

# Outwood Academy Adwick

Windmill Balk Lane, Woodlands, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN6 7SF

**Inspection dates** 26–27 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Over a three-year period, students' progress in mathematics was not always as good as it should have been. The most-able students do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.
- In the sixth form, students' progress in academic subjects requires improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has not been effective enough to ensure that students make good or better progress, particularly in GCSE courses.
- Information on students' prior attainment is not used well enough to plan work which is closely matched to students' learning needs.
- In a significant number of lessons, there is an overemphasis on providing students with knowledge. There is, therefore, not enough focus on developing students' skills and deepening their understanding.
- On occasions, there is too much teacher-talk in lessons and students do not find things out for themselves in order to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Students do not always respond well enough to the marking and feedback on their work.
- The academy's work with parents and within the family of schools is not yet effective enough to improve the attendance of those students who regularly miss school.

### The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership has ensured that the academy's performance, particularly in relation to the percentages of students reaching five or more grades A\* to C including English and mathematics, is improving rapidly. The committed and talented senior leadership team knows the school well and has established a range of strategies which are accelerating students' progress, including in mathematics.
- Students are proud of the academy and feel safe within it because, in their words, 'The staff care for us and are always there when we need them.'
- Students behave well and value the many opportunities they have to take responsibility and to support their younger counterparts.
- Sixth form students make very good progress in vocational programmes and also support younger students in their studies.
- The governing body has an accurate awareness of the academy's performance and holds the leadership to account with rigour.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons or part-lessons. They also made short visits to several lessons in a range of subjects. Two of these 'learning walks' were made jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspector also visited registration sessions, known as 'vertical mentoring groups.'
- They spoke with five groups of students, including sixth-formers, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, administrative staff, pastoral leaders, heads of subject departments, the special educational needs coordinator and members of the senior leadership team. They also spoke to the community police officer based at the academy.
- Inspectors took account of the 86 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and also of the questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at students' files and exercise books in class. They also looked at internal and external student attainment and progress data, academy development planning and the academy's view of how well it is doing. In addition, they scrutinised the governing body's own evaluation of students' achievement and also documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Jim Kidd Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Eleanor Garbutt	Additional Inspector
Marcia Harding	Additional Inspector
Mark Shenton	Additional Inspector
Sonya Williamson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized secondary school, which has been an academy since 2009 and which is a member of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below that usually found.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those students known to be eligible for free school meals, those from service families and those looked after by the local authority) is well above average.
- Almost all students are White British. There are very few students from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Small numbers of students attend alternative provision at the YMCA, Featherstone Youth Engagement Centre and Engage Training. In addition, a community police officer is based in the academy and delivers a range of courses designed to ensure that students keep themselves safe.
- There have been several staff changes since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new principal.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, in order to ensure that achievement continues to accelerate, by:
  - making better use of students' prior attainment information to plan work and activities which meet the learning needs of all groups of students more closely
  - ensuring teachers' planning focuses as much on deepening students' understanding and developing their skills as it does on helping them to gain knowledge
  - reducing the amount of teacher-talk in lessons, in order that students are given more opportunities to developing their independent learning skills and thus take more responsibility for their own progress
  - ensuring that challenge for the most able enables them to reach the standards of which they capable
  - ensuring that students respond consistently well to the marking and feedback they receive on their work.
- Build upon the strategies already established to ensure that students' progress and attainment in mathematics continue to improve.
- Work more closely with parents and within the family of schools to improve the attendance of those students who do not come to school as regularly as they should.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students' attainment on entry to the school is generally below average but it is declining further over time. Percentages of students reaching five or more GCSE grades A\* to C including English and mathematics have improved each year since 2010 and attainment using this measure was just above average in 2013. However, achievement overall requires improvement because students' progress in mathematics over a three-year period was not as good as it should have been.
- Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, scrutiny of students' work and a close consideration of the school's internal data demonstrates that students' progress is accelerating. In the current Year 11, for example, more students than ever before are on track to make three National Curriculum levels of progress in both mathematics and English. The proportion of students making four levels of progress is also rising, but not at the same rate.
- The academy recognises that its most-able students do not always attain the standards of which they are capable. Indeed, since the previous inspection, a well-below average proportion of students reached the higher GCSE grades of A\* and A.
- The development of students' literacy skills is given a high priority across the academy and students are encouraged to understand and use subject-specific terminology in all the subjects they study. In addition, students read widely and data from the learning resource centre show that many students take out books on a regular basis.
- 'Catch-up' funding is used effectively to support the increasing numbers of lower-attaining students entering the academy and is having a positive impact on these students' progress and attainment.
- Pupil premium funding is also used wisely to support students in small group sessions and also on an individual basis. As a result, the gaps between the performance of pupils known to be eligible for support through the funding and others are closing. In the 2013 GCSE examinations, for example, a larger proportion of these students made more than expected progress than did their peers.
- Focused support for disabled students and those with special educational needs ensures that these students, too, achieve at least as well as others in the school. Their progress in the 2013 GCSE examinations was above that seen of similar students nationally.
- Students in the sixth form make very good progress in a wide range of vocational courses but attainment at A level is below average. Achievement in academic subjects therefore requires improvement.
- The small numbers of students who attend alternative provision make good progress in both their academic and personal development.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, since the previous inspection, it has not been good enough to ensure that students made good and better progress at GCSE. Nonetheless, classroom practice is becoming more effective in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and students say, 'Teaching is getting better and better: the targets set for us now are harder to reach but we have started to get there!'
- In the best lessons, a Year 11 mathematics lesson on ratio, for example, in which teaching was graded outstanding, questioning encourages students to think more deeply about the subject-matter and requires them to be more independent in their learning. In too many lessons, however, challenge, particularly for the most able, is not high enough and too much teacher talk inhibits students from finding things out for themselves and thus taking more responsibility for their own progress.
- When teachers take full account of pupils' levels of prior attainment, they plan activities which

are closely linked to what students need to make the progress they should. On occasions, there is a 'one size fits all' approach and the work is too easy for some students and too difficult for others. In lessons such as these, students sometimes lose interest and their progress slows as a result.

- In lessons where there is a strong focus on deepening students' understanding of the topic under discussion and on developing the skills needed for success in the particular subject, students rise to the challenge and are often surprised at what they can achieve.
- For example, students in Year 7 used their skills of interpretation to good effect when they compared the roles of the two monarchs in the French Revolution and the English Civil War. Too often, however, lesson planning places too much emphasis on facts to be gained and too little on the skills to be acquired.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive good support in the classroom and often receive work which is directly related to their individual needs. When this happens, they make at least the same progress as their peers and often more.
- Marking is good overall but students do not always respond well enough to the often detailed feedback on how they can improve their work.

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

- Although a minority of students are less than positive about the 'consequences' system of sanctions, most believe that it is effective and that it has led to a marked improvement in behaviour since the previous inspection. Indeed, students are proud of the academy, behave well and sometimes outstandingly well, in lessons and around the school site.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire believe their children are safe and happy in school.
- Students' attitudes to learning are also much better than they were two years ago and passivity in lessons is now the exception rather than the norm.
- Students have a high regard for the adults who work with them. They feel safe because, in their words, 'Teachers are protective and approachable and keep us well informed about any possible dangers we may face. Senior leaders are always around to support us.'
- Students also speak positively of the community police officer and respect the advice he gives them about how to stay safe outside the academy's walls. They also value the 'tackling tempers' course, delivered as part of the alternative provision programme, which, they say, teaches them how to stay in control of their own behaviour and which enables them to get on better with others.
- Students have a good understanding of how to use the internet safely and of the possible dangers of social media sites. They have a good awareness of the many different forms bullying can take, including cyber-bullying and bullying based on prejudice. In their view, bullying does happen occasionally but it is not a major problem and is handled swiftly and sensitively by staff when it occurs.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Students have a range of responsibilities and act as peer mentors, librarians, attendance mentors and sports leaders. In addition, members of the 'student voice' are never afraid to offer their views as to how the academy can improve further.
- Students support a range of charities and have also visited Africa to support children less fortunate than themselves. The sixth form plays an important role in supporting younger students in the academy. Over 150 sixth formers lead extra tuition, in mathematics, for example, for students experiencing difficulty with their studies.
- Although rising year-on-year, attendance continues to be below average. The school's work with parents and within the family of schools is not yet having the required impact on improving the attendance of those students who are persistently absent.

## The leadership and management are good

- The dedicated chief executive and executive principal are supported well by the talented principal and senior leadership team and also by leaders within the family of schools. An accurate and honest on-going appraisal of the academy's performance has led to the establishment of well-founded strategies to promote improvement. For example, they have ensured that senior mathematics leaders from within the family of schools are supporting the department. They are also ensuring that middle leaders take more responsibility for improving the quality of teaching in their departments and that the good and exemplary classroom practice already evident is shared more effectively.
- As a result, students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are now better, and heads of department lead their subjects more effectively and standards have improved year-on-year since the previous inspection.
- However, leaders are not complacent and recognise that progress in mathematics remains a concern, that attendance is still not high enough and that teachers should allow students to take more control of their own learning.
- Middle leaders are taking more responsibility for performance in their subjects and are placing more emphasis on the quality of teaching and its impact on students' progress as the starting point for their judgements on how well their departments are doing. They have a high regard for the senior leadership and comment, 'We are supported every step of the way but are also held fully to account.' They believe that performance management arrangements are fair but rigorous and lead to a variety of focused in-service training. They value the support they receive from staff from other academies within the Trust.
- The curriculum is continuously under review and meets the interests and aspirations of the students. The academy's policy on early examination entry is also flexible and is based solely on what is best for each individual student.
- The sixth form is led and managed well and curriculum content has been amended over the years to meet the particular needs of the students entering Year 12. The number of academic courses has declined and there is now a wide range of vocational options, which are valued by students and in which they achieve very well.
- Child protection and safeguarding policies and practice meet current requirements. The school checks to see that any discrimination is quickly tackled and eliminated. However, its drive to ensure that all students have an equal chance to succeed is not yet fully successful because students are not achieving as well as they could in mathematics.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View are entirely happy with what the academy is doing for their children and would recommend the academy to other parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are fully committed to the academy and to how it can help to raise the aspirations of the local community. They visit the academy regularly and provide impressive support to both staff and students. They are proud of the academy and of everyone connected with it. They are always looking for ways in which the academy can further support students in their personal, social, emotional and academic development.
  - The governing body has an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for development. Governors are actively involved in analysing and evaluating data in relation to students' achievement and they are fully aware of the impact of 'catch up' and pupil premium funding.
  - Governors ask searching questions of the leadership in relation to the academy's performance in all areas of its life; they also emphasise to staff that they will only receive financial reward if they meet their classroom targets for students' progress. They recognise that performance in mathematics has not been good enough since the previous inspection and, along with the senior leadership team, have established strategies to ensure that achievement in this subject improves.

## 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>	135963
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	425886

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<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>	1170
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Mounsey
<b>Principal</b>	Carolyn Blundell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 722237
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@adwick.outwood.com



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