

# Wakefield City Academy

Warmfield View, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 4SF

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

| Overall effectiveness          | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------|
|                                | 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.

- Students, given their starting points, make outstanding progress, especially in mathematics and English. As a result, all students go onto employment, education or training at the end of Year 11.
- All staff have extremely high expectations of students and what they can achieve. Lessons are challenging, make the students think and allow them to make outstanding progress. Overall marking is very helpful. However, some is not as good. Some students are not given the opportunity to respond to marking in a timely manner, which reduces its effectiveness.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Students have a sense of belonging to the Wakefield City Academy 'family'. They watch out for each other and respect each others' differences and beliefs.
- The executive headteacher and two co-headteachers have established a 'no blame, can do' culture, where staff are willing to take risks with their teaching and go 'the extra mile'. As a result, students' attainment is rising, the gaps between students closing and the expectation that all will achieve exceptionally well is being fulfilled.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 35 lessons taught by 34 teachers and one taught by a higher level teaching assistant. Nineteen of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. All age groups were observed across a range of subjects. Inspectors also visited the library and the inclusion room to observe learning.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the two co-headteachers, governors, middle leaders, teaching assistants and teachers with no leadership and management responsibilities. Students were met with and also spoken to informally at social times.
- Inspectors scrutinised students' work, read documents presented to inspectors, including those relating to governance, students' progress, self-evaluation, improvement planning, the curriculum and safeguarding.
- Nine responses were made to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The 27 responses to the staff questionnaire were taken into account by the inspection team. The inspection team took into account a very small number of parental comments by email.
- The inspection team also visited the fire service to see the young fire fighters course in action.

## Inspection team

Tanya Harber Stuart, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Rimmer

Additional Inspector

Jane Willis

Additional Inspector

Fiona Dixon

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Wakefield City Academy became an academy on the 1 January 2011. When its predecessor school, Wakefield City High School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be an outstanding school.
- Wakefield City Academy is a smaller than the average size 11 to 16 (secondary) school.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is much higher than the national average. The proportion of students supported with a statement of special educational needs or at school action plus is considerably higher than the national average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is far higher than the national average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium (extra funding provided by the government for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or are children of service families) is much higher than the national average.
- A number of students attend alternative courses, such as construction or hairdressing, as part of the curriculum at Key Stage 4. In addition, some students are working with the Fire Service to gain the young fire fighters qualification. All of these courses are partially funded by the pupil premium.
- The school 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?

- Bring the quality of all marking up to the standard of the best by allowing students to consider and respond to the feedback they receive more quickly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- The proportion of students achieving 5 A\* to C grades including English and mathematics in 2012 was broadly in line with the national average. The proportion which achieved an A\* to C in mathematics was above the national average. Given their starting points, the progress the students make between Year 7 and Year 11 is exceptional.
- Students supported by pupil premium reach higher levels of attainment than similar students nationally. This is because of the effective spending of the pupil premium money to support their attainment across the school. Although the students supported by the pupil premium make less progress than their peers in the school their progress, given their starting points, is still outstanding. The scores these students achieved in English and mathematics and overall in 2012 were lower than those achieved by other students in the school. However, the students supported by pupil premium are now making even better progress and the gaps between levels of attainment are closing.
- Students who are supported at school action, school action plus, have a statement of special educational needs, or who speak English as an additional language all make the same exceptional progress as their peers. This is because the school knows each student as an individual and provides a bespoke, and highly effective, curriculum for each and every student.
- The additional courses run outside the school are very well attended. The students make outstanding progress in these courses and in the other courses that they take. The young fire fighters course is exceptionally well run. The course gives students plentiful opportunities to develop their collaborative working abilities and social skills as well as obtaining a nationally recognised qualification in fire fighting.
- The Year 6 into Year 7 summer school, partially funded by additional money for pupil premium students was a great success. Run by the school librarian, the two week course engaged students in a wide range of activities, including extended writing, pizza making and a visit to the local rugby club. Their work with the rugby club is now being showcased on the club's website. These students are making even better progress in English and mathematics than their peers and have integrated into the school community highly successfully.
- There is a specific literacy programme which supports students with low reading ability to improve their ability to read. This provides bespoke feedback to the students who are then able to take responsibility for planning their learning. As a result, they make outstanding progress. Across the school there is a focus on developing the literacy levels of students. This initiative has supported the excellent progress the students make in English.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Very high expectations of both academic achievement and behaviour, from all staff, have led to a culture of achievement for all. This means that in lessons students want to learn and succeed.
- Work is challenging and engages students. For example, in an outstanding Year 9 graphics lesson students were investigating types of packaging. They were given the opportunity to demonstrate their independence to organise their own work and manage their time. Excellent questioning and resources which met the needs of all students, regardless of their academic ability meant they all made outstanding progress. The marking of students' work was very detailed, explaining to students what they needed to do to improve and teachers' comments were followed up in successive pieces of work.
- In an outstanding Year 9 mathematics lesson, the work was very well organised to make sure all students were challenged to achieve exceptionally well. The use of paired work, whole-class work and individual work throughout the lesson encouraged the students to think about their answers with different people and review their learning. The marking of students' work was

exceptional, detailed, specific to mathematics, and was followed up quickly by the students in subsequent pieces of work.

- Teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants, are used very effectively in lessons to support the learning of students. These staff are linked to specific departments and attend the training provided. They have good subject knowledge and are an integral part of lessons. For example, in a Year 7 music lesson, the teaching assistant skilfully supported students in the development of their rap and in the presentation of it. In a Year 10 mathematics lesson, the higher level teaching assistant was an exemplary guide to the students because of her exceptional subject knowledge, calm manner and very effective way of encouraging the students to think about their answers.

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

- Students' behaviour is extremely positive. They self-manage their behaviour, and in some lessons, peer manage it. Attendance is high and punctuality excellent.
- Students are educated well about how to keep themselves safe, both in the 'real world' and the virtual world of the internet. There are trained cyber mentors in the school who support other students' if they have concerns over cyber bullying.
- The very small number of incidents of bullying is dealt with very swiftly and effectively. The school is a very safe and ordered community in which the students feel cared for and safe.
- In lessons students are keen to learn. They work well together and enable interesting activities to take place. For example, at the Fire Service, students on the young fire fighters' course, worked exceptionally well together to practise putting out a fire, organising themselves as a team to ensure all the equipment was used properly, safely and effectively.

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

- Both teachers and senior leaders are driving improvements in teaching. Staff are highly supportive of the way senior leaders seek to improve the quality of teaching. There is a very strong focus on providing professional development, which is appropriate to the needs of the staff and the students. Performance management is rigorous, linked to the progress students make and is challenged effectively by governors.
- Any 'dips' in performance are dealt with professionally and in a supportive way. Bespoke packages of support are put in place to improve the quality of teaching and the progress the students make. As a result, attainment has risen in subjects where there were relative weaknesses.
- A holistic approach is taken to educating each student, not just academically but socially. Students were adamant, and the inspection team agreed with them, that there is equality for all regardless of background or academic ability. All the staff, governors, students, and the community work as a team to ensure the best possible outcomes for the students enhancing their life chances considerably.
- The tracking of students' progress is rigorous and focused on each student as an individual. There is a variety of well thought through intervention strategies which support the excellent day-to-day teaching. Middle leaders support each other, and in turn are supported by senior leaders to ensure all groups of students make exceptional progress.
- The curriculum is bespoke to students' needs. The integration of vocational and academic subjects makes sure levels of attainment are rising, including in the two core subjects of English and mathematics, providing each students with more opportunities at the end of Year 11.
- The students' moral, social, spiritual and cultural education is promoted exceptionally well across the school, in lessons and during social times. The respect and courtesy shown between staff

and students and between staff is obvious across the school and the students describe the school as a 'family'. The school works hard to engage parents, running a wide variety of activities to engage parents in their children's education.

- Early entry in mathematics is well thought through and is highly effective in ensuring the excellent outcomes at GCSE.
- The single central record and recruitment procedures meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are ambitious for the students. Many of them have a long-standing relationship with the school and they know the students as individuals. They challenge senior leaders, using data effectively to do so. They have links to departments, and participate in lesson observations so they have first-hand experience of the quality of teaching provided for the students. They have access to professional development. They have a thorough understanding of the pupil premium funding and what it is being spent on and the difference it is making to those 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> | 136394    |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Wakefield |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 412426    |

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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Academy   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Non-maintained  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 649   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | John Anderson   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Alan Yellup (Executive Headteacher) / Marie Hunter (Co-Headteacher) / Suzanne Austwick (Co-Headteacher) |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | Not previously inspected  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01924 303755  |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01924 303758  |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | office@wakefieldcityacademy.com   |

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