

David Young Community Academy

Inspection report

Unique reference number	131898
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	381421
Inspection dates	9–10 May 2012
Lead inspector	John Young HMI

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

Type of school	Sponsored Academy
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,002
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Madeley
Principal	Ros McMullen
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Young
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Keith Massett
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Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with less than two days' notice. Most of inspectors' time was spent in classrooms judging the impact of teaching, assessing students' work, talking to students about their learning, and to staff, about students' progress. The inspectors visited 38 lessons and observed 38 teachers at the school. Inspectors observed an assembly and visited tutorial sessions. Senior leaders and the lead inspector carried out four joint lesson observations. Inspectors held meetings and discussions with a range of staff, groups of students and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at a range of other evidence, such as development plans, safeguarding arrangements and self-evaluation documents. They evaluated questionnaire responses from 33 parents and carers, 135 students and 35 staff.

Information about the school

The academy is similar in size to most secondary schools nationally. The large majority of students are White British and live locally. The remaining numbers of students originate from a range of minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of students who are believed to speak English as an additional language is in line with the national average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus and those who have a statement of special educational needs is similar to national averages. These needs range from physical disability to speech language and communication needs, and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.

The academy is sponsored by the Church of England and has a specialism in design and the built environment. It holds the Investors in Pupils award. The academy also provides a range of extended services, such as study support, family learning courses and community access to their facilities. Breakfast is incorporated into the start of the day for all students, and a daily programme of enrichment events and activities end the day. The academy works collaboratively with a network of specialist schools, academies and independent schools, and is at an advanced stage of forming a multi-academy trust. The academy currently meets the government's floor standards which are the minimum standards expected by the government for attainment and progress.

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

Key findings

- After rigorous scrutiny of wide-ranging evidence, inspectors concur with the academy's self-evaluation that the educational experience provided to students is good and improving. It is not outstanding because students' outcomes, the quality of provision, and the impact of leadership are not outstanding.
- Leadership is good and has orchestrated major improvements in the academic performance, reputation and ethos of the academy over time. Senior leaders have built capacity throughout the academy and are reaping the benefits of having capable staff at all levels of the organisation. The alliances forged with key partners aid the raising of standards, the quality of provision and students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Governance is good.
- Attainment has risen quickly since the previous inspection and students' achievement is good when set against their below and often well below average starting points. But, there is room for improvement as students' achievement and attainment is not universally strong in some key areas.
- Teaching has a good impact on students' learning overall and in the best lessons students make rapid progress. However, there are weaker elements of teaching and some inconsistencies. The curriculum is innovative and supports students' learning well.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Most students feel safe and supported as a result of the secure arrangements in place. Some parents and carers and students feel that poor behaviour and bullying are big issues. Inspectors do not concur, but agree there is room for improvement. Rates of persistent absence are high.
- The academy's specialism makes a strong contribution to raising standards, curriculum breadth and widening students' horizons and aspirations.

- The sixth form is satisfactory and improving which is indicated by students' satisfactory and improving achievement. These outcomes are underpinned by good teaching, effective student support, enrichment opportunities, a bespoke curriculum and suitable leadership and management.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise students' attainments and enhance their achievements by:
 - increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of assessment, feedback, evaluation and support procedures, so that there is more precise and timely identification of the specific intervention required to boost students' learning and progress in those subjects that have historically performed less well than the highest attaining subjects in the academy, and maintain the high outcomes in other areas
 - ensuring students make or exceed three levels of progress in all subjects, but above all in English and mathematics during their time in the academy
 - further improving students' learning and progress in the sixth form.
- Ensure the impact of teaching is at least good or outstanding in all lessons by:
 - making certain that the learning activities and strategies employed by staff closely match the specific abilities and needs of all students and offers sufficient challenge
 - eradicating the inconsistencies and weaker aspects of teaching so that it consistently promotes a good climate for learning and produces high student engagement
 - sustaining a clear focus on learning and the development and consolidation of key skills and competencies throughout all lessons.
- Further improve students' attendance and significantly reduce the level of persistent absence among students by:
 - embedding the active promotion of excellent attendance across the academy, and increasing the impact of strategies to promote more frequent attendance among students that are persistently absent
 - developing more effective strategies for raising parents' and carers' awareness of the impact poor attendance and frequent absence can have on their children's academic development.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire feel that their children make good progress. To test this out, inspectors examined several performance indicators. Inspectors analysed students' prior attainment and progress over time and compared this with the academy's latest tracking information which they deemed reliable. The evidence confirms that students' achievement, including those who are disabled and those with special educational needs, those known to be eligible for free school

meals, and minority ethnic students, is good overall. This is demonstrated by the increase in their attainment from below or well below average on entry, to broadly average, by the time they leave the academy. Inspectors saw students acquiring knowledge quickly and securely in a range of subjects, and confidently applying a range of key skills. They watched students' competence in reading and writing improve through a sharper focus on extending their vocabulary and comprehension, oracy skills, creative writing, and input to hone their grammar. There are similar efforts to boost students' mathematical skills, particularly in problem-solving and algebra. This more recent focus is not yet embedded but it underlines the effective ways in which students are being prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. Consequently, very few students become unemployed and increasing numbers are going on to further and higher education.

Because students' attainment is rising at a much faster rate than seen nationally, they have been able to significantly close the deficits that existed with their attainments, those of their peers in other schools, and national averages. However, the ratio of students making expected progress in English and mathematics is not as high as it should be, and results in some humanities subjects lag behind those of the highest attaining subjects. The latest tracking data and inspectors observations show that current progress in these areas is strong and that most students are on track to meet their targets. Attainment and achievement in the sixth form are satisfactory and improving. The academy knows that it needs to increase the impact of intervention strategies to boost students' progress further. The academy's specialist subjects are high-attaining and have played a key role in driving up standards.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers and students who completed the questionnaire believe that students are well taught and make good progress at the academy. Inspectors agree and judge the quality of teaching to be good overall, which is reflected in students' mostly good progress. Staff know that their challenge is to raise the bar higher by delivering more outstanding lessons and eliminating the remaining weaker practice.

Staff are passionate about what they do and work hard. The majority have strong subject knowledge and foster positive relationships with students. They plan lessons carefully, taking account of the student data available to devise suitably demanding activities which stretch students. They hold high expectations of students, who in turn develop high aspirations, aided by good support and their effective personal and social development. This creates an inclusive, lively and purposeful learning climate. Skilful delivery, good learning aids and resources, clear success criteria, and targeted questioning to challenge students' thinking, together with appropriate guidance and intervention to correct misconceptions enables students to thrive and systematically acquire, develop and reinforce key concepts and skills in a range of subjects. Students particularly enjoy more practically oriented tasks and chances to solve problems, work creatively and independently. Effective links with business and the partner academy and independent schools help to enrich the learning opportunities available to students. A range of visits, visitors and work experience allow students to gain insights and experiences from beyond Seacroft and Leeds.

Less effective practice seen in lessons included an absence of the aspects identified

above. For example the climate for learning and the impact of teaching was compromised when staff did not adhere to agreed principles for managing behaviour, promoting student engagement and matching work precisely to students' specific needs and capabilities.

The use of assessment to support learning is satisfactory and evolving. Staff accept that more refinement is necessary to enable earlier and more precise identification of the next steps in students' learning; and to raise awareness of students' current levels of attainment and the relative progress they are making toward their age-related, end of year and end of key stage targets. Marking and feedback are variable.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers and students who responded to the inspection questionnaire hold mixed views about the quality of behaviour, how often lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour and how well the academy deals with bullying. Inspectors conclude that whilst behaviour is not yet good, the key indicators demonstrate that the strength of these concerns are not well founded and that students' behaviour and safety are satisfactory overall. The academy is a welcoming and orderly environment where most students display positive attitudes and relate suitably to each other and staff. However, behaviour is not yet good and on occasion staff have to contend with challenging behaviour, serious incidents and acts of defiance. Similarly, some staff have different thresholds of what constitutes acceptable behaviour and this results in some inconsistency of approach.

Reports of bullying, including prejudiced-based and cyber-bullying are low, and the incidence of staff referrals of students for poor behaviour are falling over time. Most students are biddable and adhere to the behaviour and safety protocols and improvement strategies in place and the rate of reoffending is confined to the minority. Students understand safe working practices and usually apply them. Some high-quality support, advice and guidance help students to feel secure, particularly those deemed more vulnerable. However, the academy accepts that it must increase confidence in the effectiveness of the behaviour management and improvement procedures in place and improve the extent to which students self-regulate their behaviour. Students' participation in the local Seacroft Army Cadet Force, the 'Academy Court' and the vertical tutor arrangements, support this aim by enabling students to show discipline, resolve disputes maturely and amicably and encourage older students to take responsibility for their own behaviour, and to positively influence the behaviour of others.

Attendance is low but improving over time. Rates of persistent absence remain high despite the proactive steps the academy has taken to remedy this. Leaders recognise that the academy must do more to promote regular attendance and ensure parents, carers and students realise the negative impact regular absence can have on students' educational success and their life chances.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders are effectively building ambition and securing improvements in the outcomes for students and the quality of provision. Their support and challenge at all levels via regular monitoring and evaluation, coaching, training and mentoring is increasing the proportion of good or better teaching across the academy. Leaders' skilful strategic direction, including enhancing ethos, and the way the academy engages with students and their parents and carers, are the foundations upon which standards are rising, the curriculum is improving and attendance is increasing. These factors, and the tackling of identified weaknesses, indicate the academy's capacity to improve further. Staff show a strong affinity to the academy's vision to provide a top class education for students that will enable students to excel in many walks of life. The academy is outward looking and is sharing its expertise to promote improvement in other schools. The academy accepts that the efficiency of systems to evaluate the extent of improvement in areas of its work requires refinement, so that leaders can always corroborate their 'gut instincts' with hard evidence.

The curriculum supports students' learning well, including those deemed most vulnerable and those with additional learning needs. Students opt from traditionally academic, vocational and work-based pathways, supplemented by provision designed to increase their confidence and self-esteem, raise their aspirations, improve their resilience and accelerate their learning. Sport, music, art and dance, and involvement in the Young Philosophers Club and the academy newspaper widen students' horizons. These, together with, preparation for work guidance, leadership roles and the work of the chaplain ensure students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted. As does their charity work and quiet reflection in assemblies.

The academy's specialism makes a strong contribution to raising standards and improving the quality of provision. Attainment in the specialist subjects is high. Some staff are lead learners and share good practice. It has led to new qualification routes for students and the local community benefit from a number of associated projects.

The governing body discharge their duty to monitor, challenge and strategically influence the academy's development effectively. A sound committee structure linked to key aspects of the academy's work coupled with members' apt experience and expertise enables them to evaluate the academy's performance objectively and critically.

The academy effectively promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination which is reflected in the improving performance of different groups of students, a strong stance on prejudice and the positive relationships that exist between students from a diverse range of ethnic, social and religious backgrounds. Safeguarding arrangements are secure with suitable procedures for the safer recruitment of staff, child protection, risk assessment, and site security. Parents and carers who replied to the Ofsted questionnaire were mostly positive about the work of the academy and would recommend it to others. Inspectors investigated the concerns of the minority that were not, but found little corroborating evidence to support their views. Student numbers are rising as the academy increasingly becomes the destination of choice for local residents due to its growing status.

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 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.
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.



11 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of David Young Community Academy, Leeds LS14 6NU

Thank you for being polite and helpful to the inspectors when we visited recently. We learned a lot from observing your lessons and talking with you. We read with interest the views you, and your parents and carers expressed in the questionnaires.

After studying the evidence, we found that your academy provides you with a good education. We know you will be pleased by this news because you told us how well you think you are doing and how much you enjoy coming to the academy. Standards are rising and your achievement is generally good as a result of the good teaching you receive, the broad and balanced curriculum on offer, and the good care, guidance and support you receive. However, not all of you do as well as you could in all subjects, nor is all teaching good or better. Behaviour and safety is satisfactory, and occasionally some of you let yourselves down. Your attendance is improving but the ratio of those persistently absent is still too high. We found that you are developing a good range of leadership, personal and social skills which will help you in the future and that your horizons are being widened by the various enrichment and extracurricular options open to you. We found that your specialist subjects have a positive impact on your achievement and in developing community links. We saw how proud you were when your names were announced for gaining promotion in the cadet force, and you told us how hard you worked in planning and performing in 'Jesus Christ Superstar' recently. You also told us how interesting it was to hear the author, illustrator and animator, Curtis Jobling, speak to you about improving your reading.

The academy's leaders are effective in their role and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for further development. We have asked them to focus on making the academy even stronger. In order to do this we want them to: further raise your attainment and improve your achievement; further improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better throughout the academy; further improve attendance and reduce the rate of persistent absence. You can all play your part by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

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