

Coleridge Community College

Radegund Road, , Cambridge, CB1 3RJ

Inspection dates 13 – 14 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
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 requires improvement. It is not good because

- The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics is not high enough. The proportion of students gaining good GCSE grades in science also requires improvement.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not achieve as well as other groups of students.
- Teaching requires improvement because teachers often do not have high enough expectations of what students can achieve and work set does not challenge them well.
- The work of teaching assistants does not contribute sufficiently well to students' progress in lessons.
- Teachers' marking of students' work is not good enough to ensure that they know how to improve it.
- Overall, many students do not attend the academy regularly enough, which hampers their progress.
- Leaders at all levels lack the full range of data about achievement. This hinders senior and subject leaders' understanding of how well subjects compare with the national picture and limits their impact on improving achievement.
- The leadership of special educational needs has not enabled this group of students to catch up with their peers.

The school has the following strengths

- In a number of subjects, including English literature and art, an above-average proportion of students attain good GCSE grades.
- Leaders and the governing body check the quality of teaching carefully. Teachers are supported to improve their practice increasingly effectively and, consequently, much teaching is now good.
- The leadership of the Principal is praised highly by staff. She is already building a vision for improvement, which teachers appreciate.
- Most students behave appropriately in lessons. They generally get on well with each other.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons or part-lessons taught by teachers. The Principal and other members of the senior leadership team accompanied the inspectors in observing six lessons.
- Meetings were held with students, members of the governing body, the executive Principal of the federation and staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 57 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also took into account the 63 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and examined a range of documents, including: the academy's own records of students' progress and attainment, monitoring documents on teaching and the academy's performance, records relating to managing staff performance and those relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.

Inspection team

Glynis Bradley-Peat, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional Inspector
Christopher Teal	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than most secondary schools.
- Most students are White British. The remainder come from a variety of minority ethnic heritages.
- The proportion who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for those eligible for free school meals, those in care and those with a parent in the armed services) is broadly average.
- There is additional provision for students off the main academy site. A few students in Key Stage 4 undertake courses at The County School, a pupil referral unit. A few attend Romsey Mill and take bespoke social skills, team building, mathematics and English GCSE courses.
- The academy is part of the Parkside Federation and shares a governing body.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The Principal was appointed in September 2012.
- The school converted to become an academy in April 2011. When its predecessor school, Coleridge Community College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is good or outstanding by:
 - providing all students with tasks and activities which are at the right level of difficulty for their abilities
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve, including students who find learning difficult
 - ensuring students' work is regularly marked and that they know what they should do to improve it
 - making sure that teachers plan and liaise with teaching assistants so that support is more effective for the students for whom it is intended.
- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in English, mathematics and science, particularly for disabled students and those with special educational needs by:
 - ensuring that the work of teaching assistants is closely checked and that they understand more clearly what it is they should do to support students' learning
 - making sure that teachers regularly assess the progress of students during lessons and adapt work appropriately
 - improving students' attendance more rapidly across the academy, especially in Year 11, by convincing students and parents of the close link between attendance and achievement.
- Improve the quality of leadership by ensuring that:
 - the leadership of special educational needs, in particular, is improved
 - senior leaders work together more collaboratively and discuss their strategies thoroughly in order to drive improvements through more effectively

- leaders at all levels are more familiar with a variety of performance data on students' progress so that the impact of actions taken to bring about improvement can be more effectively identified and measured.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students enter the academy with attainment which is generally below average and, in some years, well below. Most students do not gain five or more GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics. Achievement requires improvement, including in science. The progress students make has been slower than the national picture, but is now improving. The academy's assessment information indicates that the current Year 11 are likely to be close to broadly average standards by the end of the year.
- The academy's own records and assessments, evidence from lesson observations and students' books all confirm that disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not make enough progress to catch up with and achieve as well as others. Teaching assistants are not effective enough in supporting and challenging students' learning in class. They do not always know what they should do to support learning effectively. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what students can achieve.
- Students who speak English as an additional language achieve similarly to their peers. Overall, the attainment and progress of the small numbers of students from a variety of minority ethnic groups is similar to that of their classmates.
- The gap between the attainment of students eligible for the pupil premium and that of others in the academy has usually been wide, but the attainment and progress of current students in English and mathematics are beginning to improve. Extra help in small-group literacy and numeracy sessions, particularly for Year 7, alongside initiatives to build students' confidence are narrowing the gap between these students' attainment in both subjects and that of all students in the academy, as shown by attainment in examinations. More-able students in this group also receive one-to-one support which is tailored well to their learning needs and abilities.
- The small number of students who follow courses off-site are comprehensively monitored. Their progress, attainment and attendance are checked. All students achieved passes in functional skills in both English and mathematics.
- The federation has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Systems to ensure that those students who are underperforming are identified early have been shared with Coleridge and actions are taken earlier to promote better achievement.
- The academy enters the large majority of students early for GCSE mathematics examinations and as a result half have already achieved GCSE mathematics at A* to C – a good improvement on the previous year. Students not achieving target grades re-sit their examinations to ensure they reach their potential.
- Literacy is beginning to be developed across subjects other than English. Teachers display key words and ensure that technical vocabulary is promoted. For example, in a history lesson, attention was paid to including adjectives in full sentences to describe the conditions in the trenches in the First World War. Mathematics development in other subjects is less prevalent.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good across year groups and subjects.

- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of what students already know at the beginning of lessons or assess learning accurately during lessons. This results in students being given work which is too hard or too easy.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of their students, especially those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs. The tasks given to students do not move them on quickly enough to the next stage of learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson on straight-line graphs, students who clearly understood how to calculate the gradient quickly finished their worksheet. The following task was more of the same, rather than something more difficult.
- In some subjects, students' work is diligently marked by their teachers and comments help students to improve it. Such good practice is not widespread. In other subjects, too much work remains unchecked and students do not know whether what they have completed is correct. Some teachers fail to challenge work which is clearly not good enough and, as a result, too much work is poorly presented and unfinished.
- Teaching assistants are not deployed well enough by teachers in the classroom. Although they help those students who put up their hands for help, they are not used well enough, for example, to work with groups of students who need intensive support. This is because teachers do not plan with teaching assistants precisely what it is they want them to do.
- Despite these weaknesses there is an increasing amount of good teaching and pockets of outstanding teaching in the academy. Where this occurs, teaching enthuses and engages students and teachers have a real passion for their subject. For instance, in art, students' sketchbooks are kept with pride and there is lots of evidence to show that they act on advice given by the teacher about how to improve their work.
- The reputation of the federated school for training teachers has had a very positive impact on the academy. The physical education and creative arts departments have particularly benefited through the high-calibre workforce connection.
- The teaching of literacy across other subjects is beginning to develop. Teachers ensure 'key words' and technical vocabulary are regularly shared with students and in some subjects sentence construction and reading aloud are a focus. There is some evidence of mathematics in geography and art but this is not yet a regular feature across all subjects.
- Students benefit from appropriate teaching at Romsey Mill and The County School. They gain from the specialist approaches to teaching, which give them better opportunities to learn successfully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students say they feel safe in the academy and demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The vast majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire agree with this view, as do the overwhelming majority of staff.
 - Students' punctuality is improving because of a much more rigorous checking system but there are still too many students turning up late and missing the beginning of lessons. Attendance is
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below average but improving. However, the rate of improvement is slow. Attendance of Year 11 students is weaker than in other year groups. The academy has not yet convinced all students and parents of the close link between attendance and achievement and ensured all students attend regularly.

- Students are adamant that bullying is not an issue in the academy and, on the rare occasions where it does occur, it is effectively sorted out. Academy records support this. The academy values the work of students and staff in the 'anti-bullying crew'.
- At lunchtime and during breaks, students behave sensibly and this results in a positive atmosphere. They are friendly, approachable and welcoming.
- In a few lessons, low-level disruption by a minority of students interferes with the learning of others, especially when teaching requires improvement or where there has been a series of supply teachers. In these lessons, students do not take enough responsibility for their own learning and sometimes do the minimum they can get away with.
- Students are keen to take on responsibilities in the academy and have good opportunities to voice their opinions and to influence decisions.
- Topics studied in personal, health and social education and in religious education are relevant to students' future lives and help them to gain a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. This contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The behaviour of students who receive education away from the academy site enables them to take advantage of the wider learning opportunities available.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The Principal has made a good start to building a vision for improvement among all staff. Teachers comment very positively on her leadership. However, there is work to be done to ensure that the senior leadership team work together more closely and collaboratively to discuss priorities and the way forward to tackle them.
- The systems for tracking the progress that students make and the standards that they reach are thorough. However, subject leaders are not always familiar with the full range of academy data available. They often do not know how their subjects perform against national averages or against other subjects within the academy. This hinders their ability to gauge exactly how well their subject is doing and to pinpoint improvements to boost performance.
- Senior leaders, more recently, are checking on the quality of teaching with increasing rigour. Consequently, students' progress is better this year and academy data indicate a considerable improvement in attainment. The management of teachers' performance has become more effective and holds them to account for the progress their students make. Targets are clearly linked to achievement. If targets are not met, teachers are not rewarded with pay increases.
- Self-evaluation is incisive and leaders clearly know the priorities for improvement. They are determined to raise standards and improve rates of progress, particularly for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. They are aware that the achievement of this group of students requires the most improvement. However, the leadership and management of

special educational needs have not ensured that identified students, particularly in Year 11, have made expected rates of progress comparable to those of their classmates.

- Pupil premium money has been used to raise levels of literacy and numeracy through targeted support. The academy has measured the impact of the actions it has taken to narrow the attainment gap between this group and other students. Students are benefiting from the initiatives in place and the attainment gap, particularly for the present Year 11, is narrowing.
 - The federation with Parkside Community College is beneficial to Coleridge. Some teachers teach on both sites, so good practice is shared bringing benefits to both sites. Leaders check on the quality of education provided off-site and make sure that students benefit.
 - Although the academy has policies in place to ensure that there is no discrimination and that equal opportunities are promoted, disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not always achieve as well as they can in some year groups.
 - The academy's arrangements for safeguarding students meet requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is proactive and supportive and plays an active part in the life of the academy. Members regularly check the performance of the academy and know what it does well and what it needs to improve. They have been reflective following the dip in results last year and have reassessed their own level of challenge to leaders in light of the academy's poor performance. They are increasingly holding leaders to account. Governors are clear about pupil premium funding and where it is spent. They understand that the attainment gap between this group of students and the rest of the academy is too wide but also are aware that the gap is less than it was. Governors have a secure knowledge of the quality of teaching and are absolutely clear that staff pay is related to results and that only those who earn a pay rise actually receive one.
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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	136650
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	402743
Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	568
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Carrington
Principal	Beverly Jones
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2012
Telephone number	01223 712300
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