

# All Saints Church of England Academy

Pennycross, Plymouth, PL5 3NE

**Inspection dates** 13–14 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- In the last two years too many students have not made enough progress in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 4. Improved teaching has not yet had time to make sure all students achieve well by the time they leave school.
- Not all students, especially boys and those with middle or high prior attainment, are making the levels of progress expected in English and mathematics.
- Students' literacy and numeracy skills are not improving at the same rate across all subjects.
- Achievement is uneven across subjects. Students make good progress in science and languages, but not in geography and history.
- The sixth form requires improvement as achievement is inconsistent across subjects and courses.
- Not all teachers adjust their lessons to suit the needs and abilities of all students or ask probing questions that deepen students' understanding.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Students who are disabled or have special educational needs or low prior attainment, and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, are making rapid progress, and so gaps between the achievements of these groups and those of all students are closing.
- The academy has tackled weak teaching effectively so that teaching is improving rapidly. It is now good in the majority of lessons and is beginning to raise achievement overall.
- Behaviour and attendance are improving. Due to consistent application of the behaviour policy, behaviour is now good.
- Good leadership and management are bringing about improvements in teaching and learning, behaviour and attendance. As a result, previous poor achievement is being tackled, although there are still some inconsistencies.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons taught by 36 teachers, almost all of which were observed jointly with members of the school’s senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors carried out shorter visits to several lessons and listened to small groups of students reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of students, a small group of parents and carers, the vice chair and two members of the governing body, and the head of the Phoenix off-site alternative provision, which provides support for students with challenging behaviour. Inspectors met with academy staff, including senior and subject leaders, and telephoned the academy’s School Improvement Partner.
- The inspection team observed the academy’s work and examined a range of documents, including records of the monitoring of students’ progress and the quality of teaching, records of the monitoring of students’ behaviour and attendance, systems for the performance management and development of staff, improvement plans and documents relating to the safeguarding of students.
- The inspection team took account of 39 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey and questionnaires completed by 80 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Sue Frater, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Svetlana Bajic Raymond

Additional inspector

Anne Barrett

Additional inspector

Peter Clifton

Additional inspector

Terry Payne

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school became a sponsor-led academy in September 2010. The academy is sponsored by The Exeter Diocesan Board of Education, University College Plymouth St Mark and St John, and Plymouth City Council. It has specialist status in business and enterprise, and mathematics.
- It is a non-selective school situated within a local authority that retains selection on grounds of ability. The academy is about the same size as most secondary schools. Around a quarter of the school population is in the sixth form.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than usual.
- A much larger proportion of students than is found nationally are eligible for support through the pupil premium. The pupil premium provides additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents or carers in the armed forces, and for those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported by school action is above average. The proportion of those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- Currently, 17 boys from Year11 attend off-site alternative provision at The Phoenix Centre to support their challenging behaviour. The centre is run by academy staff and supported by a youth worker..
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, and in the sixth form, by:
  - making sure that boys and students with middle or high prior attainment do not fall behind
  - improving students' literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.
- Develop teachers' skills in:
  - assessing students' understanding during lessons more frequently and adapting activities to enable all students to make as much progress as possible
  - asking more probing questions that deepen students' understanding
  - making sure students are able to work with less teacher direction to apply and extend their skills, including literacy and numeracy skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students who attended the predecessor school in the past few years did not achieve well enough and the academy has had to overcome this legacy. Achievement is improving considerably since the academy opened as a result of much better teaching, but there is still some inconsistency.
- Students join the academy with attainment that is well below average and their literacy skills are particularly weak. Students who arrive with the lowest levels of attainment, those who are disabled or have special educational needs, students from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language and those who are supported by the pupil premium, are making rapid progress and they are catching up with the other students. For example, the 2012 GCSE average points score for students supported by the pupil premium was 322.4, compared with 339.4 for all other students in the school. This is due to improvements in teaching and the effective support these students are given.
- Students who join the academy with middle or high attainment, especially boys, are making slower progress. They have not yet caught up with the levels of progress being made by similar groups of pupils nationally in English and mathematics.
- Attainment at GCSE, including in English and mathematics, has been well below average for the past two years, although it is improving and meets the government's floor standards. Students are entered early for GCSE examinations in mathematics, but not in English. Early entry to GCSE in mathematics does not limit their attainment as they can retake it at a higher level. Taking into account the 2012 results for all the GCSE and BTEC subjects taken by students overall, the girls achieved as well as all girls nationally. The boys' achievement was well below that of all boys nationally.
- The academy's checking of current students' progress across year groups indicates that it is improving and students in Years 7 to 9 are catching up with all students nationally. This progress was evident in the lessons and pupils' work that inspectors saw in a range of subjects.
- Literacy skills are still weak, but the academy is improving reading in Year 7 and Year 8 English lessons. Literacy and numeracy skills are not developing systematically across all subjects.
- Achievement is inconsistent across subjects. For example, students make rapid progress in science and their attainment is above average because lessons engage all students, especially boys, in practical investigation and research. Attainment in geography and history is below average. Even in the good lessons seen, there were not enough opportunities for students to apply and extend their skills independently. Students say they make most progress in lessons such as science and, more recently, mathematics, because their teachers challenge them to think and learn for themselves and give them a 'step-by-step' approach.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement as it is inconsistent across subjects and courses. Students make good progress in National Vocation Qualification (NVQ) and BTEC vocational courses such as business and finance which involve them in work experience. Students are not achieving well on A-level courses because they have not developed enough strategies to work and learn independently.
- The progress of students in off-site alternative provision has improved and most are on track to achieve five or more GCSE and BTEC qualifications at A\* to G grades.

### The quality of teaching

### is good

- The academy has tackled previous weak teaching effectively. As a result, teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is now usually good and there are a few examples of outstanding teaching. This is leading to better progress for students, although there are still inconsistencies. Teaching has not been good for long enough to make sure that all students achieve well by the time they leave school.

- Improvements in checking students' progress and setting more challenging targets have resulted in teachers having higher expectations. Teachers use their assessments well to plan lessons for the range of needs in their classes. This includes using resources and teaching assistants effectively to support lower achieving students, disabled students and those with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language, in making good progress. Teaching assistants are becoming more experienced in questioning the students to think for themselves, rather than telling them the answers.
- Not all teachers are checking progress frequently enough during the lessons, including those in the sixth form, to adapt the activities or to ask probing questions. This means that middle and higher achieving students are not always making as much progress as possible.
- In marking students' books, teachers write comments which help students to know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve and reach their target levels or grades.
- Positive working relationships between teachers and students give students the confidence to contribute to lessons.
- Teachers are using a wider range of strategies and resources which are engaging more boys in their learning. For example, in a Year 8 English lesson, the teacher used a newspaper article about prison ships to show how writers make clear their point of view. Students, including boys, were discussing the topic with interest. They were also skimming and scanning the article to find quotations to support their own views about it, thus also developing their reading skills. Similarly, Year 7 students were challenged to work out the difference between area and perimeter and to explain this to the class in a mathematics lesson. Across subjects, there are not enough opportunities for students to apply and extend their skills, especially literacy and numeracy skills, independently.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Due to the improvements in teaching, students' attitudes to learning are mostly positive and there are few incidents of low-level disruption in lessons.
- Students, parents and carers are positive about behaviour and safety in the school. While a small minority disagree, most staff report that behaviour has improved and is now good. Inspectors agree that behaviour is now good because all staff consistently apply the behaviour policy and procedures. The few boys who attend the alternative provision are learning to manage their challenging behaviour well and their attendance has improved significantly. Exclusions from the academy have reduced.
- Attendance has improved considerably in the academy, although it remains below average. Punctuality to school and to lessons has also improved.
- Students say that the atmosphere in school is friendly and that it is supported by the mixed-age tutor groups. This was seen to be the case in lessons and around the academy. Students display good manners to each other and to staff.
- Students say they feel very safe in school and at the alternative provision. They say there are few instances of bullying and these are dealt with effectively by the academy. Students understand how to keep themselves safe and are confident in approaching any member of staff if they have any concerns.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The Principal, senior leaders and governing body are passionate about improving the quality of education for all students. This determination, together with a strong focus on improving teaching and learning, is leading to improving trends in achievement, teaching, behaviour and attendance. Staff share the vision of senior leaders and morale is high.
- There are still some inconsistencies in the achievement of different groups of students and in subjects, particularly in English and mathematics. Rigorous checking of the progress of students by senior and middle leaders, and improvements in teaching, are now in place to bring about

more rapid improvement in these areas.

- Teaching is now good because the academy has tackled weak teaching. Teachers are held to account for their work and receive good additional training, including support from the most effective teachers in the academy.
- The academy knows its strengths and areas for improvement well, and actions are carefully planned and consistently applied by all staff, as in following the marking and behaviour policies. Policy and procedures for developing students' literacy skills are too recent to ensure good progress.
- The curriculum is constantly reviewed to meet the needs of all students. It is particularly effective in the provision of vocational courses and links with employers for the sixth form and in provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs. The curriculum provides a broad range of experiences. For example, links with other schools locally and internationally contribute well to students' achievement and, together with the work of the chaplain, to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The academy works well with parents and carers, including those who might find working with the school difficult, to help students, especially vulnerable students, to achieve. Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View were fully positive about the academy.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - is highly effective. The governing body provides invaluable expertise. It includes the academy sponsors who provide good support. The support includes links with university students and training for middle leaders. Governors know the strengths and areas for development of the academy in depth, including the quality of teaching, through examining performance data. Governors are skilled in challenging and holding senior leaders to account for raising attainment. As a result, the quality of teaching and students' achievement are improving. Governors make sure that teachers are held to account and that they do not progress through the pay scales unless the outcomes for their pupils are good. They support the academy in tackling weak teaching. They also make sure that finances are managed well. For example, the academy provides governors with a report on the amount of pupil premium funding spent on each eligible student and its impact on the student's achievement. Governors allocated most of the funding to providing intervention programmes in English and mathematics, and the rest to supporting individual students, for example with learning mentors. This helped the students to catch up with all other students, thus promoting equality. Governors attend training, such as training in safer recruitment of staff. They make sure that all statutory requirements are met, for example arrangements for safeguarding students, including those in off-site alternative provision.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136142
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	399808

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	974
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	250
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	The Right Reverend John Ford
<b>Principal</b>	Peter Grainger
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 705131
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<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@asap.org.uk



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