

# Bath Academy

27, Queen Square, Bath, Avon, BA1 2HX

<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–7 November 2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### This school is good

- Teaching is good and enables all students to make good progress.
- Those students coming to the Academy to improve their English make good progress and achieve competent speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- The curriculum is good and well planned to meet the needs and requirements of students who wish to gain entry to British universities.
- Good attention is paid to the welfare, health and safety of both day and boarding students who say that they feel safe at the college.
- College leaders set high expectations and have created a culture where students are nurtured and supported to achieve their potential. They have ensured that the quality of teaching and students' achievement are good.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Academy leaders do not have good systems for using the information gained from lesson observations to enhance all teachers' professional development.
- Students do not always use the speaking skills acquired through the English language programme in their academic subjects.
- There are too few information and communication technology (ICT) resources and limited opportunities for students to use ICT in lessons.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards)(England) Regulations 2010, as amended by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was undertaken with half a day's notice by both education and social care inspectors. Inspectors observed 19 lessons, most with the directors of studies. The social care inspector visited the host family accommodation and observed aspects of the boarding school's life.
- Meetings were held with leaders, teaching staff and students.
- No responses to the Parent View online questionnaire were available. Questionnaires from 15 teaching staff were considered.
- Written evidence, including work in students' books, schemes of work and data on students' progress was examined.

## Inspection team

Jill Bainton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clare Davis	Social Care Inspector
Sally Hall	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Bath Academy occupies a Grade 1 listed building in the city centre. Originally established in the 1990s, the Academy offers a range of nationally accredited examination courses, mainly for students for whom English is an additional language, in preparation for entry to university courses across the United Kingdom.
- The Academy was registered in April 2012 for 120 students aged from 14 to 19 years. Most students are required to achieve a competent level of English for entry. No students have a statement of special educational needs.
- The Academy offers full-time courses in a range of GCSE subjects for students aged 14 to 16 years. The Academy uses nearby physical education and practical science facilities.
- There are currently 53 male and 26 female students, all aged 16 and above. Over a third of students are United Kingdom nationals and the rest are international students. The college currently has no students of compulsory school age.
- The Academy is registered and inspected by the British Council.
- The Academy provides accommodation with host families for its boarding students.
- It aims to 'provide a first rate academic education to students from around the world including the United Kingdom to enable them to enter good quality universities in the United Kingdom and beyond'.
- This is the first integrated inspection of both education and boarding. A social care visit took place in March 2013.

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making better use of information gained from lesson observations to enhance all teachers' professional development.
- Increase ICT resources and extend their use within the curriculum.
- Encourage students to make fuller use of the speaking skills acquired through the English language programme in other academic subjects.
- Increase the range of social activities for students.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Students' achievement is good and this is the result of good teaching and a good curriculum. Students are well prepared to enter British universities. The majority of students, including those who specifically attend to improve their English, make good progress in improving their communication, literacy and language skills in both written and spoken English. For example, working in groups, students analysed sentences from their own and others' writing, correcting grammar and vocabulary and adding their own perceptive comments as to the suitability of the vocabulary chosen. Students make good progress in mathematics and other academic subjects, increasing their knowledge, understanding and skills rapidly, often taking examinations in one instead of two years. There are no significant differences in the rates of progress made by boys and girls or groups of students. The students are well prepared for the next stage of their education, both those studying academic pathways and those studying English.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Students' behaviour and personal development are good. The students have positive attitudes to learning and their attendance is very good. Lateness is discouraged and students mostly arrive on time. They behave very well in lessons and around the college and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and students. Students commented especially on the excellent individual support given to them by their personal tutors, which gives them both guidance in their academic studies and advice on personal issues. This support helps them to settle in quickly. The English language department promotes the students' personal development through informal activities, for example in meeting over coffee to improve their English. An elected student social council is planning a range of activities for the coming year, including an international evening and summer ball. Students are enthusiastic about the college, making comments such as, 'It's really good ... better than expected.'

Students enjoy living in the host accommodation. They receive good care and support in a safe, homely environment, with students confirming that they are welcomed as family members. One student commented, 'My home stay is lovely, it's just like we are their kids.' This experience enables students to develop their personal and social skills and gain self-confidence, which help to contribute to their overall success at the college. Boarding students develop positive relationships both with their host families and college personnel. They behave well in the home environment, are respectful towards other family members and some take an active part in the family life. Advance preparation and well-informed induction on arrival equip these students well for their boarding experience. Students have the opportunity to take part in some social activities, but these are limited.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students confirm that they feel safe at the Academy and that they get on well together. Students develop mature and confident attitudes and are respectful and courteous to staff. Respect for the law and for the differing views and opinions of others are effectively promoted. Above all, students have made significant strides in their personal development and independence through attending further education in the United Kingdom, learning about the services and institutions, and mixing with students from other cultures and backgrounds. They confirm that they have found this to be an enriching experience. Racial harmony is effectively promoted with celebrations such as an international evening. The Academy does not promote any partisan political views and ensures that any controversial issues are considered in a balanced way.

**Quality of teaching****Good**

The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, students make good progress. Staff have extensive subject knowledge and actively engage the students in learning, increasing their knowledge, understanding and skills. Staff have developed very positive relationships with the students, are well informed about their previous learning and use this information effectively in their planning and teaching. Students confirm that staff establish positive relationships that are conducive to learning at an early stage and the majority of students enjoy their lessons. Staff have high expectations and students respond by behaving very well. Most students are motivated to learn and engage well in lessons.

The English language programme is a strength of the Academy. Students are carefully assessed on entry using international benchmarks and then taught in ability groups. This enables staff to plan appropriately challenging work to support the students' learning. In these lessons there are frequent opportunities for speaking and listening, with paired and group work used as an enriching element. However, not all of the students who are learning English as an additional language have sufficient opportunities to practise their acquired skills in speaking through taking part in presentations and discussion in other academic lessons.

The personal tutor system works very effectively and students confirm that they are very well supported through regular meetings with tutors. In the best lessons, which are well paced, teachers plan a variety of activities to ensure that the students are fully engaged in learning. Resources are adequate and used well to promote learning, with the exception of ICT. The college has ICT to use in a specialist room, but there is insufficient ICT equipment for use by both staff and students within lessons, including access to the internet.

The Academy's assessment procedures for regularly tracking and reporting on students' attainment and progress are very effective. There are very frequent assessments of students' work in both the academic and English language programmes, which provides them with very good insights into how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. These assessments of students' progress are used highly effectively by staff in planning in detail to meet their different needs. Staff are very supportive in helping students to prepare for examinations and in explaining in detail how they can gain most marks and attain the higher grades.

**Quality of curriculum****Good**

The curriculum is good and enables students to achieve well. It supports students well through the courses and examinations undertaken which are required for them to progress to further or higher education. It is appropriately broad and includes all the requirements. Students are prepared by studying GCSE with a two-year basic programme, a one-year intensive course, for A-level studies and a University Foundation Programme. This programme is aimed at international students who have completed their secondary education in their home country and now wish to gain admission to a British university. Students have the opportunity to study English at an intensive level. They can study English either full or part time, for varying lengths of time, depending on their individual requirements. Students are given very careful guidance on their choice of study for university entrance and confirm that this support is extremely helpful to them. Provision for students' personal, social and health education is systematically planned through an extensive range of topics, which focus on preparing them for life in Britain, including introducing them to public services and institutions.

A range of extra-curricular opportunities is available to students. For example, they can join the football team, which plays other colleges, a film club, play basketball or contribute to the very popular international evenings. The Academy plans visits to open days at universities. They have identified that they wish to engage students more in extra-curricular activities.

**Pupils' welfare, health and safety****Good**

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the students are good, both for day and boarding students. There is a full and detailed range of up-to-date policies and procedures for all aspects of students' welfare, including behaviour management, the prevention of bullying, safeguarding, safety both on and off site, and first aid. All of these meet requirements, all regulations are met and all procedures are effectively implemented. The required training for all staff in safeguarding is completed within the required timescales and at the appropriate levels. A number of staff are trained in first aid and all accidents are carefully recorded. All staff are checked for their suitability to work with children and the information is included in the single central register as required. Host families are suitably checked for their role. The management of boarding with host families is undertaken by a welfare officer who has developed effective systems for monitoring the students' placements with host families through home visits, record keeping and direct contact with students. Training in safer recruitment has been undertaken by a number of staff involved in making appointments. Risk assessments are carried out, with assessments of activities both on and off site. Fire safety procedures are robust with regular fire drills, checking of appliances and a detailed fire risk assessment. The attendance and admission registers meet the regulations. Students are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles through a range of planned physical activities and they are encouraged to eat healthily.

**Leadership and management****Good**

Leadership and management, including the provision for boarding, are good and have a positive impact on the students' learning and achievement. Leaders are successful in securing a high standard of achievement for the students. The Principal is highly respected by the staff and is ably supported by senior leaders and staff, who are committed to ensuring they provide the best possible experiences for the students. The experienced and dedicated staff create a strong team, although many are part time at the college. They work together effectively to support the students, who have a high opinion of the staff and the support they receive. The Principal and staff know the students very well. Very regular meetings ensure that students feel well supported and cared for through the tutor system and the work of the welfare officer. Pastoral care is a strength, with both day and boarding students effectively supported both at college and through their host families. The high level of welfare support provided by the college is very much appreciated by the host families.

Senior leaders have monitored teaching and the information gained is used effectively to help individual teachers to improve, but a more systematic and overarching approach is required so it can better target any further professional development for staff, for example with the opportunity to attend suitable training courses. Although staff were positive in their responses to the staff questionnaires, they identified that there have been limited opportunities for further training to date. Parents and carers are kept very well informed by email about their child's progress and through the website. All the required information is made available to them. The procedures for handling complaints meet requirements. There were too few responses to Parent View to support any subsequent analysis, but a survey of parents' views, which the Academy had conducted recently, indicated that parents and carers are pleased with the provision.

The proprietors have a good overview of the college and its strengths and weaknesses. They have ensured that the accommodation is suitable and safe for learning and that all the independent school standards are met in full.

<b>Outcomes for boarders</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Quality of boarding provision and care</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Boarders' safety</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management of the boarding provision</b>	<b>Good</b>

## What inspection judgements mean

School and boarding		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education and care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education and care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education and care has serious weaknesses.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138147
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC472570
<b>Inspection number</b>	430018
<b>DfE registration number</b>	800/6015

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school. The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

<b>Type of school</b>	Tutorial College
<b>School status</b>	Independent boarding school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–19 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	79
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	11
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	12
<b>Proprietor</b>	Bath Academy Limited
<b>Chair</b>	David Game
<b>Principal</b>	Tim Naylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Registered in April 2012
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£13,950-£14,500
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	£20,450-£23,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 334577
<b>Fax number</b>	01225 482414
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