national gardening media celebrity and features regularly in commercial publications. Involvement in the project contributes significantly to improved attitudes to learning amongst the students taking part. One told an inspector, modestly, but clearly with a sense of pride and satisfaction, how the skills learned had been useful on the family allotment. It was apparent that the experience had enhanced the family bond.

The response from parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire was a little below average, but the inspectors considered the results from the academy's own survey as well. Generally, parents and carers hold positive views of the academy and significantly improved numbers of applications for places next academic year indicate their confidence in it is beginning to grow. Some parents and carers explained a range of difficulties they had experienced in communicating with the academy on various matters. It was evident that

those parents and carers were concerned that they were unable to support their children's learning fully, and this was confirmed by inspection findings.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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 school converters. Secondary schools include secondary school converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special school converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up 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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



27 April 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of John Whitgift Academy, Grimsby, DN37 9EH

Thank you for talking to my colleagues and me when we visited your academy recently. The inspectors spoke with you in lessons, around the academy and in groups, looked at your work, read the results of questionnaires filled in by you and your parents and carers, and spoke with some of your teachers. Here is a summary of the main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- The academy provides you with a satisfactory standard of education.
- You make satisfactory progress in lessons. Your results in examinations have been low, particularly when English and mathematics are included, but there is evidence that, increasingly, the progress you make is improving, including in those subjects.
- Your attendance is below average, although it is also improving.
- Most of you behave sensibly and reasonably. You said that behaviour has improved, but that it needs to be better still. The inspectors took the same view.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and lessons have improved.
- The principal and the senior leaders at the academy know what needs to be done to make things even better.

I have asked the principal and the governing body to increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better and to help more of you to develop good motivation for and attitudes to learning and behaviour that supports good learning. They will need your help to make the academy as good as I am sure all of you want it to be and I hope you will give the academy your support.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector

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