

The Academy, Selsey

School Lane, Selsey, Chichester, PO20 9EH

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	N/A
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses

- Many students make slow progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This means that they do not achieve good enough GCSE grades in these subjects by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Too many students do not write, speak or use numbers accurately and confidently.
- Teaching is not yet strong enough to raise standards quickly and securely. More could be expected of students in many lessons, and in what they can achieve.
- Progress in some lessons is sometimes slowed by students not paying attention and preferring to chat.
- Many students lack confidence in their abilities and do not have good learning skills. This is reflected in the generally poor organisation and presentation of written work.
- The leadership of the academy has not yet secured sufficient improvements in achievement in some key subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- This academy is improving. The headteacher understands the needs of the students and their families and she has an accurate understanding of how to drive up achievement, which is rising.
- Students make better progress in subjects they opt in to and, in some, their progress is good.
- The ways the academy has developed to make teaching better are good and are working.
- Behaviour is improving. This is now a safe and well-ordered community. Some students exhibit challenging behaviour but their needs are dealt with well.
- There is good support from the sponsors for the work of the academy.
- Staff morale is good because they feel that the headteacher and senior staff are making things better. The academy has the confidence of many parents.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons, including several jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors met with senior staff, representatives of the governing body, the director of secondaries from The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT), and students. There was a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Records of visits by TKAT, and the academy’s development planning and self-evaluation documents, policies and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 13 responses to Parent View. The views of parents were also obtained by an analysis of the academy’s parental surveys.
- The views of the 42 staff who returned questionnaires were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Alan Taylor-Bennett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Stephanie Matthews

Additional Inspector

Moazam Parvez

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this academy requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- It opened on 1 September 2011 as a sponsor-led academy, as a part of The Kennal Academies Trust.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is similar to the national average. The proportion supported at school action is higher than average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is near the national average.
- The academy serves a community with relatively little ethnic or cultural diversity. Nearly all students are of White British heritage.
- A small number of students attend full-time at other providers, including Chichester College of Technology.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standards achieved by students at the end of Key Stage 4, especially in science, mathematics and English, through teaching that is consistently good or outstanding, by:
 - expecting more of students and offering them more challenge in their classwork and homework, while maintaining high levels of support
 - improving students' presentation and organisation of their written work
 - helping students to write more confidently, and in appropriate styles, in all subjects
 - using a variety of ways, including close and pacy questioning, to obtain a good understanding of how well students grasp the main ideas at key points in a lesson, and using this information to make sure they are learning quickly and securely
 - adapting work to the needs of groups of students in every lesson so that everyone can make good progress
 - making sure leaders and managers at all levels use current systems to improve teaching, and monitor the impact, but over much shorter timescales
 - eliminating disruption to lessons.
- Drive up students' hopes and ambitions for their futures, by:
 - maintaining strong links with local colleges of further education and universities
 - identifying and making use of local and national role models, including past students
 - offering them regular chances to experience life beyond the local area
 - raising students' self-esteem.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Students' achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in the 2012 GCSE examinations was poor. The achievement of students currently in the academy in these subjects is better but is still weak. Standards in these core subjects are low because students have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding. As a result, they struggle to make the progress expected of them at Key Stage 4.
- Achievement in other subjects is often better. In some, for example in drama, business studies, and physical education, students make good progress because of the better teaching and the greater confidence in learning that these subjects have developed. In one outstanding Year 11 business studies lesson observed, several students had completed the course to a very high standard and were beginning GCSE economics as an extension activity.
- There is a clear and healthily positive trend in achievement across the academy, particularly at Key Stage 3. Students' overall progress is getting better, year on year, and important indicators of standards, such as the proportion obtaining five good grades at GCSE and the average point scores achieved, are climbing steadily. While this trend is stronger in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, it is happening in these core subjects.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is variable across the academy but it is secure; those supported at school action mostly make good progress. This is because of an accurate identification of needs and well-organised and appropriate support. The progress of these students is particularly sensitive to teachers giving them the right kind of work to do in lessons and teachers and teaching assistants working together closely; where these happen, the students thrive.
- Students who are eligible for support from the pupil premium make slightly better progress than their peers in other schools. In 2012, these students' average point score at GCSE was higher than the average point score for all students nationally. This is due, in part, to their taking many more examination subjects than is usual, but it is also because of the success of the special numeracy and literacy intervention work, and the use of the fund to promote their general well-being and inclusion by subsidising trips, visits and other extra-curricular opportunities.
- Too few students write at length with accuracy, and in an appropriate style. Written work is often untidy, and spelling and grammar are poor. In some lessons visited by inspectors, it was clear that students were aware of this and were not proud of their books and the way that their work was presented. This is because teachers do not always take a clear and strong enough approach to helping students to know how to tackle a piece of writing, or give simple, consistent messages across all classrooms about what is expected.
- Some students' literacy levels are improving because of extra targeted provision, and the literacy student-mentor scheme is helping to raise everyone's awareness of this issue.
- Students who attend elsewhere have their achievement monitored regularly, and staff ensure that providers meet their needs through an appropriate range of subjects. They benefit from this alternative provision.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is inadequate and this means that students' progress in those subjects is still weak. However, there are good indications of improvement in the quality of teaching in these subjects. This, and recent staffing changes, mean that these teams are becoming stronger and now have a better capacity to drive up standards.
- Teaching in other subjects is better. The rate of improvement is faster in these subjects, and there is more teaching that is good.

- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of students. Even those who teach more confidently underestimate the capacity of students to get to grips with some challenging work early on in a lesson and enjoy wrestling with ideas, making some useful mistakes and learning from them. For example, in one lesson observed, too long was spent on an undemanding starter activity when students would have enjoyed getting straight in to the interesting work which followed. Too often, teachers tend to over-structure work rather than present it in a novel and interesting way.
- Lessons are planned carefully and teachers are aware of individual students' learning needs. Some students, particularly those who are more able and those who have specific learning needs, do not always make good progress because the work is not tailored well to their needs; in many lessons, everyone tends to do the same work at the same pace.
- In the best lessons, teachers are good at asking probing questions and moving students understanding on quickly. Sometimes students are asked to offer criticism of their own and others' work. This makes learning fun and students respond well to the challenge. However, relatively few other techniques are used which would give teachers a strong sense of how well students are learning. The best lessons had straightforward and useful learning objectives but these were rarely used to test progress throughout the lesson.
- The use made of targets and information about how students can improve their performance is developing across the academy. Students say that it is easier this year to gauge how well they are doing, and they value this information.
- There is very little teaching that is outstanding in the academy but there are plans established through TKAT to give teachers opportunities to see best practice and to learn from it. Teachers are keen and willing to develop their skills; they receive feedback from lesson observations thoughtfully and many show a good capacity to develop new classroom techniques.
- Teaching makes a useful contribution to students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development but opportunities are missed in some lessons to make students reflect and want to discuss issues. Students feel that religious education and ethics lessons do not always give them chance to enjoy thinking in new and different ways, and some Year 11 students regret that there have not been many chances to go on trips and visits in connection with their studies at Key Stage 4. There are a good number of clubs at lunchtime and at the end of the day, which are well attended. Themed assemblies each week give students chances to reflect on important issues and these are linked to a number of events designed to broaden students' experiences, such as the 'take over day' with the district council.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The academy is a calm and safe community. The great majority of parents agree with this judgement and nearly all students said that they enjoy the fact that everyone gets on well most of the time.
- A few students present challenging behaviour sometimes; their needs are met well and there is usually a good balance between the care and support extended to students generally and the need for a firm response sometimes.
- Movement around the site is orderly and students mix with each other at break and lunchtimes pleasantly. There is some swearing occasionally but such language is used out of habit rather than malice.
- Many students behave cooperatively in lessons but in some lessons, especially some in mathematics, English and science, students can sometimes be inattentive and want to chat rather than do the work. This can slow progress.
- Many students have little confidence in their learning; their self-esteem is fragile. They do not tend to show inquisitiveness and challenge themselves and each other in lessons. As a result, teaching has to be skilful if students are to feel comfortable about taking risks by answering questions, contributing ideas, and making mistakes and learning from them. When they are able

to relax and be less guarded, such as in drama and in some other expressive arts subjects, students can flourish and they will sometimes surprise themselves with their achievements.

- Attitudes to groups from different cultural or religious backgrounds than the prevalent White British culture locally, and to those with different sexual orientations, are based on a spirit of tolerance rather than an active interest in, and a sense of valuing, these differences.
- Bullying is uncommon and is restricted to the odd unpleasant remark, sometimes verbally and other times via social networking on the internet. There is very little physical bullying.
- Students and staff are confident that behaviour is improving due to clear messages about expectations from senior staff, and more consistent and effective responses from teaching and support staff to indiscipline. Instances of exclusions have fallen over recent years.
- Attendance is below the national average but is not low. The academy is prepared to make a response to unacceptable levels of absence by any student, and has taken appropriate legal action in some cases.
- Students who attend alternative provision have their attendance recorded on the academy's systems and this, and all other aspects of their well-being and safety, are monitored effectively. There are good systems in place to respond rapidly to any problems that may arise.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher shows a good understanding of the learning and social needs of the students and the community. She communicates a clear vision and commands the respect of the staff and many parents. She is a visible presence around the academy and makes a point of maintaining contact with students on a day-by-day basis. An example of her commitment to getting the best for all is her individual meetings with every Year 11 student to discuss their hopes and aspirations for the future. She uses these meetings to raise ambition and to check that students are connected to appropriate support, such as the specialist careers adviser the academy has appointed and other provision in the academy.
- Priorities are identified accurately, development plans are detailed and useful, and self-evaluation is regular and thorough. There is recognition that students' achievement and the quality of teaching in the core subjects are significantly weaker than in other subjects, and that improvements have not been as rapid and secure there as they have been elsewhere.
- The quality of learning is given top priority in the academy. The systems established to support the development of teaching are based on securing better progress for students and are focused on the right things because of this. When lessons are monitored, teaching is graded against a list of required characteristics; professional development is then provided to meet individual teachers' specific development needs. The system is operated rigorously and imaginatively. It is, however, more effective in the medium- and long-term and there is a lack of rapid intervention to improve teachers' skills on a week-by-week basis. Problems with teacher recruitment in some subjects are being overcome.
- The monitoring of the progress of specific groups of students is undertaken regularly through the half-termly progress reports as an aspect of the academy's strong emphasis on equality of opportunity. There is too little day-by-day focused monitoring of particular groups' current progress in lessons, across all subjects.
- Performance management leads to decisions about pay rises that are based on teachers' meeting clearly stated targets, which they are supported to achieve. Those that do not achieve them are not rewarded. For example, few applications to the upper pay spine were successful last year.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of their roles and they respect the way that the headteacher's vision is turned into better ways of working. They play a part in monitoring teaching and learning but, again, make a difference over longer time intervals than are tolerable given the academy's need to raise standards rapidly.
- The range of subjects on offer is very wide. There has been appropriate recognition recently that

some students would benefit from doing fewer qualifications. For example, only some students now take statistics as well as mathematics at GCSE. The academy has moved to using early-entry to subjects to secure recognition of achievement for those few students at risk of not completing their time in the academy, and others who would benefit from the chance to show good levels of achievement before the end of their Key Stage 4. This policy does not disadvantage any student.

- The academy benefits from the support of its sponsor, TKAT, and feels that it gets good value for money from being part of a large but responsive network of schools. The sponsors have, for example, helped to run specific training sessions, including programmes to develop middle leaders, and they are providing support for the development of mathematics teaching, as well as human resource advice and financial oversight.
- There remain useful points of contact with the local authority. The headteacher, for example, attends meetings of the local cluster of schools and works with other headteachers across the county.
- **The governance of the academy:**
 - Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the academy. The chair of governors meets often with the headteacher, and governors are often in and around the academy, including attending parents' evenings and administering parental questionnaires. Governors make appropriate use of performance data, including the half-termly reports analysis, and use their meetings to probe the extent of the academy's success in meeting its priorities. While they are aware of how the pupil premium is spent, they have not yet played an active part in evaluating its impact. They work with TKAT to ensure that the academy's finances are managed well and they have been instrumental in eliminating a substantial overspend over the last few years. They oversee safeguarding procedures and ensure that systems are in place to ensure students' safety, and that policies are established and adhered to. Governors maintain a good awareness of the quality of teaching across the academy and ensure that good teachers are rewarded with pay rises, and those that do not meet targets are held to account; this includes the headteacher, whose performance targets are shared with the whole governing body. Governors keep themselves up to date by attending training events; this helps them to be effective in their work to support and challenge the academy as it continues to improve provision and outcomes for students.

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	137096
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	399835

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	554
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Evans
Headteacher	Vicky Wright
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01243 602558
Fax number	01243 604097
Email address	office@theacademyselsey-tkat.org

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