

Greenacre Academy

157 Walderslade Road, Walderslade, Chatham, ME5 0LP

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
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 in the academy make good progress at all key stages, from lower than average starting points, and achieve well. The number of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has improved over the last three years and is in line with the national average.
- Most teaching is at least good, with some that is outstanding. Teachers plan effective lessons that enable most students to learn well.
- Most groups of students achieve well, especially those who need extra help to catch up. Gaps in attainment between different groups of students are either small or have closed completely.
- Students behave well, say they enjoy being at the academy and feel safe. They report that bullying is rare, but know what to do if it should occur.
- Leadership of the academy is strong. The headteacher, together with senior leaders, governors and staff, is ambitious for students' success and has worked hard to raise standards by improving the quality of teaching. As a result, achievement is improving rapidly and students are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- The academy has an effective curriculum, which meets the needs of students of all abilities and supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is very good.
- The sixth form, which is shared with a nearby girls' school, is increasingly popular. The sixth form is good, as the academy's students progress well from their starting points and their achievement is good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always plan lessons that meet the needs of the students who learn most quickly. As a result, they do not always make as rapid progress as they could.
- Not all teachers follow the academy's marking policy consistently.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 39 lessons, several of which were jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also attended two tutor group sessions and an assembly.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, heads of department, heads of year, several groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and examined a wide range of documents, including academy policies, the academy's own evaluation of its work, improvement plans and data about progress, standards, exclusions, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors discussed lessons they had seen with senior leaders and looked at a range of students' work in lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 22 parents' responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire and 34 questionnaires completed by members of staff.

Inspection team

Heather Leatt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sue Cox	Additional Inspector
David Smith	Additional Inspector
Jason Wye	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Greenacre Academy is an average-sized 11 to 18 secondary modern school for boys, which became an academy in April 2012. When its predecessor school, Greenacre School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2011, it was judged good overall. It has specialist status for sport and has recently been granted multi-academy trust status by the Department for Education.
- The academy has a joint sixth form with a neighbouring school, Walderslade Girls' School. Students in the sixth form are taught on both sites in mixed classes by teachers from both schools.
- The academy supports Warren Wood Primary School in Rochester to help it improve standards for its Year 6 pupils.
- Most students in the academy are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are very small compared to national averages.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for specific groups including looked after children, students known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is smaller than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There are 32 students eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- A very small number of Key Stage 4 students receive part of their education off-site at the Medway Education Business Partnership in Rochester and Fairbridge in Chatham Dockyard.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - sharing the best practice in the academy to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently high in all subjects
 - ensuring all teachers follow the academy's marking policy, giving students clear written guidance on how to improve their work and allowing them time to respond to the advice they are given
- Raise the achievement of the students who learn most quickly even further by:
 - ensuring that work is hard enough for this group of students, challenging them to make the very best progress they can.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of students join the academy with attainment in English and mathematics that is significantly lower than the national average. They go on to make good progress across a wide range of subjects and, as a result, attainment by the end of Year 11 is in line with national figures. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics has risen strongly over a number of years.
- Students who are supported by the pupil premium make very good progress in both English and mathematics across both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, with their attainment improving and gaps closing rapidly with those students who do not receive the pupil premium. In 2013, the gap in Year 11 between these students and their classmates was less than a quarter of a GCSE grade.
- While leaders and staff recognise the need to improve the progress of more able students, progress information and work show that this group do less well than they could because teachers do not always plan lessons that challenge them sufficiently and enable them to learn well.
- The academy has a successful policy of entering students early for both English and mathematics to support their good achievement. Those who gain a grade C or above have the opportunity to retake the examination in the summer of Year 11 in order to ensure they gain the best possible grade.
- Students supported by the Year 7 catch-up premium achieve well, making rapid progress in both literacy and numeracy. The academy's data show that many have made very good progress since the start of the academic year in English and mathematics due to the success of targeted support.
- Nearly all groups of students, including the very small number from ethnic minorities, those whose first language is not English, disabled students and those who have special educational needs, also make good progress. Teachers monitor the progress of all groups of students carefully and frequently, and intervene when necessary. These students told inspectors they feel very well supported by the academy.
- Students enter the academy with lower than average levels in both literacy and numeracy. The academy works effectively to address this and literacy is particularly well supported across all curriculum subjects. Reading for pleasure is encouraged and the new library is very popular.
- The academy's sixth form students benefit from very good advice regarding which courses will be best suited to them and the curriculum meets their needs very effectively. As a result, their achievement is good.
- The very few students who attend a range of courses with a small number of off-site providers also achieve well, as teachers track and monitor their progress closely.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is usually good or better across all key stages, including in the sixth form. Teachers have high expectations of most students, plan lessons that engage them and challenge them to do their best. Students respond well to this and most work hard in class as a result.
- Teaching in both English and mathematics is at least good.
- Where learning is good, teachers make very good use of the information they have about students in order to plan and structure lessons that are engaging and meet the needs of students of most abilities. However, this is not the case in all lessons and sometimes students do not always make the best progress that they can. This is particularly true of more able students.
- Many teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to promote students' learning very effectively. For example, in a Year 11 French lesson, the teacher supported students to practise new structures which they did with growing confidence, leaving them well prepared for their

forthcoming GCSE speaking and listening assessment.

- While inspectors saw some very good practice, notably in English, marking and assessment of work is not consistent either across or within subjects. Where marking is good, teachers usually give students clear advice about what they need to do to improve and evidence is seen, in books, of students responding to this. However, not all teachers mark and assess work as thoroughly, and in these cases opportunities are missed for students to act on the guidance they are given and make improvements to their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good support for those students who need extra help. High quality extra assistance is provided as necessary to support the needs of a range of students, including those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and those for whom the pupil premium provides support. Senior leaders track and monitor their progress carefully and, as a result, these students make very good progress.
- There is a keen awareness among all teachers of the need to support and improve students' literacy skills, given their lower than average starting points. Teachers across a wide range of subjects use a variety of approaches to support students' literacy needs to enable them to be successful. For example, teachers gave students the opportunity to read aloud in a number of lessons and inspectors saw word banks being used regularly to support spelling in written work. Literacy is also supported through work in tutor time and good quality tasks set for homework.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good.
- The academy's leaders have taken effective action to increase attendance, which has improved by 1% over the last year and is now broadly average. . The academy has a range of very effective approaches in place which have impacted positively on the behaviour, attendance and exclusions of different groups of students over time.
- Students behave well in and around the academy and the atmosphere is calm and positive. They told inspectors that the system of sanctions and rewards works well and that staff apply it consistently.
- The academy promotes good relationships between staff and students and these play an important part in academy life and many lessons. Consequently, the vast majority of students have positive attitudes to learning and cooperate well with their teachers. Disruption to teaching is uncommon.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students of all ages, including in the sixth form, say that they feel happy and well looked after at the academy. They are well aware of the different forms bullying, including racist, homophobic and cyber bullying, but say that it is rare. This is supported by the academy's own records of such incidents. Students report that they know exactly who to go to if they have any problems and are confident teachers will deal with them effectively should they occur.
- A wide range of safety issues are tackled through the curriculum, and students appreciate the advice they receive about how to stay safe in a variety of situations. They say that information given to them in PSHE lessons about such things as internet and mobile technology safety, and the dangers and adverse effects of drugs and alcohol abuse, has been very helpful.
- The academy ensures that students who attend other providers for part of their education also behave well, by checking and monitoring their attendance and progress carefully.
- Most parents and staff agree that students' behaviour is good.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership of the academy is strong. The headteacher, supported by his senior staff and the governing body, is determined to ensure that the academy serves the needs of all its students as well as it possibly can. Leaders acknowledge, however, that they need to do more to ensure that

those students who learn most quickly make better progress. The academy is committed to equality of opportunity for all students and ensures that discrimination is not tolerated in any form.

- Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the students and have high expectations of what they should achieve. The headteacher has been determined to see standards continue to rise and has been uncompromising in challenging underachievement in the academy where it has occurred. As a result of a sharp focus on improving teaching, performance at GCSE has increased and has been in line with the national average for the past two years.
- The academy's improvement planning is of good quality. All leaders have an accurate view of both the strengths of the academy, as well as the areas for improvement, which they are addressing effectively. There is a shared belief that the academy will achieve the very highest standards.
- The academy has been very successful in raising the attainment of students in receipt of the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding. It has used the additional funds very well, and as a result, the progress and achievement of these students are improving and gaps are closing rapidly at both key stages.
- Teachers appreciate the effective professional training programme which the academy has in place to support them. This is linked to robust performance management, which ensures that staff at all levels are held fully to account for the progress of the students they teach.
- The headteacher is especially keen to increase the expertise of the academy's middle and senior leaders. He provides them with a range of excellent opportunities to develop their leadership and management skills and this is having a positive impact on driving improvement and raising standards.
- The curriculum, including that in the sixth form, is well matched to students' needs and, together with the academy's sports specialism, makes a very strong contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer, including a variety of sports clubs, cultural trips and visits abroad, which the students say they appreciate greatly.
- The academy offers good advice to students to ensure they follow courses that are best suited to their individual needs and interests, which means they are well prepared for the next steps in their education, training or employment.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders make an important and valuable contribution to school improvement in the local area by supporting some of the academy's feeder primary schools to raise standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. The academy also has a very successful sixth form partnership with nearby Walderslade Girls School, which is growing in popularity and expanding.
- Safeguarding is thorough, including for those students who receive part of their education off-site, and meets all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the academy is a strength. The governors are experienced and well equipped to carry out their statutory duties. They understand the academy well, including its strengths and areas for improvement, for example where there have been weaknesses in teaching and what has been done about this. They have an accurate knowledge of how good the quality of teaching is overall. They recognise where there has been underperformance in the past and hold the headteacher, senior and middle leaders to account effectively, challenging them to raise standards and improve performance. Governors also have a good knowledge of a range of data, including that in RAISEonline and the data dashboard, and use this to compare the academy's performance with that of other schools locally and nationally.
 - Governors fully understand how teachers' pay is related to performance and linked to the quality of teaching. They make certain that resources are used effectively to help students progress. For example, they ensure that the pupil premium funding is spent well. The governing body undertakes regular training to ensure that its knowledge is relevant and up to date, so that it can continue to provide a good level of challenge and support for senior staff in driving improvements for the academy.

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	138046
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	441141
Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	935
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Butler
Headteacher	Andrew Reese
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01634 861593
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