

Ryde Academy

Pell Lane, Ryde, PO33 3LN

Inspection dates 24–25 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Inadequate 4
Achievement of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching	Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Too many younger students do not feel confident to report bullying. They do not always feel safe in all areas of the academy because older students sometimes behave inconsiderately towards them. Not all teachers stick to the academy's policies, particularly those for managing behaviour.
- There have been improvements in students' achievement over the last year. Standards, notably in mathematics, are rising. However, achievement varies too much between subjects.
- Teaching has improved, particularly in English and mathematics, as a result of support provided by the sponsor. However, the quality of teaching is not always good in other subjects.
- Some students' poor writing skills limit their progress at Key Stage 3. Teachers do not all encourage students to write well and take pride in the presentation of their work.
- There are weaknesses in the way in which leaders identify priorities and plan to meet them. The academy's senior and subject leaders do not use precise enough measures to find out what is working and what is not.

The school has the following strengths

- In English and mathematics, the gap in performance between students for whom the academy receives the pupil premium and other students is closing.
- The governing body understands where it does not have a clear enough picture of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. Governors consistently challenge the academy's leaders.
- When the academy's leaders and the sponsor have identified a need for improvement and provided support and resources, they have made a difference. For example, over the last year achievement in mathematics, as well as attendance, have improved. This demonstrates that leaders have the capacity to bring about improvement.
- Teaching has improved for those teachers who attended an extensive training course, but this has not been available to everyone.
- The sixth form requires improvement. There have been improvements since 2012.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons, of which ten were seen jointly with a member of the academy's leadership team. In addition, one inspector made a number of short visits to lessons to look at provision for lower-attaining students and students with special educational needs. Two other inspectors spent time at lunchtime talking to a wide range of students about behaviour.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors and the clerk, and academy staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- The sample of 29 responses to the online Parent View survey was too small to make a significant contribution to the inspection. Inspectors took account of 97 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at documentation including the academy's own data on achievement, the academy's self-evaluation, improvement planning, staff training information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, documents relating to safeguarding, minutes of governing body meetings and students' work.

Inspection team

Mary Massey, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Marcia Headon

Additional Inspector

Phil Taylor

Additional Inspector

Paula Sargent

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- Ryde Academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school and has a small sixth form.
- The academy opened in September 2011 as part of the reorganisation of secondary education on the Isle of Wight, taking students from neighbouring middle schools and Ryde High School. It occupies the premises of the previous Ryde High School.
- The acting headteacher from Ryde High School was appointed Principal of the academy when it opened.
- The academy is sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust. The Regional Director, a serving headteacher, visits the academy regularly.
- Most students are of White British heritage. A few students do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students for whom the academy receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those with a parent serving in the armed forces) is just above that found nationally.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs who are supported through school action is just above the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. Of these students, about a third have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- A small number of students attend full- or part-time placements at alternative provision away from the academy site, at Thompson House Tuition Centre and Clatterford Tuition Centre, a pupil referral unit.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching in all subjects in order to raise achievement, by:
 - ensuring that all staff receive high-quality training that meets their individual needs
 - developing teachers' skills so they feel confident in teaching literacy, particularly writing
 - having high expectations of students' achievement and providing lessons that are briskly paced, interesting and allow students to spend more time doing and less time listening
 - making sure teachers use assessment information to match work to individual students' needs
 - making sure teachers demand high standards of presentation so that students take a pride in their work.
- Improve confidence in systems for managing behaviour, by:
 - reviewing the behaviour and the anti-bullying policies and taking the views of staff and

students into account

- creating an atmosphere of trust with students so they all feel confident in reporting bullying
 - implementing the reviewed policies and ensuring that all staff apply them consistently.
- The academy’s leaders need to accelerate the pace of change and focus sharply on raising achievement in all subjects, by:
- producing action plans that are clearly linked to thorough and accurate self-evaluation and have precise, measurable and ambitious targets, with clear procedures and timescales for evaluating the impact of actions taken
 - providing succinct and appropriate information for the governing body about all aspects of the academy’s work.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- When students arrive at the academy their attainment is just below the national average. In 2012 the attainment of Year 11 students in English was close to the national average. However, students did not do so well in mathematics and this meant that too few gained five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics.
- Some groups of students who left the academy in 2012 had not made enough progress. For example, boys, especially those known to be eligible for free school meals, students who are disabled or have special educational needs and who were supported through school action did not achieve as well as their peers.
- In response to this, the academy's sponsor has provided extensive support for mathematics and English over the last year. Students' attendance is much better, substantial staffing difficulties in mathematics have been resolved and teaching has improved. As a result, students are making better progress and achievement has risen.
- Examination results already achieved and the academy's own information show that mathematics GCSE results in 2013 are likely to reach the national average at least, and that boys will perform much better than in 2012. Achievement in English is likely to be maintained at broadly average. The academy's data indicate that the achievement of Year 10 students is improving. There are also improvements in achievement in geography and science.
- The academy has had some success in promoting equality of opportunity for its students. The gap in average point scores in English and mathematics between those students for whom the academy receives the pupil premium and other students has reduced over the last year. It is a smaller gap than is found nationally.
- The very small number of students who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- The progress of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs varies across the school. Checks on their progress are not regular enough and do not always result in the right help being provided.
- Specialist schemes have been introduced at Key Stage 3 to improve reading and these are beginning to develop students' skills. However, not enough attention is paid to encouraging high quality writing and, in subjects other than English, some students are not writing as well as they did when they left primary school. This slows down the progress some students make in lessons at Key Stage 3.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement, but has got better since 2012, when Year 13 did well, but students in Year 12 did not make enough progress.
- The few one-year GCSE courses with early entry in Year 10 are being removed from the curriculum at the end of this year because they were not effective.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- No outstanding lessons were seen during the inspection and a few were inadequate. About a third were good. These were often in subjects in which GCSE results in 2012 were close to or above the national average such as history, in mathematics and English, where support has been provided from the sponsor, or where teachers have taken part in the Teacher Effectiveness Programme (TEEP). Teachers' absence is affecting the quality of teaching and therefore students' progress in modern foreign languages.
- Where teaching requires improvement, lessons proceed too slowly and teachers are not ambitious enough for students. Students say that some teachers talk at them for too long and sometimes the work is too easy. Teachers do not routinely correct errors in students' written work. They do not expect high enough standards of writing or demand high-quality presentation which gives students pride in their work.

- Teachers are beginning to check on students' progress during lessons. However, many teachers are not using the information they have to plan activities that meet students' individual needs, even though this was a focus of training over the last year. Support for individual students, especially in Year 11, to help them with their examinations, is often more personalised and effective.
- In good lessons, teachers plan small steps in learning and give students time to work independently. Teachers provide a variety of activities that are not too easy and not too difficult and which keep students interested in their learning. Teachers ask questions that require students to explain their thinking and this helps deepen their understanding. Students receive regular and helpful subject-specific feedback through marking and conversations with teachers, so they know how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- Students report that the academy's behaviour policy is not applied consistently and poor behaviour is not always managed well. For example, while appropriate sanctions are applied when bad language is used towards staff, teachers do not always tackle the use of homophobic language, swearing or name-calling between students. Rewards which recognise good work and achievement are valued by the students, but staff are not consistent in the way they award them.
- Of the high proportion of staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, about a quarter felt that behaviour is not managed effectively and that the academy's policies are not consistently applied.
- Students clearly understand the different forms that bullying can take and are particularly aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying. However, younger students report that they do not feel confident to report bullying or that if they did, it would be dealt with effectively. The academy's logs show a very small number of such incidents have been reported. The few recorded racist incidents have been taken very seriously by the academy.
- In some areas of the school building, when there is crowding, older students, especially boys, are thoughtless and are not considerate enough of younger students, who report that they do not feel safe in these areas. There are some places younger students avoid when older students are there. However, the atmosphere in the academy appears calm. Many students are well mannered and support one another when in difficulty.
- Students' attitudes to learning are linked to the quality of teaching. Where teachers set high expectations, are consistent in applying rewards and sanctions, and provide challenging and accessible activities, students are actively involved, behave well and gain a sense of achievement.
- Weaker lessons are sometimes disrupted by lack of concentration, low-level chatter and poor attitudes which affect the learning of others in the class. Sometimes students take too little responsibility for their own learning, depending too much on direction from teachers. Students do not always show respect to supply teachers and some do not display a sense of pride in the academy.
- The Inclusive Learning Centre helps those students who are more vulnerable. Those with behavioural difficulties say that the support they get helps them to behave better. Permanent and fixed-term exclusions have dropped over the past two years. Use of the call-out system when students misbehave in lessons is going down.
- The appointment of an attendance officer and careful follow-up of absences by support staff have had a significant impact on improving attendance for all students, although it is still below the national average. The number of students who are persistently absent has also fallen. Attendance in the sixth form is good. Punctuality has also improved since the academy opened, both at the start of the day and to lessons, even though the academy has no bells.

The leadership and management require improvement

- After disappointing GCSE results in 2012, departmental plans were put in place to tackle the difficulties, especially in mathematics and other underperforming subjects. Over the last year, senior leaders have successfully dealt with some urgent issues such as achievement in mathematics, recording assessment information and raising attendance. Extensive support has been provided by the sponsor in mathematics and students' achievement in Year 11 is much improved.
 - Although there has been success in tackling these urgent problems, there are shortfalls in the quality of the academy's improvement planning. These are linked to weaknesses in its evaluation of priorities for action. For example, the academy's self-evaluation does not refer specifically to the underachievement of boys, students who have special educational needs or students known to be eligible for free school meals. The academy's improvement plan does not include precise targets or actions for these groups of students, even though their performance was an area of concern when the plan was written.
 - Improvement plans do not explain how long actions are going to take, what is going to be measured or who will evaluate what is being done. As a result, there are no clear systems to find out what works. For example, matching work to students' differing needs was a focus for improving teaching and learning last year, but is still not consistently done by all teachers. There has been no formal analysis of what difference training has made.
 - Regular professional development is provided and teachers choose which sessions to attend. Coaching and mentoring to help teachers improve their practice have been introduced. Performance management is used to hold teachers to account and inform progression up the pay spine, but training which arises from performance reviews is only personalised when there are serious concerns about a teacher's performance.
 - The quality of middle leadership is variable but is affected by absence in some key departments. There is a clear line-management system, and extra training is increasing the confidence of middle leaders. Not all middle leaders complete self-evaluation of their own departments and they have not received training in improvement planning.
 - The sixth form is expanding and the number of students staying on to Year 13 has risen. The head of sixth form understands its strengths and weaknesses well.
 - The academy's current curriculum is being changed for September 2013 to match students' needs more closely. The progress of the few students following an alternative curriculum is monitored through visits to their placements by staff. This provision makes sure that some students stay in full-time education until the end of Year 11. Some of these students have never attended the academy because they were already in full-time long-term placements when it opened.
 - The regional director of the sponsor monitors progress during regular visits and makes recommendations for improvement. Effective support has been provided to improve teaching in English and mathematics.
 - The academy meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors are strongly committed to improving the academy and are concerned about the lack of clear strategic direction and the shortcomings in improvement planning. They are regularly provided with data about students' attainment and progress but this is not in a succinct, evaluated format that is easy to understand. They increase their knowledge of the academy by making regular visits, and reporting back to the rest of the governing body.
 - Many governors are relatively inexperienced, but they are very well supported by an
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experienced clerk. They bring a range of useful expertise to the academy and are taking steps to improve their knowledge and skills.

- Minutes of meetings show that governors challenge the academy’s leaders robustly, asking probing and sometimes difficult questions. A recent report about special educational needs provision, for example, was written by a governor and made a series of clear recommendations for improvement.
 - Many staff transferred to the academy already on the upper pay scale. In the first year of opening, governors have supported the Principal in linking further progression to performance and withholding pay rises from those who are underperforming. Governors realise that they do not have full and accurate information about the quality of teaching in the academy.
 - Governors have questioned the academy’s leaders closely about the use of the pupil premium funding. They know that the performance of these students has risen, but nevertheless want to ensure that the money is targeted at those specific students for whom it is allocated and not used for more general provision.
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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	136753
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	399862

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

Type of school	Academy Sponsor Led
School category	Community
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	1100
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Holmes
Headteacher	Rob Hoddle
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01983567331
Fax number	01983618400
Email address	contactus@rydeacademy.org

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