

Hammersmith Academy

25 Cathnor Road, London, W12 9PA

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Students make good progress in Years 7 and 8, based on their starting points. Disabled students and those with special educational needs also make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons well to ensure students achieve well over the two years allocated to Key Stage 3.
- Teachers mark students' work with great care and provide helpful comments, which support them in moving up to the next level of attainment.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. They feel very safe, and their attendance is well above the national average
- The headteacher's passion and commitment effectively drives academy improvement. Leaders, managers and governors have an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths, and monitor the quality of teaching and students' achievement closely. Many aspects of leadership are strong and the academy's vision is known and supported by all within it. Staff in the academy are committed to getting the best outcomes for students. Consequently, this is an academy that continues to improve.
- The subjects offered to students are wide ranging and include an imaginative programme of enrichment activities.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress from their below-average starting points.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small proportion of teaching still requires improvement because these teachers are not matching work in lessons precisely enough to meet the needs of students.
- Systems for gathering the views of students and of parents and carers are not yet fully developed. Sixth form students in particular want more say, and to be able to contribute more to the life of the academy.
- Governors' understanding of the performance of different groups of students and of how the use of pupil premium funding benefits those students who are eligible is not secure.
- The academy is only in its second year of operation, and aspects of its work need further embedding and strengthening to meet the needs of its community.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors saw 18 parts of lessons, taught by 17 teachers. In addition, inspectors visited a number of lessons briefly, accompanied by senior members of staff.
- Meetings took place with senior leaders, heads of subjects, different groups of students and members of the governing body. Inspectors looked at a wide range of academy documentation, including self-evaluation documentation, the academy’s own information on students’ progress, policies and the academy’s records on the quality of teaching. They also examined the academy’s central record of the recruitment checks on staff.
- No published achievement data were available for this inspection. Inspectors considered the academy’s own data and the rigour of its systems for assessment. Inspectors also took particular account of what they saw in lessons.
- Inspectors considered 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of the views of staff, including those expressed in 45 staff questionnaires

Inspection team

John Daniell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Angela Cook

Additional Inspector

Kevin Morris

Additional Inspector

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Full report

Information about this school

- Hammersmith Academy opened in September 2011. It currently offers places for students in Years 7 and 8, and Years 12 and 13. The academy is sponsored by The Information Technologists' Company and The Mercers' Company
- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It has specialisms in digital media and information and communication technology.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for students known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.
- The academy has a greater proportion of boys than girls. Over half of the students speak English as an additional language.
- The academy does not use any alternative provision.
- As the academy does not have any students in Key Stage 4, it is not yet in a position to meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maximise the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - ensuring that all members of the governing body deepen their understanding of how well different groups of students achieve, and of how any gaps in achievement are being narrowed
 - developing governors' understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent and of the impact this has on eligible students' outcomes.
- Develop systems for gathering the views of students, particularly those in the sixth form, and of parents and carers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students in Years 7 and 8 achieve well during their time in Key Stage 3. Because the academy operates Key Stage 3 over a two-year period, rather than the more typical three years, students are expected to make more rapid progress than usual, and nearly all respond accordingly.
- A majority of parents rightly believe that their children are making good progress. Most groups in the academy achieve better than similar groups nationally. There are some gaps in achievement between different groups within the academy. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress but still achieve less well than their peers.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make better progress than their peers. Boys and girls make similar progress in English and mathematics, but girls outperform boys in science.
- Students entitled to receive pupil premium funding currently make less progress than others in the academy. Leaders have used the funding to finance a range of initiatives, including literacy support, the provision of laptops and the appointment of additional teaching assistants. These initiatives have helped to improve outcomes for these students, but have not yet narrowed the gap between them and others in the academy.
- As a result of high quality teaching, good leadership and effective support, gaps in attainment between different groups of students are being narrowed. This is due to the academy's strong drive in promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination.
- Students in Year 7 who are identified as requiring additional support in reading, writing and communications skills achieve well as members of the Transition Group. These students are taught English, mathematics and humanities in a common teaching base by a limited number of staff.
- Students told inspectors they enjoy reading. Many students make good use of the library. Library staff monitor the number of books on loan, and records show that more girls borrow books than boys.
- Students enter the sixth form as external applicants with low levels of prior attainment. They are currently making good progress over time.

The quality of teaching is good

- Students in the academy mostly experience good teaching. Sometimes it can be outstanding. A small proportion of teaching requires improvement. School leaders are aware of this, and are tackling it head on.
- In an excellent physical education lesson for Year 8 students, which developed skills in ground and aerial control in football, the teacher had skilfully grouped students and given them leadership roles. Good use was made of digital media technology to record activities which students watched, and used to improve their performance.
- Effective teaching helps students make at least expected progress, and often better. This is because these teachers have a thorough understanding of each student's needs and plan their lessons to ensure all students make progress, whatever their ability.
- The limited proportion of teaching that requires improvement does not take full account of students' prior learning or of their individual needs. This means that progress for some is not as rapid as it might be.
- The quality of marking is a strong feature of teaching. Marking is regular, and formal assessments take place every four weeks. Teachers' comments are detailed and explain clearly how students can move up to the next level of attainment. Many students respond in some form to their teachers' comments.
- Good teaching makes a positive contribution to students' basic literacy and numeracy skills.

These skills are taught across all subjects, and scrutiny of students' books shows that teachers have high expectations for how the skills will be developed as students progress through the school.

- Additional adults in the classroom play a key role in helping students achieve. They have a good understanding of what is required to help individual students overcome any barriers to learning.
- Records of observations of teaching kept on individual members of staff are accurate. In lessons where teaching was jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team, inspectors agreed with their judgements. Most parents and carers also rightly believe that the quality of teaching is good in the academy.
- Students make good progress in the sixth form as a result of good and better teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students display positive attitudes in lessons, and relationships between students and teachers are strong. Students are unlikely to become distracted in lessons, because the vast majority of teaching takes account of their specific needs.
- Students' behaviour around the academy is exemplary. They are courteous, move to lessons punctually and are excellent ambassadors for the academy.
- Students told inspectors that incidences of bullying are extremely rare. They recognise the different forms bullying can take, and are confident that should bullying occur, it will be dealt with efficiently when reported.
- There have been no permanent exclusions since the academy opened, and the proportion of fixed-term exclusions is well below the national average. The academy logs any incidents relating to poor behaviour and works very effectively with any students who face challenging circumstances.
- Attendance is well above the national average. Attendance information is analysed regularly to make sure that appropriate support can be provided before a problem arises.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through a wide range of enrichment activities, as well as in lessons themselves.
- Students told inspectors they feel part of a mutually supportive community, where everyone is valued, and they are encouraged to do the very best they can. The promotion of equal opportunities has a high profile in the academy, and leaders monitor the performance of different groups of students well.
- Students whose personal circumstances make them more likely to do less well receive good quality support, and they progress through the academy with high self-esteem.
- Opportunities for students to make a positive contribution to the life of the academy are being developed. The student council is about to be re-launched and sixth form students act as 'buddies' to those in Key Stage 3. Sixth form students, in particular, would welcome more opportunities to have their views heard.

The leadership and management are good

- The academy's vision is clear, known and shared by everyone. The key message of '100% all of the time. No excuses' features regularly in discussions with staff, students and members of the governing body. The headteacher leads with passion and commitment. He and his team have created a mutually supportive community in which achievement is at the forefront.
- Senior leaders are working hard to achieve high standards in the academy. A key to their success is making sure that everyone feels equally valued. Expectations are high, and leaders work hard to make sure that all staff are consistent in the way they approach their work.
- The headteacher invests in his staff. A number of opportunities which attract a financial

allowance for the academic year are offered to staff. This academic year, such allowances have been offered for a range of responsibilities, including induction of new staff, leading on teaching and learning, coordinating the new house system, school enrichment sessions and developing students' views and leadership skills.

- Senior leaders have set up good systems to monitor, evaluate and review the work of the academy. Inspectors agreed with the majority of judgements in the academy's self-evaluation document.
- Subject area leaders, some of whom have been recently appointed, are eager to get the best out of students, their teams and themselves. They are being well supported through training and effective management in order to carry out their roles.
- Teaching is managed well. Teachers' planning is monitored by subject and senior leaders to ensure consistency. Staff are encouraged to develop their understanding of effective teaching by working in small groups and sharing good practice. A comprehensive mentoring programme is available for those whose teaching is not yet consistently good.
- The headteacher and senior deputy headteacher work hard to ensure that good teaching is rewarded by allowing effective teachers to progress up the pay scale. The management of teachers' performance is closely linked to school improvement planning, staff training needs and the setting of challenging targets.
- The unusual school day, consisting of three main sessions, allows teachers to give lessons which provide interesting experiences for students. The enrichment programme provides a range of exciting activities and students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Leaders have created opportunities to engage with parents and carers and have conducted some surveys to gather their views, as well as setting up the Parent and Community Group. However, they also acknowledge that there is more work to be done in this area in order to make every parent and carer feel part of the academy community.
- As the school has no students in Key Stage 4, there is no early entry policy for GCSE.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are committed to driving up standards. They deliberately searched for a number of governors to fill any existing gaps in skills, in order to maximise their effectiveness. The 'Chairman's Club', led by the Chair of the Governing Body, is a good example of how members of the governing body work with students at risk of underachieving. Governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that statutory requirements are met. They demonstrate a good awareness of the academy's strengths and areas for future development. They receive regular reports on the quality of teaching and the management of teachers' performance, which inform decisions as to whether or not teachers progress up the pay scale. They would benefit as a group from a deeper understanding of data on the performance of different groups of students and of how pupil premium funding benefits targeted students, and the impact this has on their academic outcomes.

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	136172
Local authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	399870

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

Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
School category	Secondary
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	448
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Ilube
Headteacher	Gary Kynaston
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8222 6000
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