

Appleton Academy

Woodside Road, Wyke, Bradford, BD12 8AL

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' progress in English across the secondary phase is variable over time. Attainment in this subject at the end of Key Stage 4 has not continued to rise and is below average.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics across Key Stages 3 and 4 has improved in recent years, but attainment, although rising, remains below average.
- The sixth form requires improvement because, although pupils' achievement is getting better, it is not yet good.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough in Key Stages 3 and 4 to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should.
- Some teachers are not making good use of assessment to challenge all pupils to make as much progress as possible.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent across and within subjects. As a result, pupils sometimes show too little care for their work and are not helped to improve it.
- In the secondary phase, pupils' literacy skills, including those of speaking and listening, are not being developed securely through work in all subjects.
- Behaviour and safety require improvement because, sometimes, pupils are not fully engaged in lessons. This leads them to chat to each other and they do not listen properly.

The school has the following strengths

- Achievement in the primary phase is good. From their starting points, pupils make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The curriculum, particularly in the primary phase, is well matched to pupils' needs.
- The Principal, very well supported by leaders and managers and the governing body, has a well-informed understanding of the academy's performance. Improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement have already been made and further improvements are underway.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 39 part lessons, of which six were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, academy staff, and a representative of the Bradford College Educational Trust.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work across a range of subjects and key stages, listened to pupils read, and attended an assembly.
- The inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), questionnaires carried out by the academy and 28 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at documents including improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, monitoring records, minutes of the governing body meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mick Hill, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Osama Abdul Rahim	Additional Inspector
Brian Hill	Additional Inspector
Christine Potter	Additional Inspector
Steve Rigby	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Appleton became a sponsored-led academy providing for ages 3 to 19 years in September 2009, having previously been separate primary and secondary schools. It moved into new purpose-built accommodation in November 2012.
- The Bradford College Educational Trust sponsors the academy.
- The academy is larger than most primary and secondary schools. The sixth form is much smaller than most.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority) is well above the national average.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, is in line with that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average, as is the number supported by school action.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site alternative provision in other Bradford schools and at Bradford College.
- The academy meets the government's floor standard, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The number of secondary-age pupils in the academy is increasing rapidly; in large part due to pupils joining after the school year has started.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4, especially in English, so that all pupils make at least good progress, by:
 - planning activities that are closely matched to pupils' abilities to get the best out of all pupils in every lesson
 - regularly checking pupils' work, marking it, and providing assessment and feedback that help them understand how to improve
 - making sure teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their extended writing skills in all subjects
 - build on existing good practice in questioning so that pupils are required to answer in full sentences and develop their specialist vocabulary so that their speaking skills improve.
- Ensure consistent expectations of pupils' behaviour, especially the expectation that they listen carefully to their teachers and to each other in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because by the end of Key Stage 4 pupils have not consistently made enough progress in English and their attainment is not as high as it should be. Although GCSE English results improved in the three years up to 2012 this positive trend was not sustained in 2013.
- In contrast, achievement in GCSE mathematics has continued to rise over the past four years. The progress made by pupils in 2013 is close to what is expected given their starting points.
- The achievement of the small number of pupils entering the sixth form requires improvement but it is improving year-on-year. Improved information and guidance have ensured that current pupils are better suited to the courses they are following. An increasing number of sixth-form pupils are progressing to higher education, often the first in their family to do so.
- The achievement of pupils in Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good and improving. From starting points, which are well below those expected for their age, they make strong progress through the primary phase. At the end of Key Stage 2 they achieve standards in reading, writing, and mathematics, which are similar to those seen nationally.
- The increasing number of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, achieve as well as other pupils in the primary phase, because focused support is effective in helping them achieve. In 2013, the English and mathematics results at end of Key Stage 2 showed that the in-school attainment gap between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and their peers, was narrower than the gap seen nationally. The same is increasingly true in Key Stage 3. However, at Key Stage 4 the gap in GCSE attainment widened for this group of pupils in 2013.
- The achievement of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those of minority ethnic heritage or who speak English as an additional language matches that of their peers. This is because of the well-focused support they receive. This reflects the effective promotion of equality of opportunity for these pupils.
- Pupils eligible for support through the catch-up premium in Year 7 improve their reading ability and make increased progress in English and mathematics. This is because they are given specific help that enables them to catch up.
- Pupils are entered early for GCSE examinations in mathematics. There is no evidence to suggest they do less well as a result of this policy.
- Pupils who access courses through Bradford College and other off-site provision achieve as well as others in the secondary phase.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While teaching is typically good in the primary phase, resulting in good progress and broadly average attainment, the quality of teaching in the secondary years is not consistently good enough. This is why, overall, teaching requires improvement.
- There is much good and some outstanding teaching in the academy, including in English in the secondary phase, but also too much that requires improvement. As a result, across Key Stages 3 and 4, not all pupils are making the good progress that they should. In part, this is because a number of pupils enter the academy part of the way through these key stages, but it is also because teaching quality here is more variable than in the primary phase.
- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers are not using assessment information precisely enough to plan activities which get the best out of all pupils by accurately matching tasks to pupils' abilities so that all are challenged appropriately.
- Work is not always marked regularly. As a result, pupils take too little care in the presentation of their work and do not receive regular assessments and written feedback which help them to

understand how to improve their work.

- Not enough is being done to develop pupils' writing skills through extended written exercises in work in subjects other than English. Similarly, teachers too often accept short, undeveloped answers to their questions and miss opportunities to further develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Where teaching is more effective, pupils make rapid progress because they are challenged to do their best and to improve on previous work in order to extend their learning. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson on language and form in poetry, pupils were able to point to extended work they had completed which had been assessed and annotated by the teacher and which they had then improved upon. They worked on tasks designed to stretch their knowledge, skills and understanding in groups carefully organised by ability. Skilful questioning challenged them to use specialised language and construct well-developed analytical answers. The quality of the discussion which resulted would not have been out of place in a sixth-form lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- In a few lessons, pupils are not fully engaged in the activities provided. At these times they chat to each other even when the teacher or another pupil is addressing the class.
- Inspectors observed some boisterous behaviour and swearing on corridors but, on the whole, pupils move around the building calmly and there is typically a high level of staff supervision, especially where there are congestion points, such as on the stairs. As a result, pupils, including the youngest, say they feel safe in the academy.
- Attendance has improved over the last three years and is now similar to that seen nationally. This is the result of concerted effort by the academy staff.
- Incidents of fixed-term exclusion have fallen and are now below the level typically seen in secondary schools.
- Pupils understand the dangers of bullying in most forms, including those around disability and race and through digital media. Occasionally, some older pupils are not always sufficiently sensitive to the hurt that may be caused by name-calling based on sexual orientation and openly use the term 'gay' in a derogatory way.
- The academy seeks to secure the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through a range of activities and approaches. Examples include the thought-provoking primary assembly on advent, which inspectors observed, and the range of clubs and extra-curricular activities available. Older pupils say they appreciate the opportunities to get to know one another provided by the vertical tutor groups.

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal, well supported by senior and middle leaders, is successfully raising the aspirations of pupils and the expectations of staff. As a result, achievement has improved in the primary phase, in GCSE mathematics and in the sixth form.
- Teaching has improved across the academy, although much less consistently so in Key Stages 3 and 4, especially in English. There is a core of expert teaching on which the academy can build. The effective management of teacher performance and well-focused training have contributed to this improvement in teaching quality.
- Records indicate that rewards for teachers are firmly linked to their success in securing pupils' achievement.
- The academy checks on how well it is performing and has a very accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development. There is strong support for senior leaders from the Bradford College Educational Trust's director of school improvement.
- The curriculum in the primary phase is matched to pupils' needs and primary age pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Improvements to the secondary curriculum mean that it is

more closely in tune with pupils' needs than it used be, including for those who attend off-site provision.

- The primary school sports funding received by the academy is effectively used to enhance the sporting opportunities available to pupils.
- In the sixth form, courses are now better matched to the needs and aspirations of pupils, who are increasingly progressing to higher education. In addition, analysis of destinations indicates that all pupils who completed Year 11 in 2013 went on to education, training or employment.
- Since opening, the academy has been well supported by its sponsor. In addition to involvement in governance, Bradford College offers placements for pupils from the academy. It makes a strong contribution to the academy's drive for improvement.
- The improvements already made, the support from the Trust and from the Bradford Partnership of schools, and the commitment to improvement demonstrated by the staff, all point to strong capacity to take the necessary steps to becoming a good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very knowledgeable about the academy's performance and governors regularly visit the academy. Governors are effective in supporting and challenging senior leaders to further improve achievement. They are proactive in initiating reviews, such as those carried out on its behalf by the Bradford Partnership.
 - The governors fully support the Principal in taking tough decisions over staffing, such as withholding pay rises from underperforming teachers.
 - The academy's resources, including the pupil premium grant and Year 7 catch-up funding, are well managed and the impact of spending is evaluated.
 - Governors ensure that the academy's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory 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	135865
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	425884

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,161
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Wightman
Principal	Helen Jones
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2012
Telephone number	01274 600550
Fax number	01274 414384
Email address	info@appletonacademy.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

