

East Point Academy

Kirkley Run, Lowestoft, NR33 0UQ

Inspection dates 6–7 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Too many students underachieve. The proportion attaining five GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics is below the national average. Standards in science are particularly low.
- Students who need specific support do not receive the right help to achieve well enough. Extra funding is not used effectively to enable students from less well-off families to achieve equally as well as other students.
- Students educated off-site are not prepared well enough for the next stage of their training or the workplace because they do not develop appropriate basic skills in English and mathematics.
- Students do well in most work-related subjects but less well in English, design and technology, humanities and modern foreign languages.
- There is not enough good teaching in the academy. More than half of it requires improvement. Not all lessons are well planned and time is not used effectively. Teachers do not set targets for students or mark their books consistently well.
- Lessons are regularly disrupted by a minority of students. Exclusions are high and attendance is below the national average. Not all students feel that staff will resolve incidents of bullying.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, do not have the capacity to secure essential improvements. Plans for improvement lack detail and rigour. The roles of some senior leaders are unclear and subject leaders are not driving improvements.
- The curriculum does not provide enough choice for older students. Younger, less-able students are not taught basic literacy and numeracy skills well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The use of performance data is becoming more systematic, and this is enabling staff to monitor students' progress more closely.
- Time for students to 'drop everything and read' is encouraging them to read more often.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons, some jointly with the vice-principal.
- Meetings were held with the principal, senior and middle leaders, three groups of students, the student council, four members of the governing body and two representatives from the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- Inspectors checked Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents and carers. Staff questionnaires were not circulated.
- The inspection team observed the academy’s work, and scrutinised data about students’ achievement, behaviour and attendance. They looked at reports to check the academy’s work, reviewed the records of meetings of the governing body and scrutinised students’ books in lessons.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Suzanne Burnley

Additional Inspector

Hermione Horn

Additional Inspector

Michael Stanton

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- The academy opened in September 2011. It is sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- A significant number of students leave or join the academy at times other than the start of the academic year.
- Some students are educated off-site at the academy's 'lighthouse' and 'springboard' behavioural support centres, the local college or a range of other providers.
- The academy is smaller than average. The number of students reduced significantly in 2012. Most students are White British.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for particular groups of students, including in this case students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is much higher than found nationally.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that none is inadequate and most is good by:
 - extending recently introduced procedures to train teachers and develop good practice across all departments
 - monitoring how well all teachers plan different tasks matched to students' needs and abilities, and measuring the impact this has on students' learning and progress
 - showing teachers how to use the 100 minutes of time available in each lesson to maintain students' interest and engagement, and accelerate their progress
 - checking that all teachers set students targets for improvement and regularly mark students' books to see if they are meeting their targets and know what to do to improve further.
- Raise the achievement of all students in all subjects, including those taught off-site, by:
 - embedding the recently introduced procedures to systematically monitor students' progress so that staff have a clear, up-to-date view of each student's performance, especially those eligible for support through the pupil premium, those who are disabled or have special educational needs and students that are taught off-site
 - broadening the curriculum to improve students' learning and progress in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 3, and providing older students with a wider choice of qualifications and awards suited to their abilities and interests
 - improving the quality of provision and monitoring of students' progress in science.

- Improve students' behaviour and attendance by:
 - gaining greater consistency in how all teachers manage students' behaviour in lessons
 - strengthening procedures to monitor the attendance and welfare of students taught off-site
 - enhancing the rewards given to students for good behaviour and regular attendance
 - ensuring that all students are confident that staff will resolve the concerns they raise about bullying.

- Increase the effectiveness of leaders and managers, and build further capacity to improve by:
 - reorganising the roles of senior leaders so that all of them have clear responsibilities for raising achievement
 - strengthening subject leadership, especially in science and in those subjects where students' attainment and progress are not high enough
 - adding interim, measurable targets at key points to the improvement plan to accurately gauge the impact the academy is having on preparing all students for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Not enough has been done to make sure that all students acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills. Most students join the academy with skills that are much lower than average in reading, writing and mathematics. A high proportion of them have specific learning or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Recent changes have been made to the Year 7 curriculum to improve their basic skills but it is too soon for this to have a full impact on students' learning and progress.
- The academy has focused its efforts on improving results at the end of Key Stage 4. In 2012 over 80% of Year 11 students attained at least five C grades. Over 40% of them did so with at least a C grade in English and mathematics. However, these results mask some significant underachievement amongst groups of students. Most students make less than expected progress in core subjects, especially English and science.
- The percentage of students attaining two A* to C grades in science was well below average last year. A lack of effective leadership of science and frequent changes in staffing led to a large proportion of students underachieving.
- Standards in design and technology, humanities and modern foreign languages are far too low compared with other subjects and national averages. Students entered early for GCSE mathematics in November 2011 did not have the opportunity to resit the examination later in 2012 to improve their grades.
- Additional funding provided through the pupil premium has not enabled students eligible for free school meals or looked after children to achieve equally as well as others. It has been spent on a range of personnel to monitor attendance, provide careers guidance and manage the behaviour of vulnerable students. However, the difference in average point scores in English and mathematics between students known to be eligible for free school meals and other students shows that this has not raised the achievement of the students the funding is intended for. In 2012 only 17% of pupils eligible for the pupil premium attained five GCSE C grades including English and maths compared with 50% of all others in the school. This gap shows no signs of closing.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not receive the support and guidance they need to enable them to achieve as well as others. Students who have a statement of special educational needs make good progress. Those supported by school action achieve significantly less well than others and far fewer of them attain GCSE qualifications.
- The majority of students educated off-site at the academy's support centre, the local college or at a range of other providers did not attain qualifications in English or mathematics. Some of them achieved work-related awards but not enough attention was paid to their overall progress and welfare. Attendance was much lower than for other students taught in the academy. Similar numbers of students are taught off-site this year and little is being done to ensure that all of them attain qualifications in English and mathematics.
- The academy has started to monitor students' progress systematically, and current assessment data suggest that most students are making better progress than in the past.
- Students' progress required improvement in more than half of all the lessons seen by inspectors. Currently, approximately one third of students have already attained at least a C grade in English and in mathematics. However, the same groups of students that underachieved last year continue to achieve less well than others this year.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The academy's view that the majority of teaching requires improvement is inaccurate because too much of it is not good enough and some of it is inadequate. However, inspectors found

some good and outstanding teaching in a range of subjects.

- Students have three lessons of 100 minutes duration each day and Year 11 students say they prefer this as it helps them to learn more effectively. Time is used well in some lessons but not all teachers plan enough interesting activities. At times, progress is too slow because the teacher's expectations are low, not enough work is planned for the duration of lessons and all students are expected to do the same tasks regardless of their ability. As a consequence, some students lose interest and disrupt the learning of others.
- The academy is beginning to tackle students' low levels of literacy and numeracy on entry in Year 7. Teaching them in smaller groups is enabling them to catch up and make improved progress. For example, in one mathematics lesson students worked independently on basic calculations and revision of their times-tables to give them the knowledge and confidence to tackle more challenging work later.
- Students of all ages are required to 'drop everything and read' for 20 minutes each day. Younger students take this seriously and read diligently, but not all older students are committed to reading more often.
- Discussions with students and a scrutiny of their books show that targets to help them improve are set in some subjects but not in others. Some teachers refer to expected target grades in their marking, others do not. Only a few teachers provide students with good quality advice on how to improve their work to attain a higher grade. Some teachers do not mark students' books regularly enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- Inspectors noted low-level disruption in too many lessons. Students rightly feel that the small minority who spoil things for others are not always dealt with effectively and this undermines their learning.
- Not all students respect the staff and not all teachers apply procedures to manage behaviour effectively. Too many students are sent out of lessons regularly or are excluded from the academy.
- Students understand the rewards and sanctions used to promote good behaviour, but these are not applied consistently by all staff. Awarding points for good attitudes and behaviour is making a difference but older students say that they would like to be rewarded by more trips and activities outside the academy.
- The academy's 'lighthouse' support centre enables a minority of students who do not attend regularly or who misbehave in lessons to reintegrate into lessons in the academy. Students displaying more challenging behaviour attend the 'springboard' centre housed in a local youth club. These arrangements prevent some students from disrupting the learning of others, but the quality of their own learning and progress, and their attendance is not monitored as effectively as it is for those who learn in the academy.
- Older students say that the academy is a safe place to be but younger students had some concerns, particularly about bullying in corridors and toilets. Older students felt that bullying, mostly name-calling and physical bullying, was not a major issue, but when it did occur they did not have total confidence that their concerns would be followed up by staff and be fully resolved.
- A range of procedures to improve attendance has helped to reduce persistent absence. Overall attendance is rising but remains below the national average. The attendance of students in Year 10 is much lower than that of students in other years and a high proportion of these students are some of the academy's most vulnerable students supported by school action. The attendance of students taught off-site at a range of locations is much lower than those taught in the academy.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because senior staff are not showing that they have the capacity to secure essential improvements and prevent key groups of students from underachieving. Based on the improvements they have made since the academy's opening, senior leaders view the quality of their leadership and management as requiring improvement, but inspectors judge this to be over-generous.
- The academy's self-evaluation accurately identifies what has been achieved and what else needs to be done, but overall judgements made for the academy's effectiveness are too generous.
- The principal and vice-principals are driving improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum, and are increasing teachers' understanding of assessment data. The roles of other senior leaders are unclear. They make less of a contribution to raising achievement.
- Currently no senior teacher has overall responsibility for students who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, or for those taught off-site. A senior teacher coordinates support for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, but many of them are underachieving.
- The academy's improvement plans lack interim targets at regular points to enable senior leaders and governors to rigorously check that the academy is on track to achieve the challenging targets it has set for 2013.
- Not all subject leaders are driving improvements to the quality of teaching and achievement of students. Standards achieved in a range of subjects were very low in 2012 and there is little evidence to show what leaders are doing to improve this. Leadership of science is inadequate. The majority of students underachieved in 2012. Students in Year 11 feel that not enough is being done to prepare them for science examinations later this year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body includes several new members, including a new chair of governors. They are fully committed to helping the academy strengthen its position and ensure that students receive the good education they deserve. They support the principal effectively but acknowledge that they need to provide further challenge to hold all senior leaders to account for the academy's performance. They know the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and have not approved any teachers moving up the salary scale. They recognise the improvements made to overall results in 2012 but show less of an understanding about the underachievement of different groups of students, or how effectively extra funding is being used to try to make significant gains in students' achievement. Safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements and the single central record is well maintained, but the governing body does not check it regularly to ensure students' safety.

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	137134
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	399858

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	874
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Bale
Headteacher	Elizabeth Redpath
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01502 525300
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