

Childwall Sports & Science Academy

Queen's Drive, Liverpool, Merseyside, L15 6XZ

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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

- Over time, teaching has not ensured that all students make good progress. The most able students are not challenged to excel.
- By the end of Key Stage 4, too many students have not achieved to their potential. GCSE results need to improve and particularly in English and mathematics.
- Expectations for the attainment and progress of students are too low in mathematics.
- Examination results and progress in the sixth form are below national averages.
- There is too much variability in the quality of feedback to students.
- Low-level disruption in a minority of lessons limits the learning and progress that some students are making.
- There remains variability in how well subject leaders are driving improvement in teaching, learning and attainment.

The school has the following strengths

- The new Principal has relentlessly tackled significant underperformance with speed and in doing so changed the culture of the academy to one of high aspirations and continued improvement.
- Self-evaluation is self-critical and accurate and informs the establishment of clear improvement priorities. Senior leaders drive improvement.
- Data, monitoring and tracking systems have been transformed and now fully inform the improvement agenda.
- Teaching has improved and, as a consequence, students are making better progress.
- Achievement gaps are narrowing and, for some groups, rapidly. Progress at Key Stage 3 shows significant improvement.
- Governors are fully committed to raising standards and embedding improvement. They are robust in challenging the performance of management but also offer high-quality support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 34 parts of lessons. They also undertook learning walks, visited an assembly and tutorials as well as activities at break and lunchtimes.
- Five groups of students met with inspectors. Discussions were held with academy staff, including senior leaders, heads of departments and teachers. Discussions were also held with members of the governing body and a representative of the sponsors.
- Inspectors reviewed the 36 responses to the Ofsted on-line questionnaire (Parent View), alongside the academy’s own records of parental and student feedback. They also considered the views expressed in 22 inspection questionnaires returned by academy staff.
- Inspectors read a range of documents including the academy’s self-evaluation, development and improvement plans, monitoring reports, sponsor quality assurance reports, behaviour logs and records in relation to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also looked at internal and external students’ progress and attainment data, student files, portfolios and exercise books.

Inspection team

Patrick Geraghty, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Osama Abdul Rahim

Additional Inspector

Nell Banfield

Additional Inspector

James Kidd

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy opened in September 2012. It is sponsored by Academies Enterprise Trust.
- The academy is an average-sized secondary school with an above average proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds. Those students who speak English as an additional language represent an above average proportion. Forty two languages are spoken at the academy.
- Over half the students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is high compared with most schools. (This is additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.)
- The proportion of students with disabilities or who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There are twice as many boys as girls in each year group in the academy.
- There have been several changes to senior leadership and teaching staff since the inception of the academy. A new Principal took up post in August 2013 when the governing body was also reconstituted.
- In 2013, the academy met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all students achieve good outcomes by ensuring:
 - that all teachers plan lessons using assessment information that will support and challenge the most able students
 - that marking provides helpful comments on how to improve and checks whether students have acted on previous advice
 - that all teachers access and use information about students to set work at the right level
 - that teachers develop the use of their questioning skills so that students have opportunities to develop their reasoning, spoken language and extend their thinking
 - that in all lessons, low-level disruptive behaviour does not go unchallenged and does not impact on the learning of others.
- Improve students' achievement in mathematics more rapidly by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information in planning lessons so that the learning needs of all students are met
 - teachers have sufficiently high expectations for all students' attainment and progress
 - students are able to apply mathematics more readily to practical applications and circumstances
 - students develop and apply their number skills across a range of subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all middle leaders are drivers for improving teaching, learning and attainment within their areas of responsibility
 - current measures to improve sixth-form enrolment procedures and curriculum choices impact on better examination results and progress for students
 - academy behaviour policy is applied consistently in all lessons

- the academy continues to raise the awareness of students about the need to respect human diversity and about the appropriate use of language when speaking of others.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement. The predecessor school had a legacy of low attainment for five A* to C including English and mathematics. The first set of results for the new academy in September 2013 showed a significant increase in standards but they still remain below the national average. Further and speedier improvement is required and particularly in mathematics.
- Robust tracking, monitoring and data systems are now in place. Data analysis is used well to drive improvement and close achievement gaps. Academy tracking systems indicate that there is likely to be an increase in standards across all subjects at Key Stage 4 in the current year.
- Progress and achievement are accelerating strongly overall and particularly in science subjects. Progress and attainment in mathematics, while improving, needs to be more rapid.
- Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, scrutiny of students' work in exercise books and discussions with individual students confirmed accelerating improvement in standards. However, the most able students receive insufficient challenge to enable them to excel. Not enough students achieve the higher grades A* and A in GCSE examinations.
- The achievement gap for those students known to be supported by the pupil premium is narrowing. The academy has established effective systems to target those students for additional support. The progress for Looked After Children and disabled students and those with special educational needs is accelerating rapidly.
- Academy tracking systems and inspection evidence indicate that overall progress at Key Stage 3 is good. Gaps between different groups have narrowed significantly. The gap in progress for pupil premium students at Key Stage 3 has closed. However, the most able students are making less progress than nationally in English and mathematics.
- Sixth form attainment and progress is below national averages. However, the academy has quickly moved to establish more robust enrolment and entry criteria. Academy data indicate that current students are making better progress. Progression to university has improved with many students becoming the first members of their immediate family to go onto higher education.
- The academy places an increasing emphasis on improving students' literacy skills, using extra catch-up funding effectively. There remains too much inconsistency within and across subjects in the application of the academy's numeracy strategies.
- The academy places a strong focus on extra-curricular activities to support the students in their curriculum, including sports, drama and music. Strong provision in sports is enthusiastically embraced by many students.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there has not been enough good teaching and learning over time to ensure that all students make good or better progress.
- The formation of the academy has brought a vigorous emphasis on rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Inadequate teaching has been reduced to a minimum. However, in a significant minority of lessons, teaching and learning still require improvement. The teaching of mathematics at Key Stages 3 and 4 requires improvement.
- In lessons that are well planned students are quick to respond to high expectations. Activities are well prepared and take into account the needs of all students. A high level of challenge exists in activities and written work. Students receive good support to achieve success. Progress is celebrated. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and reflect upon their learning. Cooperative learning skills are encouraged through well-planned and considered individual, pair and group activities. On these occasions, there is a strong emphasis on literacy development. These attributes were prominent in English, art and physical education.
- Art lessons embody the best practice. Students were fully engaged and challenged whether in their own projects or on sessions on Indian textiles design or pop-up art book construction.

Students were clear about lesson objectives and embraced the high expectations set. In particular they enthused in explaining their creative ideas to others. Literacy development is seamlessly integrated into planned activities.

- On occasions teachers' planning and resources were poor and lacked focus. Students were not given opportunities to reflect and consolidate their learning.
- During less well-planned activities, minor misbehaviour by some students impacted negatively on the learning of all. Students were not expected to take sufficient responsibility for their own progress. The most able students were not sufficiently challenged with extension work and demanding activities and so were not given the opportunity to excel.
- Marking is variable. Students' work is generally tidy and presentable in most books. Marking in some subjects is well developed and involves productive dialogues between teacher and student on the ways and means to improve. Good practice was seen in English, history and science. In these subjects, teachers highlighted strengths and provided advice on how to improve further. However, in too many subjects exercise book marking failed to give pointers to the next steps to improvement. There was little evidence of teacher follow-up to assess improvement and chart students' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour requires improvement. In a minority of lessons low-level disruptive behaviour negatively impacts on the learning of all students. These disruptions occur where activities do not match the learning needs of students and they consequently lose interest. Academy behaviour policy is not consistently applied across all classes.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students said that they feel safe within the academy. There is effective training and awareness raising of e-safety for both staff and students. Students are fully aware of how to use the internet safely and also of the possible dangers of social media websites.
- Students' behaviour around the academy site is orderly. Students are polite and cooperative with each other and adults. The academy has effective systems to record incidents of bullying and racism. However, some students commented that a degree of bullying, racist and homophobic language still exists and that this was not reported to staff. Where bullying and inappropriate language occurs and is reported to staff, students say it is dealt with and any issues are resolved.
- Senior leaders have introduced well-developed systems for tracking and monitoring attendance which are having an impact. Attendance is improving rapidly although it still remains below the national average. Persistent absences data have improved and the exclusion rate has been significantly reduced. The academy works very well with a large number of agencies to support vulnerable students and those requiring additional pastoral support.
- The academy promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well within the curriculum. Increasingly, students are willing to take on a variety of responsibilities such as student leaders. However, the academy is missing opportunities to involve sixth formers in aspirational and improvement work with Key Stage 3 and 4 students. The physical well-being of students is promoted through the curriculum and numerous extra-curricular sports activities.
- The academy is a tidy environment and, on the whole, uniform dress codes are good and strictly applied.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. The new Principal has worked with great alacrity to tackle major underperformance and management issues within the academy. He has effectively moulded a young and energetic senior leadership team into drivers for improvement. The Principal has used effectively astute and highly experienced consultancy to prioritise and instigate change. A significant majority of staff have embraced the new academy culture with its

emphasis on high aspirations and rapid improvement.

- Self-evaluation is honest, self-critical and accurate. In September 2013, academy management graded all aspects of provision and overall effectiveness as inadequate. Since then, change has been very rapid but always with an emphasis on sustainability and on embedding better practice.
- Academy data systems have been transformed. Tracking and monitoring systems are robust. Data analysis and presentation is strong and very well developed. Key areas for improvement are now accurately identified at both whole-academy and departmental levels. There has been a real shift in emphasis to monitoring levels of progress. The effective use of data to plan lesson activities across all subjects, although improving, remains variable.
- Middle leadership is improving. Middle leaders are now taking greater accountability for the areas for which they are responsible. The quality and impact of middle leadership is, however, still variable.
- The management of teaching and learning is bringing about improvement to the quality of teaching. Well-considered staff development is moving the quality of teaching and learning rapidly forward. However, managers acknowledge that there remains too much teaching and learning that requires improvement. Academy leaders are aware of the need to accelerate attainment and progress at Key Stage 4.
- Performance management is robust. Performance management and professional development are used very well to support and challenge teachers whose work has been judged as weak.
- Much work has been done to make the curriculum broader and more balanced. However, the academy acknowledges that further work is required to develop numeracy across all subjects.
- The academy places a strong focus on the care and support of vulnerable students. Partnerships with external agencies are very strong and effective. Links with an outstanding local secondary school has impacted on academy work and staff training. Gaps in achievement between different groups of students are closing but improvement here needs further acceleration.
- The academy trust sponsor supports the academy through its structure of regional directors who visit and advise regularly. In particular this was both essential and valuable during the early months of the new Principal's tenure. Changes to the structure and composition of governors have been a key factor in supporting and challenging academy leadership. Sponsors, governors, senior leaders and staff are committed to sustained and embedded long-term improvement.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well across academy provision. Data is used well to monitor the performance of different groups and is now effectively used to reduce identified gaps in achievement.
- The academy meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors hold the leadership to account with rigour while offering crucial support. They have an astute awareness of the academy's strengths and areas for development.
 - Governors analyse and evaluate student achievement data regularly and accurately and have a good understanding of trends in progress and attainment. They appreciate the quality and focus of the data analysis now produced by the academy. They are fully aware of how pupil premium funding is spent and keep a close eye on the impact of this spending.
 - Governors are fully aware of how the academy is attempting to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

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	138787
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	440143

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	970
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Williams
Headteacher	James Kerfoot
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0151 722 1561
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	contactus@childwallssa.org

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