

Carlton le Willows Academy

Wood Lane, Gedling, Nottingham, NG4 4AA

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All groups of students achieve well and make good progress.
- Standards are consistently above average by the end of Year 11.
- Teaching is typically good, and some is outstanding.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent.
- They demonstrate a very good understanding of how to be safe and stay safe, in a wide range of situations.
- There is a real sense of community in the academy, in which all students are valued equally.
- Students' personal and social development is excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is supported very well.
- The headteacher leads the academy strongly, and is supported well by the senior team. Together they have made good improvements to teaching and achievement, and the way different subjects and courses are planned and taught.
- The sixth form is good. Students achieve well, helped by a good range of courses to match their abilities and aspirations. They benefit from good guidance and opportunities to develop a wide range of skills for later life.
- The governing body is effective in challenging the academy. The governors' comprehensive knowledge of the academy's performance means that they add to its capacity to keep improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Students are not always challenged enough in their work to achieve exceptionally well.
- Subject leaders do not check the quality of teaching and learning thoroughly enough to quickly identify and tackle any barriers to outstanding teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 45 lessons, 10 of which were seen together with either the headteacher or an assistant headteacher.
- The inspectors took into account the 93 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the information from 74 staff questionnaires in conducting the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with five groups of students, senior and subject leaders, and governors.
- The inspectors looked at a range of academy documentation, including information about the progress made by students of all abilities in each year group, and how closely the academy improvement plan matched their needs. They also looked at records of checks on the quality of teaching and students' behaviour and attendance, as well as policies to help safeguard them.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Thomas	Additional Inspector
Richard Masterton	Additional Inspector
William Cassell	Additional Inspector
Anne McAvan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Carlton le Willows Academy became an academy in April 2011. It retains the same name. When it was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2009, it was judged outstanding.
- It is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for students in the care of the local authority, students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is below the national average.
- Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.
- A very small number of students learn away from the academy. They are educated at the Wheel Base, which caters for students learning mechanics, or Real Education for those who have specific learning needs.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- It is a partner within the Redhill Teaching School Alliance, which shares staff training opportunities across its schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable students of all abilities to achieve outstandingly well by making sure that:
 - teachers always provide demanding lesson activities that challenge students of all abilities to make as much progress as possible
 - subject leaders promote outstanding teaching and achievement by thoroughly monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards at the end of Year 11 are consistently well above average and continue to improve. This includes the proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades, including in English and mathematics. The academy's data point to a further increase this year.
- From above-average starting points in Year 7, students make good progress throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. An above-average proportion exceed nationally expected progress, because teaching throughout the academy is mainly good.
- Students do not make outstanding progress because the tasks that they are given in lessons are not always challenging enough to support consistently rapid achievement.
- Over half of the students in Year 7 who are entitled to 'catch-up' funding to raise their standards in English and mathematics to the levels expected for their age have now done so. The others are progressing well.
- Different groups of students, including those from minority ethnic groups and students who speak English as an additional language, all progress throughout the academy at a similar rate. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress, including in English and mathematics, because of support that responds to their individual needs.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent carefully to provide small classes and individual and group support in English and mathematics. As a result, the gap has narrowed between the average scores in English and mathematics of students known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and those who are not. Their gap in attainment is now on average three terms in English and five terms in mathematics.
- The academy enters students early for GCSE mathematics but they continue being entered for the examination until the staff are sure they have achieved their potential. In 2012, a lower proportion of students entered in Year 10 achieved the highest grades. By Year 11, students' results at all levels compared favourably with national results.
- A minority of students spend part of their education studying on work-related courses. The very small proportion who are educated away from the academy site make good progress, and their achievement and attendance are tracked carefully.
- Students' skills levels when they join the sixth form vary from year to year, as students of all abilities are accepted. The academy's information and inspection evidence show that students make good progress by the end of Year 13 from their individual starting points.
- Most students in the sixth form complete their courses and go on to employment or further or higher education.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good throughout Years 7 to 11 and the sixth form, and this results in students' good progress over time. A small amount of teaching is outstanding, and in a very few lessons

teaching requires improvement.

- Lessons are characterised by harmonious relationships between staff and students, which create a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Teachers make very clear the specific skills and levels that students should aim to achieve by the end of each lesson. They are regularly revisited throughout the lesson.
- Throughout the academy, including in the sixth form, students get plenty of time to practise what they have learnt and to work independently and in groups. This was illustrated in a religious education lesson for Year 9 students. They made informed judgements about the different beliefs about the creation of the world, based on a range of information that they debated with their classmates.
- In an outstanding English lesson, students made excellent progress in extending their understanding of the deeper meaning of a poem because the lesson was very well crafted to involve the whole class. The questions asked by the teacher were chosen carefully to extend their understanding. However, this high-quality practice is not yet a typical feature of lessons, and the work students are given does not always match their individual ability levels closely enough to support outstanding achievement.
- The academy has had a successful focus on developing students' literacy skills in a wide range of lessons. Good practice was seen in subjects such as geography, graphics, history and food. Subject-specific words and literacy skills were incorporated into learning. Numeracy is now developing well across different subjects.
- The academy has clear expectations for the quality of marking, and some is excellent in the information and guidance it gives to students. It is working to make sure that marking is consistently of such high quality.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students get on extremely well with each other. This is encouraged by the very popular mixed-age tutor groups, which add to the positive feel of the academy.
- Students enjoy being at the academy. They are proud of their involvement in its development through, for example, being consulted about staff appointments and academy policies on behaviour and anti-bullying. Students show great commitment to helping others, including fundraising. Such activities, along with positions of responsibility and opportunities for decision-making, result in their excellent personal and social development.
- Sixth form students make a significant contribution to the academy, including by supporting younger students and carrying out very successful charity fund-raising.
- Students' behaviour is excellent, both in lessons and around the academy. Students show a real desire to learn. The site is extensive, with some narrow paths that get very crowded, but movement between lessons is extremely orderly. Students respect the behaviour policy and praise the system of rewards and consequences, which is all the more effective because the teachers implement it consistently well.
- The students speak very confidently about how to ensure they stay safe. As well as a secure understanding of how the internet can be a danger to them, they are also very aware of other

possible risks such as misuse of drugs.

- Students say that there is very little bullying in the academy, because they know the impact that it can have on others. The academy does not tolerate it. During the inspection, students also expressed their belief that prejudice and discrimination are never right. Along with good exposure to other cultures through the curriculum, the academy ensures that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well.
- Attendance is above average. Many students' attendance is excellent and the academy has made good progress in raising the attendance levels of those whose attendance has previously been less regular.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership which is highly respected by staff, students and parents. He oversees the academy's performance thoroughly, ensuring that it can continue to develop and broaden the education it provides to all students. The other senior leaders provide effective overall support.
- The senior leaders have a good awareness of the academy's key strengths and weaknesses, based on detailed systems for checking and assessment of performance, and careful planning to tackle the areas for improvement that arise from this analysis. This has led to important improvements to the curriculum and good systems for staff training and development.
- The academy's improvement plan and the performance targets set for staff reflect the academy's priorities to raise teaching and progress to outstanding. While the academy judges a higher proportion of teaching to be outstanding than the inspection team, the teaching observations inspectors carried out with senior school leaders resulted in matching judgements.
- Subject leaders are making good progress overall in raising achievement in their areas. Although they check aspects of performance in their subjects, their monitoring is not specific enough to make sure, for example, that students are always challenged as accurately as possible in their learning.
- Staff's progress towards their performance targets is checked regularly, and pay rises are not awarded unless they achieve measurable goals in speeding up students' progress, improving their teaching and showing, where appropriate, effective leadership. Practices such as weekly training, teaching and learning communities within the academy, and the partnership with the teaching alliance continue to improve the quality of teaching.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are particularly strong in terms of the wider development of students' social skills within the community, the good range of courses to suit all needs and aspirations, and effective guidance. The senior leaders track students' progress carefully to identify any students at risk of falling behind in their work, and the resulting support is prompt and effective in raising achievement.
- Students appreciate the wide range of courses available to them, especially in Key Stage 4, and the organisation of their learning into mixed-age groups. After-school activities give them many additional opportunities to develop new skills, including personal and social skills.
- Students of all abilities and groups, including those considered at risk of being vulnerable, are

catered for and supported equally well in this inclusive academy. Extensive partnerships with outside agencies and organisations and individual and group support from academy staff ensure that students' individual needs, whether academic, social or behavioural, are met very well and there is no discrimination.

- The academy 'buys into' services provided by the local authority, whose regular reviewing of the academy's progress provides leaders with an objective and helpful assessment of its strengths and needs.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors have a comprehensive knowledge of the academy's work, much of which they gain from direct involvement such as observing the quality of teaching. Consequently, they are able to challenge its performance and there is ample evidence of them doing so. They know where the academy's strengths lie, what performance data say about students' achievement, and where improvements are being made. The governors speak confidently and knowledgeably about the arrangements for staff's performance management and know how effectively pupil premium funding is being spent. They are well placed to contribute even more to the academy's evaluation of its effectiveness. They make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding, including for those students who spend time learning at other sites, meet current national requirements.

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	136627
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	412071

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1350
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Martin
Headteacher	Craig Weaver
Date of previous school inspection	N/a
Telephone number	0115 956 5008
Fax number	0115 956 5009
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