

# Montsaye Academy

Greening Road, Rothwell, Kettering, NN14 6BB

**Inspection dates** 25–26 April 2013

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> <b>2</b>     |
| Achievement of pupils          | Good                 | 2                        |
| Quality of teaching            | Good                 | 2                        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | Good                 | 2                        |
| Leadership and management      | Good                 | 2                        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The academy Principal, governors and leaders at all levels are focused on raising aspirations and creating opportunities for students to make good progress.
- Achievement is good. By the end of Key Stage 4 an above average proportion of students have made good progress in most subjects and average numbers have achieved five GCSE A\*-C grades in five subjects including English and mathematics.
- Teaching in most lessons is good with some that is outstanding.
- The sixth form is good because students are making good progress due to the good and outstanding teaching they receive.
- The academy has worked hard to ensure that behaviour is good. Good humoured staff and positive relationships between staff and students contribute to a pleasant atmosphere.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is improved by the vertical tutoring system.
- The academy has introduced rigorous and effective systems to make sure that all students are making good progress in all year groups and across all subjects.
- What the school offers is broad and relevant to the learning needs of Montsaye students.
- Literacy is well taught in a number of subject areas.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding so that students' progress is good rather than outstanding.
- Some students are not sufficiently challenged in their lessons where teaching is not good or outstanding.
- Written feedback is not well used in all subjects to help students' understand what they have to do to improve the quality of their work.
- The attendance of a small group of students is below average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 41 lessons taught by 41 teachers. Three of these lessons were jointly observed with school leaders. Inspectors also made brief visits to a number of lessons in mathematics, attended an assembly and observed students' behaviour around the academy.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students. Discussions took place with academy governors/trustees, the Principal and the senior leadership team, the special educational needs co-ordinator and a group of subject leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents (Parent View), responses from parents collected by the academy and the 19 staff questionnaires returned by academy staff.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at information about students' progress and attainment, the academy's improvement plans and the academy's own analysis of how well it is doing. Inspectors also looked at the system for managing the performance of staff, minutes from meetings of the governing body and a range of policy documents.

## Inspection team

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Liz Talmadge, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Patrick Walsh                | Additional Inspector |
| John Greevy                  | Additional Inspector |
| Jacqueline Pentlow           | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Montsaye Academy was formed in 2011 as a converter academy. When its predecessor school was last inspected it was judged to be good.
- The academy is slightly larger than average, it serves the communities of Rothwell, Desborough and surrounding villages in Northamptonshire and teaches students aged between 11 and 19 years.
- Most students in the academy are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is very low. There are more boys than girls in all year groups.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is a little below average. This is additional government funding for students entitled to free school meals, for children in local authority care and for students with parents in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is above average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school experiences a small, but significant, number of in-year admissions into Key Stage 4.
- The academy has a sixth form.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students work off-site in a wide variety of work experience placements.
- The academy meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers:
  - increase the pace of learning so that it challenges and engages all students
  - teach students the skills that they need to be effective when they are learning independently
  - develop their skills in questioning so that they can assess how much progress students are making and re-shape activities to help them make even better progress.
- Improve the quality of written feedback so that all students are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the academy with average overall standards but fewer than average numbers of them are high-attaining students. Standards have risen strongly over time showing the good progress the academy is making. In 2012 the number of students achieving five A\*-C GCSE grades was broadly in line with the national average
- GCSE results are consistently well above average in mathematics. In 2012 the numbers of students attaining grades A\*-C in GCSE English dipped but the average point score for students in English was still in line with the national average. The academy's system to track students' attainment and progress demonstrates that English results are set to improve strongly in 2013.
- Students make particularly good progress in mathematics. In 2012, an above average proportion of students had made expected progress or better than expected progress from Year 7 to the end of Year 11. In English a small number of students made less than expected progress. During the inspection students made good progress in the majority of lessons.
- By the end of Key Stage 4 most students make good progress in a wide range of subjects including: design technology, food technology, music, history, physics, biology, chemistry and German. Progress is less good in core science, geography, art and design and drama. The majority of teaching seen in these subjects was good or better indicating that the academy is making improvements where underperformance is identified.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide mentoring and support for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those students who are looked after. There is strong evidence that the progress of these pupils accelerates between Year 10 and Year 11 and that the standards for these students are improving rapidly. The percentage of students making three levels of progress between Year 7 and Year 11 is close to average in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs have made variable progress by the time they reach the end of Year 11. In 2012 a new tracking system and better support for these students was introduced and this is already demonstrating good progress in all year groups.
- The academy enters some students early for GCSE examinations in mathematics. Those students achieving less than their target grade are entered for the examination again in Year 11. There is therefore no impact on overall results in the subject.
- Students wanting to enter the sixth form have to meet quite demanding entrance qualifications and this has led to a steady improvement in students' progress over the last three years. Progress seen in sixth form lessons during the inspection was mainly good or better.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching in the majority of subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually at least good; some is outstanding. The academy has focused the training of its teachers on aspects of teaching that they judge to require improvement such as: assessment for learning and how to teach outstanding lessons.
- Relationships between staff and students are good and teachers plan and teach lessons that deepen students' knowledge and understanding. They have high expectations of what students can achieve and work hard to raise the ambitions of students and instil them with self-confidence. Students know this and value the hard work of their teachers.
- In the best lessons teachers regularly use their assessment of students' achievement to plan lessons that motivate and engage them. They make sure that students know what their targets are and explain to them how to make progress. Teachers create a classroom environment that encourages learning and they use stimulating resources to engage the interest of students. A Year 7 English lesson on descriptive writing was, for example, improved by opportunities to touch and smell things. Teachers also provide a range of ways of learning, including small group

and pair work, and they make good use of peer and self-assessment. In these lessons students display a high level of engagement.

- Where teaching is not yet consistently good or outstanding:
  - the pace of learning is too slow
  - the skills that students need to work independently are not explicitly taught
  - the questions that teachers ask are not effective in helping them to understand what students know and can do and so they are sometimes unable to help students make even better progress
  - teachers talk too much and students lose interest

In these lessons students are not sufficiently challenged to be actively engaged in their learning.

- Teaching assistants work well to support individuals and small groups of children.
- The academy is focused on improving students' literacy skills and some good examples of literacy teaching were seen in a range of subjects.
- Examples of good marking were seen during the inspection but not all teachers regularly use written feedback to help students know precisely what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teaching in the sixth form is mostly good or outstanding and teachers generally expect students to learn more independently. Teachers expect high levels of student participation in learning and they set challenging tasks. Students appreciate the regular support that they are offered to check that they are up to date with their learning and say that they value their relationships with their teachers.

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

- The academy is justly proud of the good work it does in raising student ambitions and self-confidence. Expectations of students are high and the vast majority of students respond positively to them. Behaviour seen during the inspection both in and out of the classroom was good. The parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire reported that they thought behaviour was good.
- Students told inspectors that they feel safe both inside and outside the school buildings. They say that bullying is rare and adults act quickly to resolve any issues that arise. Students report that homophobic language is used occasionally but that it is challenged by staff.
- Most students like coming to school, they speak well of the academy and attend regularly. A small number of students have poor attendance. The academy is working hard and improving attendance; it is a little below average in Key Stage 3 and 4, and good in the sixth form.
- The academy enjoys a friendly atmosphere where students' relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults are very good. This is supported by a vertical tutoring system that enables students to work together across the age range. In lessons students behave well and when given the opportunity to learn independently can show good and outstanding behaviour in support of each other's learning.
- Some off-site activities support a small number of Key Stage 4 students in a wide variety of work experience placements. This helps them to develop their work-based skills and prepares them well for employment or further training. The placements form part of a vocational programme and they are organised and managed by the Connexions service. The health and safety arrangements for these students all meet statutory requirements.
- The academy has clear guidance on expected behaviour and both rewards and consequences are understood by students. The significant reduction in the number of exclusions during the last twelve months demonstrates the impact that the academy is having on students' attitudes and behaviour.
- The house system provides a forum for students to have a 'voice' and creates regular opportunities for them to express their views and opinions on a range of issues.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The academy has a clear sense of purpose. The Principal and her senior team are committed to ensuring that all students within the academy aspire to achieve their potential. In support of this, academy leaders and governors have created a community sports resource that is available to parents, carers and their families during the evenings and at weekends.
- Senior and middle leaders have focused the training of academy teachers on improving the quality of teaching; the significant improvements in Year 11 examination results over the last few years illustrate that they have been quite successful. Most teaching seen during the inspection was good or outstanding.
- The progress of every student is closely monitored by senior and middle leaders so that teachers can use the information when planning their lessons. Senior leaders work closely with subject leaders to review the performance of subjects and teachers on a regular basis. This leads to the good progress being made by most students in many subjects.
- Senior leaders hold teachers to account for the quality of their teaching and progress that their students make through rigorous monitoring. Salary progression is dependent upon teachers reaching agreed standards and having the approval of governors.
- The academy understands its strengths and areas for further development. Ways of raising student achievement are carefully considered and academy leaders will quickly change any initiative that is not working well. Improvement plans are clear about what the academy priorities are: ensuring that teaching is more consistently good or better and continuing to improve student achievement.
- The balanced academic, applied and vocational courses are a strong feature of the academy and offer students a very wide range of learning experiences. These motivate and engage students and support them in achieving as well as they do. Good guidance available to students helps them to make the best choices in preparation for study in Key Stage 4 or the sixth form and for routes into work, training or higher education.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- Safeguarding and child protection meet all statutory requirements and are well managed.

**■ The governance of the school:**

- Governors and trustees have high aspirations for Montsaye students. They chose to become an academy so that they could continue to provide the community focus that they believe is central to achieving this aim. They are a thoughtful, skilled and well informed group of people, closely involved in monitoring the work of the academy by offering appropriate challenge and support to the Principal and her senior team. Governors' concerns about standards in the sixth form led to changes being made to the entry requirements so that students' GCSE qualifications are more appropriate for advanced level study. Governors are very knowledgeable about what is going on in the academy and know about the impact of expenditure, including pupil premium funding. Governors know about the quality of teaching in the academy and understand how well students are achieving. Alongside the Principal, governors make sure that teachers' underperformance is tackled and that good performance is rewarded. Governors want to make a positive difference to the school community and are effective in doing so.

## 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> | 137049           |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Northamptonshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 413421           |

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

|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                         | Academy converter              |
| <b>School category</b>                        | Non-maintained                 |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                    | 11–19                          |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                       | Mixed                          |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>     | Mixed                          |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>    | 1068                           |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 129                            |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body             |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | Rev A Ward                     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                            | Mrs Susan Fennell              |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | Not previously inspected       |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 01536 418844                   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                             | 01536 418282                   |
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