

Landau Forte Academy, Amington

Woodland Road, Amington, Tamworth, B77 4FF

Inspection dates

5–6 December 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.

- Overall students have made good progress from the time the academy opened, when standards were well below average.
- Results in English literature and mathematics show that students achieve well and make good progress.
- A major success of the academy is giving students pride in their work and their achievements.
- Teaching has improved and is mainly good or outstanding. At its best, students are very active in lessons which they enjoy.
- Teachers generally use questions well to help students understand their work.
- Behaviour around the academy and in most lessons is good.
- Staff deal well with any challenging behaviour.
- Leaders, governors and the Landau Forte Trust have a very good understanding of how well the academy has progressed since opening and what it needs to do to improve further.
- Leaders have focused very well on raising the quality of teaching so that it has improved greatly. This shows that the academy is able to carry on improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Results in GCSE English language fell significantly this year.
- Some teaching requires improvement because teachers do not always adjust the activities when they are teaching lower-ability groups and students become distracted.
- Teachers do not always give students enough time to think before they are expected to answer questions, and sometimes step in too quickly when students find work hard.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 34 lessons. Most observations were joint visits with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with staff, students, the Chief Executive of the Landau Forte Charitable Trust and the Chair of the Governing Body, as well as a phone conversation with a parent.
- They took account of 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They observed the academy's work and analysed 72 staff questionnaires.
- They looked carefully at 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

David Bennett

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

David Butler

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized sponsored academy.
- Its predecessor school was Woodhouse Business and Enterprise College. It became an academy in September 2010, sponsored by the Landau Forte Charitable Trust. In September 2011, the academy moved to a new purpose-built site.
- The academy had a monitoring inspection for new sponsored academies in February 2012.
- Almost a sixth of students are known to be eligible for pupil premium (additional government funds), which is average.
- Around four per cent of students are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs; this is below average. Almost a fifth of students are supported through school action, which is above average.
- A number of students are educated part time at alternative provision including the Tamworth Boxing Club and the local specialist skills centre on the Torc campus.
- 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?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning throughout the academy by:
 - adapting lesson activities when teaching low-ability groups so that these students are actively engaged and enjoy their learning
 - 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
 - giving students time to think before expecting answers to questions, and then asking further questions to extend their learning
 - allowing students time to persevere with their work before intervening.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in GCSE examinations are improving strongly. When the academy opened it had accurate information about the standards students could be expected to reach if they continued to make progress at the same rate as they had been making over the previous three years. Results for GCSE examinations in both 2011 and 2012 show that students greatly exceeded these levels because they made good progress from these starting points. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs and who have additional support for their learning made similar good progress.
- Results for English language GCSE in 2011 showed students achieved well. In 2012 results fell significantly. However results for GCSE English literature, which over three-quarters of the students in the year sat, improved. Students made good progress in this subject.
- Achievement in mathematics improved greatly in 2012 and was good. The proportion of students who make and exceed the expected progress is similar to national figures. A small group of students were entered for the GCSE before the end of Year 11. All students continued to study mathematics, including some who followed a course which help prepare them for studying mathematics at A level.
- Achievement in science is good. All students who completed GCSE courses for the separate sciences of biology, chemistry and physics were successful at gaining at least a grade C in all three subjects. The number of students studying GCSE sciences has increased and results are good.
- Additional government funding (the pupil premium) has been used effectively to support groups of students with additional help for their reading, writing and mathematics, as well as lessons at the end of the normal day for other subjects. It has also been used to make sure students can go on educational visits and are not disadvantaged. These activities have meant that achievement for these students has improved and results at the end of Year 11 show very little difference between these students and others. Very few students left last year without going on to further education, a job or training.
- Students are given support to improve their reading and they are often seen reading during breaks. Many say they read more at home. The library is used well at lunchtimes, when students are able to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books in a very calm way. Different subjects often include opportunities to help students improve their writing and occasionally their calculation skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved and is good. The academy rightly recognises there is room for improvement as not all teaching meets this standard, but many lessons are good or outstanding.
- Teaching helps students make good progress across a wide variety of subjects. The academy has undergone a very strong evaluation of the teaching of English, including gaining an external validation of its judgment. This has shown that teaching is generally good and often outstanding, with students making good progress.
- Relationships between teachers and students are good and this gives students confidence that staff want them to succeed. Older students, who can remember when the academy opened, say that the quality of teaching has improved greatly and they enjoy lessons now. Previously they

spoke of being unable to learn because lessons were dull and teachers were not able to control some students who interrupted their learning.

- Teachers often use questions well in lessons. They expect students to give longer answers and to justify what they have said. Students also discuss their work before answering and this helps them gain a good understanding of their work. When questioning is not good it is because students do not have enough time to think about their answers before they are given additional help, or teachers answer their own question. Teachers do not always extend learning by using a student's answer to then ask a more demanding question.
- Students enjoy practical work or when they are made to work in groups. This gives students more responsibility to decide the way in which they work, and helps them to develop good skills to work when not under the direct control of the teacher.
- Students improve their reading, writing and calculation skills in many lessons. Different subjects make sure students have opportunities to improve these important skills.
- Teachers generally plan lessons well but they use the same lesson outline for all ability groups. This sometimes means that activities for lower-ability groups do not engage them well in their work. They do not then work well, become distracted and need constant reminders about their behaviour. In other lessons the same students are highly motivated and engaged.
- Work is not always matched to the needs of different ability groups and so it does not challenge all students. In some lessons activities allow students to work over an extended length of time and they make very good progress. However, at times students are not allowed long enough to work on a problem so that they can find ways to solve it and improve their own learning. Teachers intervene too quickly.
- Marking is variable. In the very best marking, for example in English and art, teachers identify what students need to do to improve their work and then give clear advice on how they could achieve better. Students are given extension tasks, which they respond to before the next lesson. Sometimes, marking is not frequent or detailed enough to help students improve.
- Students are provided with good opportunities for their spiritual development. The gatherings for house members allow students to think about recent issues which have affected them. Art work around the school is of a very high standard and celebrates excellent work. Students often discuss moral issues, for example the implications of bullying for both the victim and the bully.
- Cultural development is supported through students considering different world cultures. They also are able to visit cultural events like the opera. Students also take part in a large number of additional classes after school in music and drama and some are looking forward to taking part in the school production later this year. Social development is good. Students all work well in groups and students who have problems controlling their anger receive excellent support for their social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the academy and in the majority of lessons has improved greatly since being in the new building and is good. Occasionally, when teaching does not meet the needs of the students well enough, students do not remain focused on their work and they then become distracted.
- Relationships between students and staff are good. Students who have problems with their behaviour, including those who have difficulty controlling their anger, are very well supported. Incidents of weaker behaviour do take place but these are rare and very well dealt with when

they occur. The boxing club is effective in helping students to learn self-control and also to have a better appreciation of their own worth.

- Students have a good understanding of the key issues of keeping safe, appropriate to their age. They say bullying incidents are rare but they do occur from time to time. When they occur both the victim and the students responsible get good support. Parents and carers are informed about the way in which the academy deals with incidents and are given good advice. The link worker between the academy and parents and carers is available to give additional support.
- Students have received a large amount of advice on how to prevent bullying using computers or mobile phones. Advice has included demonstrations on how to make sure your settings on social network sites are at the most appropriate level, and how to block text messages from specific numbers. However, incidents of this kind of bullying do sometimes occur and the academy takes swift action when they are reported.
- Students have information to help keep themselves safe. This includes advice on sexual health and substance abuse, including both cigarettes and alcohol. Students also understand the worth of different types of relationships and they are challenged if they use words like 'gay' in an inappropriate manner.
- 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.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership at all levels is strong. The Principal and other senior leaders have a very clear purpose and ambition to continue improving which are shared by staff. They have an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and areas which need further improvement.
- The academy has responded to the fall in achievement in English language by making sure all aspects of English have been examined closely and improved where necessary. Leaders have checked on the quality of teaching. They have supported the staff to change the way in which they measure how well students are progressing and are likely to achieve in their GCSE examinations.
- The academy has been very successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning. There is excellent support for all teachers to help them improve their teaching. Staff who need to improve have been well supported by other staff who act as mentors. Teachers who have identified a similar area of teaching which they want to improve work well together to support each other and this, along with additional training, has brought about improvements.
- The Landau Forte Charitable Trust supports the academy well to improve the leadership and the quality of teaching. There are close links with other foundation academies in Tamworth as well as with the original academy in Derby. The chief executive is a frequent visitor and he ensures the academy follows the expectations set by the Trust.
- The academy has good systems to check on how well teachers are teaching. Leaders identify areas of strength and aspects which need improving. These are then shared so that managers can point teachers in the right direction to get support from colleagues or additional training. The governing body ensures that 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 work-related courses. Increasing numbers

study a foreign language, and the languages available have been extended to include French, German and Spanish. A greater proportion of students are studying the three separate sciences at GCSE.

- The academy plans learning well across all years for students to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- A group of students attend a local training provider each week. This is timetabled so that they do not miss any lessons. At this alternative provision they study construction, both brick work and using wood. A group attend a local boxing club to help them with self-discipline and having a better understanding of their own worth. A few students complete an extended work experience for part of each week by working as part of the academy's staff.
- 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 has also made sure these students do not miss out on educational visits. Money has been used to employ a member of staff to help families and students who have problems at home or where students are reluctant to attend school. The gap between the achievement of these students and that of others is being successfully narrowed and attendance for these students has improved. The use of these funds and how successful they have been are reported the governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is very strong. The governing body includes members who are highly experienced as members of the Landau Forte Charitable Trust. They have well-developed expertise from serving on other governing bodies within the Trust. They train new members to the governing body as well as updating existing members. Governors challenge the academy strongly to make sure it is always improving. They check to make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding students meet all current requirements and that the academy puts in place the correct procedures if an incident occurs. They check how well different groups of pupils achieve to make sure that no group does less well than any others, and compare the results to those achieved in similar schools and academies nationally.

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	136136
Inspection number	399775

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	907
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Bell
Principal	Diane Pickering
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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