

King Edward VI Sheldon Heath Academy

Sheldon Heath Road, Sheldon, Birmingham, B26 2RZ

Inspection dates 14–15 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students start at the academy with standards which are below average. They make good progress to achieve broadly average results in GCSE examinations.
- A major success of the academy is giving students increased confidence in their own abilities so that now many want to continue their education at the academy before going to university.
- The sixth form has improved greatly and results in 2012 for Year 12 students were above average.
- Teaching is mainly good or outstanding. At its best, relationships between students and staff are excellent.
- Teachers use questions well to make sure that students understand their work.
- Behaviour around the academy and in nearly all lessons is good with few incidents of poor behaviour. Students from different backgrounds work well together and they feel safe.
- Leaders and governors have a good understanding of how well the academy has progressed since opening and what it needs to do to improve further. They have made sure teaching is constantly getting better and results are rising. This shows that the academy is able to carry on improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Results in A-level examinations are not as high as in other years.
- Marking does not always tell students how they can improve their work.
- Teachers do not always adjust their lessons to take account of the responses from students so that work is always challenging.
- In some lessons, students are given work that is too easy or too hard.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 48 lessons. Some observations were joint visits with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff, students and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- They took account of 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They observed the academy’s work and analysed 33 staff questionnaires.
- They scrutinised examination results for 2012, assessment records, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body and the academy’s development plans and evaluations.

Inspection team

Michael Smith, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Glen Goddard

Additional Inspector

Terence Payne

Additional Inspector

Gillian Martin

Additional Inspector

Allison Dawes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized sponsored academy.
- Its predecessor school was Sheldon Heath Community Arts College. It became an academy in September 2010, sponsored by the King Edward VI Foundation.
- The academy had a monitoring inspection for new sponsored academies in October 2011.
- About two fifths of students are known to be eligible for pupil premium (additional government funds). A similar proportion of students are from ethnic minority backgrounds, the largest group of which is from a Pakistani background. Both of these proportions are well above average.
- Around 6% of students are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs; this is broadly average. Just over a tenth of students are supported through school action, which is average.
- A number of students are educated part time at alternative provision at South and City College Birmingham, Kingshurst Training and the Enta Academy.
- The academy has received a number of awards including those for Eco Schools and from Stonewall.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students make good progress with their A-level subjects in Year 13 by building on the success of their Year 12 results in 2012.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning throughout the academy by:
 - teachers continually assessing how well students are progressing during lessons and adapting their teaching to take account of students' responses
 - making sure that work is matched to students' different abilities so that it is not too easy or too hard and students are always challenged
 - marking consistently telling students how well they have done and giving them clear advice on what they need to do next to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in both GCSE and A-level examinations are improving strongly. In GCSE examinations, students make good progress from their starting points, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs and who have additional support for their learning. Teaching challenges students in the large majority of lessons, although at times work given to them is either too hard or too easy.
- Students make good progress in mathematics and English. The proportion of students who make and exceed the expected progress is similar to national figures. Students now enter more GCSE examinations and less vocational courses. Results are improving across all areas although, in 2012, results in French and Spanish were lower than the previous year.
- Students from a Pakistani heritage achieve in line with other students. In observations of lessons it was very noticeable how well students got on with each other and there were no classes where groups from the same background appeared to need to work together.
- A small group of students are entered for mathematics GCSE examinations at the end of Year 10 because of concerns about their attitude. These students are successful and they gain in confidence and continue studying during Year 11. High-ability students studied an additional mathematics course as well as the GCSE course in Year 11 last year. This helped them with their understanding of mathematics and is why there has been a big increase in the number of students studying mathematics at A level.
- Additional government funding (the pupil premium) has been used effectively to support targeted groups. Funds have been used to help students to improve their reading and provide small groups with extra revision classes. It has also been used to help students buy school uniform, support for individuals at a breakfast club, and funding visits to universities for students who may not otherwise consider applying.
- The extra support has meant that achievement for these students has improved and is closer to that of all students. It has also meant more students, including those from a Pakistani background, are staying on to study A levels and more are going to good universities. Increasing numbers of students are staying on to study in the sixth form. Very few students left last year without going on to further education, a job or training.
- A-level results are improving. Results in 2012 for Year 12 students show the impact of how well the academy has improved the progress students make. Nevertheless, results in A-level examinations are still below average. This is because the students in Year 13 have not benefitted from the full impact of much improved teaching and support.
- Students often start at the academy with weak reading, writing and calculation skills. Additional support is effective in helping these students improve so they are better able to meet the demands in lessons. Too few students read at home for pleasure. Good support is available for some students with their reading from sixth form students. Opportunities for students to improve their reading, writing and calculation skills across a variety of different subjects help them to improve.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Many lessons are good or outstanding, although there remains some teaching which is not yet good. Teaching helps students make good progress across a wide variety of subjects. Relationships between teachers and students are good and students are confident that their teachers care about how well they are progressing and give them excellent support.
- Teachers often use questions well in lessons. Students are expected to explain answers and to justify what they have said. This helps students gain a good understanding of their work as well as helping them to improve their speaking and listening skills.
- Students work in carefully organised groups in some lessons and in others they enjoy practical work. This allows students to be more in charge of the way in which they work. This gives them opportunities to develop good skills to work when not under the direct control of the teacher.
- Students say that teaching has improved over the last two years. They enjoy a variety of lessons but some students feel teaching is good whereas others feel it could be better. As one said, 'It depends on who teaches you.'
- Students improve their reading, writing and calculation skills in many lessons. Tutor time is used well to help students improve these skills as well as giving them opportunities to discuss and learn about local and international issues which are in the news.
- Teachers generally plan lessons well. However, work is not always matched to the needs of different ability groups and so it does not challenge all students. Teachers often check on students' learning during lessons and use their work as a teaching point with the rest of the class. But, at times, teachers do not use what they have found out to change their plans to take account of how well students are progressing.
- Marking is variable. In the very best marking, for example in English and geography, teachers identify what students need to do to improve their work and then give clear advice on how they could achieve better. Sometimes, marking is not frequent or detailed and it does not explain how a student could improve their work.
- Students are provided with good opportunities for their spiritual development. Assemblies and subjects such as English often allow students to reflect upon spiritual matters such as considering myths and legends. Students often discuss moral issues. For example, in science, students discuss the rights and wrongs of animal testing.
- Cultural development is evident by the way in which students from different backgrounds get on well with each other. Students also take part in a large number of additional classes after school in music and drama. Social development is good. Students all work well in groups. They also develop good social awareness through assemblies and by considering important events from history and religious events from a wide variety of religions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the academy and in the majority of lessons is good. Occasionally, when teaching is not good, behaviour falls below this high standard. Systems to support students who do not always behave well are effective. Students respond well to the new system of rewards.
- Good work by tutors and heads of house mean relationships between students of different backgrounds are very harmonious. Students say they all get on well with each other because the academy makes sure they all are considered to be important.

- There are good procedures to ensure that students are safe. The academy works well with different external agencies to support students. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding is very well informed and works well with the academy to ensure students are kept safe.
- Students have a good understanding of the key issues of keeping safe, appropriate to their age. This includes aspects of sexual health, using computers and social network sites, implications of belonging to gangs, knife crime and of substance abuse, including both cigarettes and alcohol. Work with the equality charity, Stonewall, means students understand different types of relationships.
- Bullying incidents are rare and staff are always available to give support if it occurs or if students fall out with each other. Students know about the different types of bullying. Students in Year 7 said that they felt well supported before they started at the academy and that they have settled in well.
- Attendance has improved and is above average. There has been a reduction in the number of students who have too much time off school. There has also been a big reduction in the number of students who have been either permanently or temporarily excluded.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership at all levels is strong. Staff are supportive of the Principal and there is a very clear purpose and ambition which is shared by all. There is a good understanding of the academy's strengths and areas which need further improvements.
- Leaders, including subject leaders, have been successful in improving the quality of teaching so that more is judged good or outstanding. Teachers feel well supported and that they can get additional help to improve their teaching when required. They particularly enjoy the before-school sessions each week which look at different aspects of teaching and how these can improve their practice.
- The King Edward VI Foundation supports the school well to improve teaching, including support for teachers in their first year of teaching. This also includes support from the King Edward Consortium for staff who are learning to become teachers. There are close links with other schools within the foundation. The academy has been successful in supporting other schools when they are working with students who are new to learning English and also on how best to help students read by knowing the sounds different letters or groups of letters make (phonics).
- The academy has good systems to check on how well teachers are teaching. All teachers have targets to bring about improvements and to judge how successful they have been. The governing body ensures that those teachers who successfully meet their targets are suitably rewarded.
- The academy has changed the subjects students study so that, in Years 10 and 11, students now mainly study GCSE courses with fewer studying vocational courses. A group of students in each of these years attend local colleges or training places one day each week. This is timetabled so that they do not miss any lessons. At the alternative provision, they study courses which are related to their career hopes. For example, hair and beauty, vehicle mechanics, construction or as a computer technician. Students enjoy these and say they want to carry on when they reach the age of 16 and attend college full time.
- Courses offered in the sixth form are now mainly A level, with just a few vocational courses. The

academy plans learning across all years so that students have opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Tutor periods are used well to help with students' literacy, numeracy and calculation skills.

- The academy has used additional government funding (the pupil premium) well to support students who need additional help with reading, writing and calculation work. It is also used to help students see the benefit of gaining as high a set of qualifications as possible. The gap between the achievement of these students and that of others is being successfully narrowed and more students are staying on and then going to university. The use of these funds and how successful they have been is reported on the academy's website to parents as well as to the governing body.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is good. The governing body has a good committee structure in place to check on how well the academy is doing. It challenges the academy well to make sure it is always improving, although minutes from the governing body meetings do not always show the extent of this challenge. Governors check to make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet all current requirements. They check how well different groups of pupils achieve to make sure that no group does less well than others.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number 136152

Inspection number 399765

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

Type of school	Academy Sponsor-led
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	1169
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Christopher
Principal	John Allen
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	0121 4644428
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