

King Harold Business & Enterprise Academy

Broomstick Hall Road, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1LF

Inspection dates 6–7 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Some students, including those who are eligible for pupil premium funding, are not making sufficient progress.
- The quality of teaching is far too variable and not enough is good or better. Teachers, especially in mathematics, are not planning activities at the right level of difficulty for their students.
- Marking and assessment vary far too much in quality and effectiveness. Students are not consistently offered clear guidance on what they have done well, or what needs to be improved and how.
- Homework is not used appropriately to ensure that learning is fully developed.
- Where teaching is particularly ineffective, levels of disruption rise. A number of students told inspectors that too many lessons are disturbed because of inappropriate behaviour from a minority of students.
- The effectiveness of staff with leadership roles is too variable, with some not contributing enough to raising standards.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors and senior leaders recognise the academy's strengths and weaknesses and have taken some decisive action to secure improvements.
- Achievement has improved since the previous inspection. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C including English and mathematics is increasing.
- Students feel safe in the academy and they think it is improving. They are cared for well.
- Relationships with parents and the wider community are being developed well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook 26 classroom observations featuring 25 different teachers. Approximately six observations were undertaken jointly with senior school staff.
- Meetings were held with the governors, including the chair, with representatives from the academy’s sponsors and with a representative of the local authority. Meetings were held with five different student groups and with many different staff, including the headteacher, senior managers and heads of department.
- Inspectors took account of 34 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, in planning the inspection. The responses to 26 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at samples of students’ past and present work and scrutinised various documents. These included the academy’s checks on how well it is doing, and planning and extensive information on students’ academic progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance, punctuality and safeguarding.
- Inspectors evaluated the impact of additional funding, such as the pupil premium.

Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Concetta Caruana

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Paul Watson

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Ian Wilson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average secondary school, with similar numbers of boys and girls in attendance.
- The large majority of students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, as is the proportion who speak English as additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government to help nationally underperforming groups such as students known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The academy makes use of full-time and part-time alternative provision at Ware College, Grace Academy and The Box, an alternative education provider located close to the school.
- There are two private sector child care facilities on site but these are not managed by the governing body, and are inspected separately.
- In the 2012-13 academic year, the academy met the current government floor standard, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.
- The school has been part of The Kennal Academies Trust since September 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - the features of good teaching in the school, particularly relating to strengths in planning and challenge, are used as a model to improve the overall quality of teaching
 - students are regularly set good quality homework across all subjects offered
 - every teacher provides students with regular and detailed written feedback on their work, including how it can be improved
 - all teachers manage behaviour effectively in their lessons.
- Improve achievement so that all groups of students, including those eligible for the pupil premium and higher attainers, make more rapid progress by ensuring that work set is always pitched at the right level and is appropriate for their needs.
- Increase the impact of leadership by ensuring that all staff with leadership roles are fully involved in raising achievement.
- An external review of pupil premium spending should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of the academy's work is developing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because students make variable progress across different subjects and year groups. During the inspection, insufficient progress was made in too many of the observations undertaken.
- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics are currently impeded by the severe staffing problems facing the academy.
- Students start Year 7 with levels of attainment that are below average. The standards reached by the end of Key Stage 4, while still below average, have risen since the previous inspection, with more pupils making better-than-expected progress in both English and mathematics.
- In 2013, the attainment of students eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium was not high enough, because they did not make enough progress. This group of students achieved on average nearly a whole GCSE grade below their peers. Current assessment information shows that these gaps are being closed. Data available from GCSE results already gained, through early entry in both English and mathematics, show that outcomes are continuing to improve, and that gaps in attainment are closing.
- Outcomes for higher-attaining students are uneven across subjects. Some higher-attaining students told inspectors that they did not always feel properly challenged or stretched by the work set. They also made reference to homework not being properly planned and complained that their learning is sometimes disturbed by the behaviour of others. A significant minority of parents also expressed concerns about the progress being made by their children.
- Disabled students, those with special educational needs, students from minority ethnic groups and students for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other students. This is evidence of the academy's appropriate commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.
- The academy is improving the checks it makes on student's progress in basic literacy and numeracy. As a result, the help made available to students eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding is growing in its effectiveness. The academy provides a range of support for the academic and personal needs of such students.
- The progress of the small number of students attending courses off-site is appropriately tracked and monitored. The academy rightly values such options as a way to ensure that the students involved remain engaged with their education.
- The academy makes selective use of early GCSE entry. It values this option in terms of helping to boost confidence and self-esteem. The results gained so far indicate that, by the end of the current academic year, GCSE outcomes will have improved further on what was gained in 2013.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement. It is too variable in quality. Too little teaching is of an outstanding quality and, on too many occasions, the teaching does not provide sufficiently for the needs of different students. Planning for the needs of higher-attaining students is frequently

weak.

- On too many occasions, teachers do not plan learning activities that are pitched at the correct level of difficulty and challenge for the students in the classroom. Too frequently, the approach is to plan work of just one level that is designed to fill time rather than challenge and extend learning.
- Homework is not planned or set with consistency. The lack of properly planned homework across subjects is hindering the progress made by students at all levels.
- There is too much reliance on the use of rather mundane worksheets. Such materials are associated with low expectations of what the students can achieve, do not provide sufficient scope for students to hone their skills in literacy and numeracy and severely limit the progress that is made, both in lessons and over longer periods in time. Too many students' books seen during the inspection failed to show good quality and concerted progress in learning over time. This was especially so for higher-attaining students.
- Marking and assessment are variable in quality, with a significant minority of teachers failing to adhere to the academy's policy. Some examples of good marking and assessment were seen which clearly identified to the students what they had done well, what could be improved and how. On too many occasions, however, marking was irregular, lacked subject-specific detail and did not show the students how they could improve. In such circumstances it is difficult for students to progress their work to higher levels.
- Senior leaders have recently sharpened the focus on improving the quality of teaching. Many of the strategies are new and have not had sufficient time to become embedded and are not yet showing the impact desired. Moreover, not all teachers are consistently implementing the agreed strategies.
- Where teaching is better, teachers plan thoroughly and ensure that students are given engaging activities which extend learning. Where teaching is most effective, staff expectations are clearly high and students are expected to take a pride in their endeavours. Exercise books are better presented and progress and improvement over time are more obviously evident.
- Where teaching is most effective, an appropriate emphasis is placed on developing skills in literacy and mathematics. For example, good learning was seen in a well-planned Year 7 religious education lesson. The class were being introduced to the basic principles of Islam. Expectations were high and appropriate challenges were set for different students, so all made good progress. In part, this was because of the emphasis that was placed on requiring the students to produce a piece of properly presented written work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Most students are polite, helpful and courteous, but a small minority do not consistently behave well. This is particularly so when the quality of teaching is not good enough and what is being taught does not capture the imagination of all students. In some classes, where teaching fails to engage students' interest, behaviour tends to deteriorate. The behaviour of some girls, in particular, is especially disrespectful.
- Students, parents and staff consulted during the inspection all raised concerns about pockets of poor behaviour. Some 40% of parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire raised

concerns about behaviour and a number of students made reference to the fact that their learning is impeded in lessons where teachers do not manage behaviour effectively.

- During the inspection, inspectors witnessed examples of inappropriate behaviour in lessons. Usually, the teachers involved were either very inexperienced or agency staff who were filling short term vacancies.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say that they feel safe and that they are well-cared for. Despite the concerns raised, they also reported that behaviour is improving. Older students said that there have been definite improvements since the arrival of the current headteacher.
- Students know about different forms of bullying and reported that much work is undertaken to warn of the potential threats associated with cyber bullying. They made reference to the fact that bullying incidents are rare but, if anything untoward does occur, they know who to turn to and have every confidence that swift and appropriate action will be implemented.
- There is creative use of pupil premium funding. For example, weekly classes in archery are offered for a group of eligible students to boost their confidence and self-esteem and to encourage them to exercise more responsibility. This initiative is meeting with success, including improved attitudes and attendance being displayed by the students involved in the project.
- Much successful work has been undertaken to improve attendance. Students now attend with more regularity than was the case at the last inspection. The current attendance rate closely mirrors the average for secondary schools nationally.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because not enough has been done to make teaching and progress consistent. . Academy policies, such as the marking policy, are not applied with consistency by all staff and the setting and monitoring of homework is haphazard. Consequently, the progress students make shows far too much variability.
- The effectiveness of subject leaders is variable. Not all are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility; their contribution to school improvement is limited.
- Governance shows much potential. The governing body is shared with another academy situated nearby. This academy is enjoying far more success and the governing body has a strong track record of improvement. The governors have identified reasons for underperformance and, during the course of the last academic year, took decisive action to rejuvenate the senior management team. The changes they made have the potential to improve the academy's performance. Unfortunately, many of the changes are still relatively new and are taking time to embed. Some staff with enhanced responsibilities are still finding their feet and their effectiveness up to now has been limited.
- In addition to the strong support offered by governors, senior staff are supported well by senior staff from the academy's sponsors and by the local authority. Monitoring by the local authority indicates that the academy is improving and that it has the capacity to improve further.
- Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Senior staff are acutely aware of where weaknesses exist and what needs to be done to improve. The quality of teaching is checked frequently and

training is offered to secure improvements. Many of the strategies to improve teaching are still new and are being developed. This is why the quality of teaching across the academy shows too much variation. The features of the best teaching are still not shared widely enough across all subjects.

- A broad spread of subjects is offered and these are augmented by a good range of additional sporting activities for students to follow. The students expressed a wish for more cultural activities to be made available; they lamented the lack of music and drama activities.
- The current spread of subjects helps students to gain qualifications that enable them to access the next stage of their education, or progress to training or employment. Very few students leave the academy at the end of Year 11 without a place in education, training or employment to pursue. The present range of subjects offered, however, does not offer higher attaining students sufficient scope to excel. The academy has not evaluated whether its current subject provision adequately meets the needs of all its students.
- Good provision is made for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development both through the subjects offered and through the general life of the school. A variety of visits, including overseas, and charitable efforts, which students occasionally initiate for themselves help to develop understanding of world events and encourage a sense of responsibility.
- The academy works hard to engage parents and carers in its work. Most believe that the academy is well led and managed and they feel informed and are happy with the quality of information provided about their child's progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the academy well and have a clear understanding about what is done effectively and where improvements are needed. They fully appreciate the difficulties that currently exist in mathematics and are aware that the present quality of teaching overall shows too much variability for progress over time to be good. Governors monitor the academy's work closely and are prepared to make difficult and decisive decisions when needed. This is witnessed by changes made to the senior management team last summer and a willingness to second staff from within the academy chain to secure improvements. However, they have not ensured that pupil premium funding is being utilised effectively to close any gaps that might exist in the performance of different student groups. They are fully involved in the headteacher's performance management and they ensure that the performance of all staff is linked to pay progression. They also ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet all current government requirements.

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	136342
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	431618

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	630
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Lillingston
Headteacher	Denice Halpin
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2012
Telephone number	01992 714800
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