

The Ridings' Federation Winterbourne International Academy

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135944
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	381972
Inspection dates	26 April and 29 May 2012
Lead inspector	Robert Pyner 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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1852
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	350
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Ian Butcher (Chair of the Academy's Governing Body)
Headteacher	Robert Evans (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	High Street Winterbourne Bristol BS36 1JL
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

Inspection team

Robert Pyner	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sally Hall	Additional Inspector
Chris Teal	Additional Inspector
Phillip Winch	Additional Inspector
Carol Worthington	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice and over two separate days. The inspectors conducted 51 lesson observations or inspection activities amounting to over 26 hours of direct engagement with teaching staff and students. These included five joint observations with senior leaders; in all 39 teachers were observed. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, the Chair of the Academy's Governing Body, the Chief Executive Principal and the Deputy Chief Executive Principal of the federation, staff and students. An inspector held telephone discussions with one parent and the external consultant supporting the academy. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the academy's work, and looked at progress tracking and performance data, strategic planning, students' work and policies, guidelines, plans and reviews. An inspector heard a few Year 7 students read. The questionnaire responses from 355 parents and carers, 145 students and 48 staff were also analysed.

Information about the school

The Ridings' Federation Winterbourne International Academy is much larger than the average-sized secondary school and is federated with another school, Yate International Academy. Together these make up The Ridings' Federation of Academies which was established in September 2009 with educational partnership from Airbus UK, CISCO and the University of Bath. The federation has a Chief Executive Principal and Deputy Chief Executive Principal with each academy having its own Principal and leadership structure. Governance is at two levels with a board of directors for the federation trust and a local governing body for each academy. A distinctive feature of the federation is the promotion of a strong international dimension. Teaching staff work across the federation including the leadership of some subjects. From September 2011 there has been a fully integrated sixth form. At Winterbourne most students are from a White British heritage and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also below the national average; students' needs include moderate learning and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or in receipt of specific provision is lower than the national figure. The academy meets the current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress; subject specialisms are mathematics and modern foreign languages.

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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good academy. It is not yet outstanding because less-able students and those with special educational needs do not all make the strong progress seen in other groups and there is a wide gap in the achievement between girls and boys. The drive for improvement is reflected across the academy with accurate self-evaluation based on very effective progress tracking and analysis of outcomes.
- Since the academy opened there has been clear improvement in outcomes for Year 11 students with most measures being significantly above national figures. The progress made by higher and middle ability students together with girls is very strong overall.
- There has been an effective focus on the improvement of teaching, well supported by programmes developed by the academy. The monitoring by senior leaders is regular and accurate. There is strong teaching across the academy but in some work with less-able groups the lack of clearly-focused activities matched to students' needs can lead to slower progress.
- Behaviour is good. Most students are friendly and courteous, and display positive attitudes to learning; they say that they feel safe. Overall, the academy is a calm and hard working community.
- The leadership for the federation and academy is well structured to focus on improving achievement and widening opportunities for students. Improvement planning is based on highly accurate self-evaluation and involves middle leaders to ensure impact. This approach is leading to clear improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The sixth form is satisfactory. The director of sixth form for the federation has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the academy and improvement strategies have a clear focus on raising achievement. Academy

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evidence shows that improvement strategies are beginning to show impact.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further in order to at least meet to the targets set for Year 11 in 2013 by:
 - developing more focused intervention strategies to support less-able students and those with special educational needs so that these groups make similar progress to all students
 - developing the learning strategies for boys to narrow the gap in achievement with girls.
- Improve students' achievement in the sixth form so that it consistently exceeds national figures by:
 - utilising more effectively the systems for the tracking of progress against target grades for individual students and intervening swiftly when underachievement is identified
 - improving students' independent learning skills.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students enter Year 7 with broadly above average attainment and, overall, make good progress throughout their time at the academy. Progress measures in English and mathematics have shown clear gains since the academy was opened and this has resulted in strong improvements in outcomes for these subjects. Evidence from the inspection confirms this good progress overall and this is strongly supported by the responses in parents', carers' and students' questionnaires. However, this good progress is not the case for all groups of students. Although students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported well in their learning, less-able students and those with disabilities and special educational needs do not all make the very strong progress seen over time for middle and higher ability groups. The academy has developed a reading programme for Year 7 students and this is providing good support to help those who require extra encouragement to develop their literacy skills. The teaching assistants working on this programme are particularly skilled at supporting these students.

Standards have risen overall since the opening of the academy. In 2011, the proportion of students gaining five or more higher GCSE grades including English and mathematics was significantly higher than the national figure and an improvement on the previous year. Outcomes for English and mathematics show similar improvement, however the results for modern foreign languages in 2011, one of the academy's specialisms, were disappointing. Academy data show improved predictions for this year.

Students say that they enjoy lessons and that their teachers work hard to support

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their learning. Students in one focus group particularly mentioned the improvement in the access to computers. Students mostly listen to instructions well and effective relationships mean they are encouraged to ask questions that support their understanding. Girls make very good progress overall and, although boys make better than average progress in English and mathematics, there remains a large gap in achievement between the gender groups.

In the sixth form, students' progress is satisfactory. They generally make clear progress from broadly above average starting points, although there is some variation between subjects. Attendance has improved following firmer registration requirements. Students report improved support and guidance on the transition from Year 11 into the sixth form and this, together with the provision of targeted courses, for example, a two-year AS level course in mathematics, has improved retention rates. A structured improvement plan with a focus on improving outcomes for the higher grades and the development of independent learning shows signs of impact.

Quality of teaching

Most parents, carers and students noted in responses to the inspection questionnaires that teaching in the academy is effective. Academy data show that there have been clear improvements in the quality of teaching. Inspection evidence indicates that strengths include high expectations, the use of teachers' subject knowledge to ask probing questions, and a lively pace to lessons that include a variety of activities, including practical tasks, requiring students to practise their understanding and skills. An example of this was observed in a science lesson with a Year 8 group working on how to present findings on a graph. Following practical work, they were working on a structured worksheet which provided enough information for them to construct a graph to show the line of best fit based on their findings. The teacher skilfully provided information on how the work linked to assessment levels. Generally, the high quality of relationships ensures that students are well engaged, motivated and enthusiastic across the range of subjects in the planned curriculum. The effective use of good subject knowledge is a strong characteristic of teaching in the sixth form.

The best teaching takes place in lessons where well-targeted activities are planned to challenge specific groups of students. This feature is not evident in all lessons, however. Although there is some effective targeted support for identified disabled students and those with special educational needs, in some lessons there was insufficient planning for the specific needs of less-able students. This can lead to students, mainly boys, to become distracted and less engaged in their learning with the result that their progress slows.

Marking shows improvement since the monitoring inspection last year. Students say that marking can be variable between subjects but is generally helpful, especially for the older year groups. Inspection evidence shows some variability but with examples of good practice, for example in English books with comments that support students to understand the next step in their learning, often matched to their targets.

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There are good contributions in lessons to moral, social and cultural development but less to spiritual reflection. In particular, there are clear opportunities in lessons and through displays around the academy for students to appreciate differing cultures around the world and this is linked to the international dimension of the academy.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students' attitudes to learning are generally very positive and they are, for the most part, fully engaged, keen to answer questions in lessons and work well together. Students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable who spoke to inspectors and case studies provided by the academy show that this group receive good, personalised support through the B4LC provision. They report that they are supported well in the centre, where staff have a good understanding of their specific individual needs. A range of students who met inspectors noted that they felt safe and that behaviour around the academy is generally good although a few lessons can be disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. They understand that bullying can occur in a variety of forms and say that it is dealt with by staff. A small minority of parents and carers who replied to the inspection questionnaire felt there was an element of disruption to lessons. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour is typically good overall although when lessons do not meet their needs, some less-able boys can show lack of interest and indulge in low-level disruption. Parents and carers strongly agree that the academy is a safe place.

Attendance is high and effective systems are in place to follow up unexplained absences. Students with poor attendance records are well supported although the rates for some students with special educational needs are lower than the academy average. Exclusion rates are below average and there have been no permanent exclusions since the academy opened. Students with behavioural difficulties value the work of learning mentors.

Leadership and management

The Principal of the academy provides a strong commitment to the improvement in achievement for all students. He is well supported by a leadership team which understand the strengths and weaknesses of the academy and use data of all types to plan improvements and evaluate outcomes. Data are used very effectively to monitor effectiveness and prioritise improvements, although this is yet to show consistent impact on outcomes in the sixth form. Systems for improving teaching are effective with the impact being seen in the increasing profile of good or better teaching. Much of this improvement is the result of the teacher support programme developed by advanced skills teachers within the federation. This provides effective, targeted and time-bound support for individual teachers. Middle leaders are committed to this programme and play an integral part in the improvement process. They evaluate the outcomes for their subjects and provide effective improvement plans. The local governing body is well led and provides effective challenge and support, reporting to The Ridings' Federation of Academies Trust. Overall, these broad strengths in the leadership and management of the academy mean that it is in a very strong position to sustain and continue its improvement.

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The work of the federation has contributed to the academy's improvement. There is a well understood division of responsibilities with the federation's Chief Executive Principal responsible for strategic and financial issues, leaving the Principal free to concentrate on students' achievement. This structure works very well as shown by the significant improvement in outcomes since the academy opened. A number of advanced skills teachers now work across the federation, providing valuable support to other staff together with federation directorships for the leadership of English, mathematics and the sixth form.

The curriculum is broad and balanced with a good range of opportunities across the academy including in the sixth form. These, overall, make a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The development of courses to meet a broader range of needs has been developed with the provision of BTEC and NVQ courses which has just begun to show an impact on outcomes. Plans are in place to develop further the academy's international dimension with the full implementation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years programme for Year 7 in September.

The academy promotes equality and tackles discrimination well. There are very effective systems to collect and analyse data on achievement and students' progress and these are being developed to target interventions and personalised learning but have yet to show consistently improved outcomes for some groups. Staff are aware of the needs of minority ethnic groups. Safeguarding procedures are a priority for the academy, resulting in effective systems which meet all current requirements.

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.



30 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of The Ridings' Federation Winterbourne International Academy, Winterbourne BS36 1JL

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we inspected your academy recently. Special thanks go to the student-guides who helped the inspectors find their way around, the groups who met inspectors and to those of you who completed the questionnaire; we found these very useful. We enjoyed talking with all the students we met and found what you had to say very informative and relevant.

This letter is to tell you about our findings. The Ridings' Federation Winterbourne International Academy is good overall. Most of you achieve well by the time you leave Year 11 although this is not the case for all groups of students, particularly those who can find learning hard. Girls make better progress than boys and achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory. You and your parents and carers told inspectors that you feel very safe in the academy and that staff help you in many ways to do as well as you can. Overall, behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Teaching is good overall with some that is outstanding across the academy.

The Principal, senior staff and governors provide effective leadership and management. They recognise that there are aspects of the academy that need improvement, and these are the areas that the inspection team identified.

- Increase the achievement by less-able students and those with special educational needs so that these groups make similar progress to all students.
- Support boys so that they can increase the progress that they make across the academy and narrow the achievement gap with girls.
- Further improve students' achievement in the sixth form.

You too have an important part to play by continuing to work hard, attending regularly and making the most of the wide range of opportunities you have at the academy.

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector

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