

# Pewsey Vale School

Wilcot Road, Pewsey, SN9 5EW

**Inspection dates** 12–13 June 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.

- Students make good progress as a result of good teaching and improvements to the tracking and support for their achievement. As a result, they achieve well.
- Leaders and governors have taken decisive action which has accelerated progress in the academy over the last year and improved the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have high aspirations for the students.
- Leaders have improved teaching over time through more consistent checking and support for teachers.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the academy. They are proud of their school. They feel safe and know whom to go to for help.
- Attendance is above average and students enjoy coming to school.
- The development of students' social, moral, cultural and spiritual awareness is a strength of the academy.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teachers do not use the information about students' learning to plan activities that are challenging for all.
- When marking work, not all teachers give enough guidance on how to improve or expect students to respond to their advice.
- Leaders do not always focus closely enough on the progress students are making in lessons when judging how good the teaching is.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, five of them jointly with senior leaders.
- They spoke to students about their work and asked for their opinions about the academy.
- They looked at students' work and teachers' marking of work in students' books.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders and three governors.
- They took account of the 22 responses to the online Parent View survey and the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team looked at a number of documents, including information about safeguarding, the achievement of students in the academy, the academy's checks on how well it is doing and its records of monitoring in relation to teaching, students' behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Wendy Boulter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Margaret Faull

Additional Inspector

Catherine Worthington

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Pewsey Vale School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- It converted to become an academy school on 1 July 2011. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The academy receives pupil premium funding based on this number.
- The proportion of students in receipt of pupil premium funding, which is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families, is lower than the national average. All three groups are represented in the academy currently.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- A very small number of students in Year 11 attend alternative provision for one day a week at a local farm as part of the Wessex partnership programme but at the time of the inspection, they were on study leave.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Compared with schools nationally, a greater proportion of students join and leave the academy during Years 8 to 11. This reflects a local community, which includes military personnel.

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

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by making sure that:
  - teachers use assessment data more effectively to plan lessons which stretch and challenge all learners so that they make faster progress
  - all teachers give high quality feedback more consistently to enable students to understand how to improve their work
  - teachers manage students' behaviour more effectively in some lessons.
- Ensure that all leaders always focus closely on the quality of students' learning when making judgements about lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- At the end of the first year after becoming an academy, the results were not consistently good across all subjects. The headteacher, governors and senior staff took decisive action to tackle this situation. As a result of better teaching, the development of a more rigorous monitoring system, new staff appointments and a great deal of extra help and support for students to improve, progress has speeded up in all year groups. The proportion of students in Year 11 predicted to attain five or more A\* to C grades in GCSE examinations including English and mathematics is higher than in 2012 and above the national average.
- Students' progress in mathematics and English has improved. Results for those students who were entered early for GCSE examinations in Year 10 confirm that results in Year 11 will be better than last year and above the national average.
- The academy successfully develops students' literacy skills and encourages them to enjoy reading. Students borrow regularly from a very well equipped library and were enthusiastic about reading, both within and at home. The academy's approach to developing literacy is making a difference. Key words are to be found in students' planners. An example of these being used spontaneously was in a textiles lesson, where a student who was discussing work with another was unable to think of a technical term and immediately said, 'I'll check and see if it's on my key words page.'
- In 2012, the average points score of students known to be eligible for free school meals was similar to that of the rest of their year group. Predictions for 2013 indicate that it will be the same this year. The academy offers a wide range of support to meet the needs of these pupils. Students known to be eligible for free school meals are predicted to achieve better than their year group in mathematics this year.
- Disabled students or who have special educational needs made similar progress to the rest of their classmates in 2012. In 2013, progress throughout the academy is more variable between year groups but broadly similar overall.
- Better systems to track the progress of students through the academy, raised expectations of the progress they should make by the end of Key Stage 4 and better use of this data by leaders and teachers make a strong contribution to improvements in students' achievement. Achievement is not yet outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching to accelerate the rate of students' progress further.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Improvements to the quality of teaching are making a clear difference to how well and quickly students are learning. Regular checks and reviews of teaching, focused coaching and training opportunities, as well as the appointment of new staff, contribute to this improving picture. However, some inconsistencies remain in the use of assessment data to plan lessons and in the marking of students' work.
- Lessons usually have a clear structure and teachers have increasingly high expectations of students. Many classrooms are stimulating; for example, in religious education, the whole classroom is vibrant and interactive, which encourages greater engagement and enjoyment of lessons.
- Students enjoy most of their lessons, particularly when there are opportunities to work collaboratively and actively. The level of maturity they display in more independent work is a strength of the academy.
- In lessons where staff use the tracking data to provide support for different groups of students to meet their needs, learning is accelerated and more enjoyable. However, this is not the case in all lessons. As a result, the work can be too easy for the more able students and too difficult for the least able, which reduces their rate of progress.

- Teaching assistants are used well across the school to support learning for a range of students, and students comment on how helpful this is to their progress. A good lesson taught by an experienced teaching assistant was well structured and pacy, encouraging all students to make good progress.
- The best teaching helps students to learn more quickly because the teachers encourage them to work independently and at their own pace but monitor carefully that they are working hard enough. In an effective information and communication technology lesson, the students worked independently but the teacher had a system, clearly understood by the students, to allow them to see their marks and know what to do next. This encouraged a dialogue between the teacher and the students about their individual work. In a good food technology lesson, the teaching was lively and interactive, with the students encouraged to apply their learning to a real-world situation which engaged them and led to some good discussion.
- Some teachers have very effective feedback strategies on students' work, which identify next steps in learning and what could be improved. Where this approach is well developed, students are clear that it really helps their learning. However, this is not consistent across the academy and not all teachers give sufficient guidance to students on how to improve their work or expect them to respond to this guidance.

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

- Students are clearly proud of their school. They know their teachers care for them and there is great support shown by students for their teachers. They recognise that their teachers will 'go the extra mile' and are 'always willing to give up time to help'. Students feel safe in the academy and know where to get help if they should need it.
- Behaviour is generally good in lessons and around the academy. Lessons are characterised by good relationships between students and teachers. In lessons where teachers encourage more independent learning, students respond well to this additional responsibility. Staff and parent questionnaires, as well as comments from students, agree that behaviour is generally good.
- Relationships between teachers and students are mutually supportive. The strong pastoral care at the academy fosters good relationships and encourages an atmosphere which one student described as being 'like a family'. Students move easily and generally sensibly around the school and show respect for each other and the adults they work with.
- The generally mature and caring attitudes of the students ensure that racism or bullying, including homophobic bullying, is rare. Students are clear that it is morally wrong and confident that the academy will deal with it effectively should it happen. Prefects support other students through an online system (i-help) that allows students to report any concerns anonymously.
- New students are quickly accepted and there is support among students for each other. This encourages students' self-confidence.
- Students' enjoyment of school and cooperative behaviour is reflected in their good attendance and the low figures for exclusions from school.
- Lessons are occasionally disrupted by some poor behaviour when students are not fully engaged by the lesson. The reaction of the majority of students is to ignore this and display a mature level of self-control.
- Rewards and sanctions are clear and understood by students, although they report some inconsistency in how well the staff apply them.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- In its first year after opening as an academy, outcomes for students were lower than expected. The headteacher, governors and senior staff took decisive action to address areas of underperformance, which has resulted in accelerated improvement over this year in a number of

key areas.

- Senior leaders and governors use the management of teachers' performance well to identify targets for teachers that will improve students' achievement. Senior leaders have taken effective action to improve teaching that has not been good enough.
  - Strategies to improve teaching and learning are monitored through a systematic review process and improved arrangements for tracking students' progress. This has led to better targeting of support for those students in danger of falling behind. However, leaders are not always consistently focusing on the progress students make in lessons when judging the quality of teaching.
  - Academy development planning is focused on raising achievement. The governors and senior staff have identified accurately key areas for improvement and are setting ambitious targets for students' progress. These strategies are having an impact on the progress of all year groups and further raising the expectations of staff and students, as well as demonstrating the school's commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all students.
  - Students receive good support from highly effective pastoral care, such as that given to those in alternative provision, which is focused on raising aspirations for all students. No students left the academy without a college place, apprenticeship or a job last year, which shows that support for students moving to their next stage in life is effective.
  - The Key Stage 3 curriculum is broad and includes the opportunity to study two languages for the most able. It finishes for some subjects in Year 8. The extra year provides some flexibility at Key Stage 4 and additional time to prepare for GCSE examinations. A proportion of more able students have an opportunity to study courses at a higher level. A choice of routes through Key Stage 4 ensures that students, including those who take examinations early, are well prepared for when they leave the academy.
  - The academy promotes students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development effectively through a supportive and caring environment and a curriculum that offers a range of opportunities. For example, the academy provides religious education for all. Students spoke positively about the chance this gave them to discuss and debate a wide range of topical issues. Students have the opportunity in many subject areas to go on trips which take their learning outside the classroom.
  - The academy's arrangements for ensuring the safeguarding of students meet statutory requirements, and leaders, including governors, are active in ensuring that students are safe.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors are very supportive and proud of the school and are effective. They are becoming more confident in understanding their role as academy governors. They are ambitious to ensure that they hold the academy to account and have actively sought external advice to help them improve. The use of pupil premium funding is reported to, and discussed by, the governors to ensure that there is equal opportunity for eligible students. Academy leaders report both performance and monitoring data to the governors. Governors understand the broad strengths and weaknesses of the academy's performance. They review the quality of teaching through feedback from teaching reviews and performance management. They have supported senior leaders this year in ensuring that any weaknesses in teaching have been addressed. Governors set clear performance targets for the headteacher which focus on raising outcomes for students. This process is supported and validated by an external partner. They are also keen, however, to ensure that all staff, including the headteacher, have opportunities for further professional development.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136849
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412864

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	325
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Hartley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Grant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01672 565000
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