

# The Fallibroome Academy

Priory Lane, Upton, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 4AF

**Inspection dates** 28 February 2013–1 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The Principal and senior leaders show an uncompromising ambition, shared by all staff and governors, for the further improvement of the academy. They have made the academy 'a place of excellence'.
- Students make rapid progress from their starting points and achieve extremely well.
- The academy has succeeded in narrowing the gaps in attainment between certain groups of students and others in their year group.
- Senior leaders are exceptionally rigorous in checking students' progress and the quality of teaching and ensure that only the best is good enough.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Most teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They involve students actively in their learning and make them think for themselves.
- On very rare occasions, progress slows in lessons where students do not have enough independence or time to respond to teachers' feedback on their work.
- Students' behaviour in classrooms and around the academy is exemplary. Students are polite and friendly towards one another, to staff and to visitors. This very positive atmosphere helps them to feel and be very safe.
- The academy's promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good.
- Leaders have very high expectations of staff. Performance management arrangements are extremely robust and all staff are ambitious to improve even further.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students make excellent progress as a result of high-quality teaching and management and well-targeted support.
- The governors are a major asset to the academy and show a great commitment to their work. They bring a wealth of professional knowledge and experience to the academy and are a driving force behind improvement.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about all that the academy provides for their children.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons. About a quarter of these observations were carried out jointly with the Principal and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with the Principal and senior leaders, teaching staff, governors of the academy and groups of students.
- Inspectors considered the views of 189 parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire, as well as a letter received from a parent and 45 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the academy’s own information on students’ attainment and progress; behaviour and attendance records; safeguarding procedures; records of academy leaders’ lesson observations; self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.

## Inspection team

Susan Wareing, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Christine Birchall

Additional Inspector

Derek Davies

Additional Inspector

Paul Latham

Additional Inspector

Anne Thomas

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Fallibroome Academy is larger than the average secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students known to be entitled to free school meals is well below average.
- About 7% of students with disabilities or special educational needs are supported through school action. This figure is below national averages.
- A similar proportion of students are supported through school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. This figure is below the national average.
- The main categories of students' special educational needs are specific learning difficulty; behaviour, emotional and social difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder.
- A very small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend classes on one day a week at Macclesfield College of Further Education or at the Macclesfield Youth Achievement Foundation.
- Approximately 9% of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government). This proportion is well below the national average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum requirements for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Make teaching and learning even better by ensuring that all teachers:
  - make the most of students' excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes, by giving them more opportunities to work independently
  - provide students with enough opportunities in all lessons to reflect on and respond to written feedback from teachers on how they can improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Students begin at the academy with standards that are consistently well above average. By the end of Year 11, the great majority gain five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C including in English and mathematics, with many of those passes at the very highest grades, across a wide range of traditional academic subjects.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional pupil premium funding attain lower grades than other students in GCSE English and mathematics examinations. However, in 2011 and 2012 the academy has been successful in narrowing this gap in attainment to a level which is smaller than that found nationally.
- The rigour of the academy's systems for checking the progress of each individual student is outstanding and allows leaders to intervene immediately on any students who are at risk of falling behind. For example, leaders have been quick to introduce new, more appropriate courses in mathematics and science and intensive training for teachers in English. Information from the academy's records of students' progress shows that these measures have set this year's students on track to exceed the 2012 GCSE results in both subjects in the 2013 and 2014 examinations.
- The academy makes limited use of early entry GCSE in mathematics, for students of middle and low ability, to give them the best chance of gaining a qualification at grade C by the end of Year 11. Around half of these students are successful at the first attempt and are then keen to improve on their grade for the remainder of the year. Those who do not continue receive intensive support in English and this practice meets their particular needs very effectively.
- The majority of disabled students and those who have special educational needs make broadly expected progress from their starting points and in English they sometimes exceed it. This is because of the high-quality support and care that the academy provides for them. A very small number of students did not make as much progress as they could in the 2012 examinations, but swift and decisive action by the academy has ensured that gaps have narrowed for most of these students this year.
- In the sixth form, students achieve grades at A and AS level that are well above the national average and this represents excellent progress from their starting points.
- The academy develops students' reading, writing and communication skills very effectively across a wide range of subjects, for example, through regular opportunities for private reading during form periods. Inspectors saw some imaginative joint work between departments to improve students' writing skills, but the impact is not yet consistently in place across all subjects.
- The improvement of the library was an issue at the last inspection. It now plays a significant role in promoting students' enthusiasm for reading, for example, through visits from authors, artists, and parents and carers who are invited to talk to students about the books they have enjoyed.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Senior leaders have made a considerable investment in the continuous improvement of teaching across the academy and the impact of their commitment is reflected in the majority of good and outstanding teaching seen during the inspection. Such teaching allows most students, especially in the sixth form, to make rapid and often exceptional progress.
- Most teachers have excellent subject knowledge and make excellent use of subject-specific language, for example in technology and science. Students gain much confidence from teachers' very expert guidance on examination techniques and this helps them to make substantial progress.
- Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects and the teaching of them, for example in music and dance, is infectious and inspirational for students.
- Excellent relationships between students and with their teachers are characterised by mutual

respect and good humour, which adds greatly to students' enjoyment of their learning.

- In the most successful lessons, teachers plan work at exactly the right level for each student and give many opportunities for them to solve problems through individual research and group discussion. The academy has set very high standards for staff in their use of technology, so that teachers routinely use interactive white boards in lessons to enhance their teaching and students' learning.
- Teachers readily share good practice with one another. In a technology lesson, students drew very effectively on their knowledge from English lessons about the features of a good book. They then went on to plan a design for their own books, using what they had learned in technology.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive well-targeted additional support from teachers and teaching assistants. They speak highly of the help that they receive.
- The quality of marking was an issue at the last inspection. It is now helpful and ensures that all students know their target levels and grades and how to improve on them. However, the academy recognises that there remains some inconsistency across departments in applying the academy's marking policy.
- In a few lessons, teachers talked too much and did not give students enough time to think about teachers' comments on their work and to respond to them.
- Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. The inspectors saw examples of teachers sharing innovative practice to enthuse their students and promote their independence. For example, in a sixth-form French lesson, students greatly appreciated the chance to study aspects of French culture independently on tablet computers and then exchange ideas about what they had learned.

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

- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the academy is exemplary, reflecting the academy's high expectations of students' conduct. Students are mature and considerate to one another and extremely polite, friendly and respectful to teachers and visitors.
- Students are very articulate and confident young people who are at ease in taking the initiative in conversing with adults. They bring excellent attitudes to their learning and this helps them to make outstanding personal and academic progress during their time in the academy, of which they are very proud. They enjoy the many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities, such as membership of the academy's various forums and councils and in charity fundraising within the academy.
- All students feel and are very safe in the academy, because staff make every effort to promote a highly positive culture, not least through the academy's partnerships with outside agencies, the RESPECT programme and the academy's work in performing arts.
- Students have a very good understanding of all types of bullying, including through computer and mobile phone technology and bullying based on prejudice, such as homophobic bullying. They say that such behaviour is extremely rare in the academy but that if they have concerns, they know whom to approach for help.
- No parents and carers and very few members of staff express concerns about behaviour. Attendance is broadly average and improving year-on-year.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The Principal and leaders know the academy's strengths and areas for development very well through strong self-evaluation and this leads to very well-focused actions for improvement. Systems for checking the progress of students are exceptionally rigorous.
- Through the academy's partnerships as a Teaching School, senior leaders have invested considerable resources into a high-quality programme of continuing professional development

for staff. The programme's impact is evident in the improvement of the quality of teaching over the last two years.

- Performance management arrangements for teaching staff are exceptionally sharp, and only those teachers who meet or exceed their targets gain salary increases. In the rare instances where teaching is inadequate, there are very clear procedures to move staff on to more focused monitoring, and senior leaders and governors do not shrink from difficult staffing decisions where necessary.
- The curriculum, at all key stages, is a strength of the academy. Its focus on traditional academic courses at Key Stage 4 is well matched to the needs and aspirations of students and parents in the local community, but senior leaders are quick to respond to students' changing needs with new courses, for example in mathematics and science. The curriculum is enhanced by a rich programme of visits and lunchtime and after-school activities, including those in the arts, sports and subject-related clubs.
- A few students attend lessons away from the academy for one day each week. Academy staff accompany students each morning to the college or the local youth achievement centre, to ensure regular attendance. Academy staff also make regular visits to check that teaching and learning are good. The quality of these arrangements is evident in the very few students who do not move on to further education, training or employment after Year 11.
- All students have very good careers and options guidance in Years 9, 11 and in the sixth form. As a result, around 60% of students move on to sixth-form study and almost all students move on to further or higher education, training or employment when they leave the academy.
- Students have good opportunities to practise their reading, writing and communication skills across subjects. Opportunities in mathematics are at an earlier stage of development.
- The academy takes its responsibilities for promoting equality very seriously and ensures that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are exceptional. Students receive clear guidance on moral issues, for example, in RESPECT lessons.
- The academy's students, mostly of White British backgrounds, are very well prepared for life beyond school, in a more diverse society. They speak very highly of the cultural experiences the academy has given them, especially in music, dance and drama, and through overseas links, for example, with a South African school.
- The academy receives no external support from the local authority other than governors' services. The academy makes very effective, regular use of other external evaluation to check the accuracy of its self-evaluation and to assist the governors with the Principal's performance management.
- Arrangements for safeguarding, including training in child protection for staff and governors, are extremely thorough and meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is an asset to the academy. Governors understand the academy's strengths and development needs exceptionally well. Classroom visits and regular training in the use of information about the academy's performance enable governors to make very accurate comparisons with the performance of similar schools. Governors are very able to ask difficult questions of leaders and they keep a close watch on their own effectiveness with equal rigour. Governors support senior leaders in maintaining a very close link between pay and performance and ensure that the academy's finances are astutely managed. Governors check carefully that pupil premium funds are used effectively and result in the closure of the achievement gap for eligible 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136278
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	412381

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>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1531
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Hipperson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Rubery
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2006
<b>Telephone number</b>	01625 827898
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