

Tudor Grange Academy

Dingle Lane, Solihull, B91 3PD

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Academic standards are exceptionally high in all subjects.
- Teaching is outstanding.
- Students are effectively engaged by a rich and varied curriculum.
- Students develop excellent attitudes to learning. A broad range of educational experiences develops students' personal and social skills exceptionally well and equips them most effectively for their next stage of education and the world beyond school.
- Behaviour is outstanding and students feel very safe in school.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders constantly strive for even better outcomes for students.
- The new sixth form is outstanding. Students in all subjects make exceptional progress because they are challenged and their personal skills are strongly developed.
- Governors challenge the senior team well and supports the school's continuous improvement.
- The overall effectiveness of science is outstanding. Expert staff teach outstandingly well and ensure students' learning in science is exceptionally good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons and parts of lessons. Fifteen lessons were observed jointly with the senior leadership team. Inspectors walked around the school with students to observe behaviour in and out of lessons. Inspectors observed some of the school’s enrichment activities and part of the induction process for Year 6 pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, college leaders and groups of students, the Chair of the Multi Academy Trust, the Chair of the Local Governing Board and another member.
- A meeting was held with a small group of parents and carers. The views of 108 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, were considered together with the academy’s own parent questionnaire of 600 parents. The results of 107 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors analysed the school’s 2011 and 2012 examination results, and the validated results for 2013. They analysed the school’s data on the progress students have made from their starting points and their current progress. Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including records of meetings, curriculum plans, records relating to safeguarding, and data on behaviour, attendance and exclusions. They looked at the school’s evaluation of its strengths and areas for development, and its improvement plans. Inspectors scrutinised samples of students’ work.
- A specialist science inspector joined the team to evaluate the effectiveness of science.

Inspection team

Michelle Parker, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Brian Cartwright (science specialist)	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Sai Patel	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Additional Inspector
Helen Booth	Additional Inspector
Shahnaz Maqsood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Tudor Grange School converted to an academy in October 2010. When Ofsted last inspected the predecessor school, Tudor Grange School, it was judged to be outstanding.
- Tudor Grange has been led this term by the executive principal following the resignation of the principal in April 2014.
- This is a larger than the average secondary school. It opened a sixth form in September 2012.
- The student population is stable with very few students joining or leaving the school part way through the year.
- The vast majority of students are White British.
- Very few students are eligible for support through the pupil premium, the additional funding provided by the government for students who are looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is much smaller than average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The academy does not use alternative provision.
- The academy is part of a multi academies trust. The trust comprises three secondary schools, the Tudor Grange Academies of Solihull, Worcester and Redditch and two primary schools St James and Haselor.
- The academy was designated a teaching school in 2011.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that communication with parents and carers is strengthened so that parents and carers have more opportunities to talk to and share their views with staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Standards have been maintained and are exceptionally high across the whole school, including the recently-opened sixth form. This has continued for the last five years.
- Almost all students make exceptional progress, including the small number of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and the very small number of students who are eligible for support through the pupil premium.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to promote their outstanding progress. There is a rapidly-closing gap between the achievements of students' eligible free school meals and their peers. Current data indicates that almost half of all students will make better than expected progress in both English and mathematics.
- Attainment and progress of all students, including the most-able and those with special educational needs, and those supported through the pupil premium are well above national averages. The school's validated results for 2013 indicate that 93% of students gained at least a C grade at GCSE for English and mathematics. In addition, in nearly half of the subjects, including English Literature, and Language, mathematics, chemistry and physics, students gained well above the national averages in the highest GCSE grades.
- Students are entered successfully for GCSEs at the end of Year 10 and take additional GCSEs at the end of Year 11. The weaker performance in French has been successfully addressed.
- The school makes highly effective use of funding received through the Year 7 catch-up programme (extra money from the government to support those students who attained below expected levels in English and mathematics in Year 6). Students entered for the Year 7 catch-up programme make rapid progress.
- Students' excellent skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics contribute to their rapid progress in lessons. They enjoy and value reading and engage enthusiastically in a wide range of extra reading activities, for example, listening to each other read and joining book clubs.
- Students are confident in their mathematical understanding and accurately apply this across a wide range of contexts in other subjects.
- Students in the sixth form achieved well in GCE AS examinations. This reflects students' excellent prior learning. Consequently, there is a large and successful uptake of English, mathematics, and the sciences. Students in Year 13 are maintaining their high levels of progress and interest in subjects they study. Retention rates into Year 13 are very high. Although it is early days for the sixth form, current progress data indicate that the high standards achieved last year are being maintained and consequently students are very well prepared for their future lives.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is at least consistently good and a significant amount is outstanding. Teaching is dynamic and inspirational. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to imaginatively engage with students in challenging activities and encourage them to achieve to their very best.

This approach promotes high levels of enjoyment and progress. Students are very keen to learn.

- Teachers know their students very well. Skilful questioning probes and deepens students' understanding. For example, a teacher's questioning prompted Year 10 students in a psychology lesson to apply their knowledge of behavioural theories to develop insights into the riots in Britain. Further questioning encourages students to 'tell us more about that' or 'explain what you mean by that' and so extends their understanding.
- Teachers set high expectations of students. Resources are well chosen to support learning, particularly for students from different starting points. Students are invited to share what they have learnt and to demonstrate how they have solved problems. Thus, the learning of the whole class moves forward rapidly.
- Teaching in the sixth form is frequently outstanding. It encourages students to think as professional practitioners in the subjects. This encourages students to dig deeper into the topic and improves their ability to apply their knowledge to new situations. Detailed feedback enables students to develop their learning and to tackle successfully practical problems.
- Students' assessment of each other's work contributes strongly to their gains in understanding. This is because assessment opportunities for students are well planned and extend mutual understanding.
- The induction of Year 6 pupils is outstanding because activities are imaginative and well-chosen to whet pupils' appetites for September and set high expectations for work and behaviour.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. The positive attitudes of students, their mutual respect for each other, cooperation and mature attitudes powerfully support effective learning in lessons.
- Students work with minimal supervision in small groups and in pairs discussing learning and sharing their opinions. Staff tackle sensitive subjects and explore students' views thoroughly.
- At break, lunchtimes and around the site, students conduct themselves sensibly. This contributes to the purposeful air of calm and adds to students' positive feelings of being safe.
- Students wear their uniform with pride and take care with their work. They respect the academy buildings. There is no litter.
- Students stated bullying of any sort was rare. Inclusive attitudes, tolerance, and understanding towards different beliefs and views of the world are encouraged, especially through personal and social development work. For example, homophobic bullying is rare because students accept differences between people. Students stated they were confident that should they need to discuss a sensitive issue, staff would listen and support them.
- High-quality opportunities allow sixth formers to engage in activities that support their understanding of work and life beyond the academy. For example, leadership roles, mentoring of younger students, and work placements effectively build students' employment skills.
- The academy's work to keep students' safe and secure is outstanding. Records of students

whose behaviour has fallen short of the academy's high standards show that incidents are rare and declining. Likewise, persistent absences and exclusions are quickly reducing. This is because students want to learn and they do well. Attendance is above the national average and swift action is taken to identify and work with families if students' attendance falls.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The executive principal, senior leaders and governors continually set aspirational standards for students and staff. Staff are proud to be part of the academy and dedicated to what is best for students. Consequently, the academy is successful in maintaining the highest levels of achievement.
- The academy's ethos of respect permeates all aspects of the academy's life and ensures inclusion. This helps promote the rapid progress of students who might be vulnerable to underachievement.
- The leadership team, particularly the executive principal, managed the past year's considerable staff turnover with sensitivity and care. This ensured that there was minimal impact on students.
- Middle leaders play a key role in ensuring the high quality of all students' achievement across the school. Their meticulous analyses of data inform their monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Challenging targets are set and teachers held accountable through weekly progress checks led by middle and senior leaders. Consequently, any student's underperformance is quickly identified and tackled. Performance management systems support this process effectively and identify further training needs.
- The sharing of good practice drives improvement in teaching and learning, as does the carefully-tailored approach to the professional development of every member of staff. Staff share their expertise when deployed to work with other schools and those within the multi-academy trust.
- High quality, well-thought-out policies underpin the daily running of the academy. These are regularly updated and reviewed. For example, refinements have been made to the marking policy to focus more effectively on feedback from staff.
- The broad and balanced curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to students' positive attitudes to learning, both in the main academy and the sixth form. The skills, activities and subjects sessions on Wednesday afternoons promote students' personal and social development and communication literacy and numeracy skills. The outstanding work of the physical education department makes a major contribution to helping students stay healthy.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well through the formal and informal curriculum.
- The strong leadership of the sixth form ensures that the gains students make in their academic and personal development enable them to make a significant contribution to the broader life of the academy.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the academy. However, some parents identified that communication with them could be improved. Senior leaders recognise this as an area for further development.

- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The multi-academy board and the local governors' board make an outstanding contribution to the monitoring and development of education at the academy. The members' professional expertise provides additional rigour and enables the boards to challenge and hold senior leaders to account. Governors act swiftly to support the executive principal in taking decisive action to address any weakness.
- Governors scrutinise every aspect of school life and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and the achievement of all students. They understand how teachers' performance is managed and reward successful teachers.
- Governors used their financial acuity to develop the sixth form. They monitor whether effective use is made of the pupil premium. This has enabled the academy to employ high-quality learning mentors to successfully support and work with vulnerable students and those eligible for the pupil premium.

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	136310
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	434588

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1345
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	169
Appropriate authority	Multi-academy board
Chair	R Edwards
Executive principal	J A Bexon-Smith
Telephone number	0121 7055100
Fax number	0121 7038226
Email address	office@solihull.tgacademy.org.uk

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