

Enterprise South Liverpool Academy

51 Horrocks Avenue, Liverpool, L19 5NY

Inspection dates 30 September–1 October 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Inadequate | 4 |
| Leadership and management | | Inadequate | 4 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Inadequate | 4 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Inadequate | 4 |
| Sixth form provision | | Requires improvement | 3 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Standards, particularly in English and mathematics, are far too low. School leaders have failed to take effective action to turn around this legacy of underachievement.
- Students' weak literacy, communication and numeracy skills are a great impediment to them making better progress across most subjects. This is because school leaders' actions to tackle this issue have been weak and ineffectual.
- The large majority of students with special educational needs do not receive the support they require and teachers do not always adapt lessons to suit their level of ability. As a result, these students make inadequate progress.
- Disadvantaged students underachieve because the pupil premium has not been used effectively.
- Behaviour requires improvement because, in a minority of lessons, low level disruption sometimes occurs.
- The most able students make inadequate progress because teachers' expectations of what they can achieve are too low. Consequently, the work they are set is often too simple and the challenge is sometimes non-existent.
- Self-evaluation is wide of the mark and the school improvement plan lacks rigour.
- Governors have been forthright in challenging school leaders to improve this school. However, improvements that they have requested have not always been implemented quickly enough.
- Attendance, though improving, is still too low.
- The sixth form requires improvement because performance is inconsistent across subjects and not enough students who take re-sits in English and mathematics at GCSE achieve this qualification.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders, including governors, faced an immense challenge in merging the two predecessor schools that were failing to provide a good standard of education. They have successfully created a cohesive, warm and welcoming community where students feel valued.
- Students are polite, friendly and respectful. In the main, teachers manage behaviour well.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say there is little bullying, they feel safe and are proud of the fact that, in their school, prejudice of any description is not tolerated.
- Achievement in both physical education and art is exceptional. This shows just what these students can achieve when taught well and with enthusiasm.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 part lessons and one inspector visited the off-site provision at the nearby 'Dove Centre'. Inspectors observed and talked to students in the dining areas and as they moved around the school on their way to lessons.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders in the school, students, a representative of the local authority and representatives from a number of bodies that work in partnership with the school, including headteachers from nearby primary schools.
- The inspection team evaluated a wide range of documentation provided by the school when considering its judgements. This included information on students' achievement, attendance and behaviour, records of governing body minutes, school policies, the school's self-evaluation of its work and plans for improvement, and external reports on the school's overall effectiveness.
- Inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire and the school's own surveys of the views of parents. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, however, the inspection team did consider an email that was submitted by a parent of a child in the school.

Inspection team

Joan Bonenfant, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Neil MacKenzie

Additional Inspector

Christine Addison

Additional Inspector

Andrew Henderson

Additional Inspector

Paul Rafferty

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Enterprise South Liverpool Academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school, with a sixth form.
- The school was formed from an amalgamation of two schools in the neighbourhood and moved into new, purpose-built accommodation in 2013.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, that is those eligible for support through the pupil premium, is much higher than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students who are supported at school action is well above the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage and there are more boys than girls in the school.
- A small number of students in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 follow lessons off-site in the nearby 'Dove Centre'. This centre is staffed by teachers and teaching assistants from the school. It is designed to provide education for those students at risk of disengagement in education in the main school.
- A considerable number of students have only recently joined the school after the closure of a local school.
- In September 2014, the school took over the management of specially resourced provision for up to 16 students on the autistic spectrum.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and thereby raise standards, particularly in English and mathematics, for all students, including disadvantaged students, the most able and those with special educational needs, by:
 - ensuring all teachers adapt their teaching to suit the needs and abilities of their students
 - making sure all teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve
 - providing work that is appropriately challenging to the most able students
 - ensuring all students with special educational needs get the help they need to make good progress
 - establishing a clear and coherent policy that is followed by all teachers across all subjects to improve students' basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy.
- Improve students' behaviour by:
 - eliminating low-level disruption by ensuring all lessons are suitably engaging
 - improving attendance and punctuality by working more effectively with parents so that they make sure their children attend regularly and on time.
- Improve the overall effectiveness of the sixth form by:
 - reducing variability across subjects by holding subject leaders more effectively to account for performance in their subject
 - making sure that all students who do re-sit examinations in English and mathematics at GCSE level achieve this qualification.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - embedding procedures to manage the performance of teachers so that underperformance is eradicated
 - ensuring all heads of department set a good example by communicating high expectations for all students and are held to account more rigorously for teachers' performance in their area of

responsibility

- embedding current initiatives to improve the quality of teaching so that all teachers get the help, support and guidance they need to teach all groups of students effectively and, in so doing, raise achievement
- improving self-evaluation so that it more accurately reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the school
- sharpening the school improvement plan so that it contains clear, measurable success criteria with timescales so that the school can, at regular intervals, see how well it is doing and what still needs to be improved
- ensuring that funds available through the pupil premium and the Year 7 catch-up funding are spent appropriately so that all students eligible for this support make better progress
- ensuring the curriculum effectively supports the development of students' basic skills.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Standards are far too low and have been so for quite some time. School leaders did not take prompt, effective action when achievement declined in 2013. This was then compounded by further underachievement in 2014, when the Year 11 students' examination results plummeted to well below an acceptable standard.
- Although there have been some improvements, for example in attendance and the sixth form, underachievement in key areas is stubbornly persistent. As a result, school leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to improve this school quickly.
- School leaders have underestimated the detrimental impact of poor levels of literacy across the school. Actions to tackle this problem have been on too small a scale and superficial. As a result, weak literacy skills remain a major impediment to students' achievement and their future prospects.
- The school does not promote equality effectively because there are unacceptably large gaps in achievement between groups of students such as those with special educational needs or disadvantaged students and other students both in this school and in the rest of the country.
- School leaders have been too lax and have, therefore, not always ensured that all statutory requirements are met, for example regarding the updating of policies and the information available on the school's website.
- Self-evaluation is wide of the mark. School leaders do not have an accurate picture of the school's overall effectiveness. The school improvement plan lacks rigour; it presents a list of well-intentioned actions but lacks clear, measurable success criteria. Consequently, it does not serve as a useful tool to turn around the legacy of underachievement that continues to plague this school.
- School leaders have had an overgenerous view regarding the quality of teaching because they have not always used information on students' achievement to inform their judgement, relying too heavily on lesson observations. As a result, school leaders have not done enough to secure good, effective teaching of groups of students, including those with special educational needs, disadvantaged students and the most able.
- Strong stewardship of mathematics is starting to have some positive impact and there are the very early signs of improvement in this subject. However, on the whole, subject leaders are of variable quality, because they do not always have high expectations of what students can achieve in their area of responsibility and they are sometimes ineffective in holding teachers of their subject to account for their performance.
- School leaders have used both formal and informal procedures to tackle weak teaching. This has been effective to some extent and teachers who have not met their targets have been kept back from promotion. School leaders have introduced further refinement to performance management procedures but these changes are embryonic and have not had time to take effect.
- Teachers speak highly of the training and support they receive to improve their teaching. Recent initiatives to improve the quality of teaching, including rigorous, enthusiastic and ambitious leadership of this area of the school's work, show promise. There are some tentative signs of improvement in teaching, but, because such developments are at an early stage, there is as yet little evidence of impact on improving students' achievement.
- The school has forged many partnerships with other agencies, such as Liverpool University and John Lennon Airport. There is a comprehensive programme of careers advice; for example, events such as the 'Business Breakfast', where representatives from a wide range of professions provide useful information to help students make informed decisions about the next steps in their lives, are slowly helping to raise aspirations. However, too many students do not go on to further education, employment or training because they do not always have the essential basic skills they need to fulfil their ambitions.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, however, too few students are well prepared for their future because there has been insufficient attention paid to improving reading, writing and numeracy across subjects. As a result, they cannot always access the wide and varied opportunities that life can offer.
- There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, including trips abroad, drama productions and visits to art galleries. A great number of students enjoy the excellent range of sporting activities available after school. This contributes well to students' physical well-being.
- The school does its best to tackle discrimination by providing a clear steer to students that prejudice of any description will not be tolerated.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through lessons and assemblies. Students show respect for one another and have tolerant attitudes to people of other faiths or

from different communities. In this respect, the school prepares students well for life in modern Britain.

- School leaders acknowledge that they have struggled to engage parents effectively in the life of the school. Parents who responded to the school's own survey are generally supportive of the school. However, it is difficult to gain a more representative view of parents' views, because there was such a low response to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
- The school has engaged effectively with the local authority. This had some positive impact, for example in starting to improve the overall quality of teaching.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- School leaders, including governors, have demonstrated vision and tenacity in seeking to merge two predecessor schools that were failing to provide a good standard of education. This has presented a considerable challenge; much time, energy and effort have been successfully spent creating a cohesive, welcoming community housed in a splendid new building.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Records of meetings of the governing body provide clear evidence that governors have been forthright in demanding far better outcomes for all students, particularly those that are disadvantaged. For example, governors were very disappointed with the results in 2014 and quickly challenged school leaders to account for such a dramatic drop in standards.
 - However, school leaders have not always responded effectively to this degree of challenge and improvements that have been requested have not always been implemented sufficiently swiftly. As a result, the governing body has been ineffective in making sure all students in the school receive a good education.
 - The governing body has been ineffective in making sure that the expenditure of the pupil premium has had a direct bearing on improving students' achievement.
 - Governors have used performance management procedures to challenge the headteacher to improve the school, but this has so far been unsuccessful in achieving the desired outcomes.
 - The governing body is astute, loyal and well-informed. Governors bring an extremely wide range of highly relevant expertise to their role and express a strong sense of moral purpose and ambition to improve this school.

The behaviour and safety of students

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Although students' behaviour has improved over time it requires further improvement because a minority of lessons are disturbed by low-level disruption, such as chatting, especially when the teaching is not engaging.
- School leaders have successfully created a harmonious environment from very challenging circumstances. As a result, students are friendly, polite and welcoming. They display positive attitudes towards one another and their teachers. Students mix well together in social spaces, such as the dining areas, and show pride in their school.
- School leaders have worked effectively to instil good habits. As a result, most students arrive on time, smartly dressed, with the equipment they need for their lessons. However, a minority of students arrive late for school too often. This does not help them to get their day off to a good start, in the right frame of mind for learning; furthermore, it is not good preparation for the world of work.
- Major incidences of poor behaviour are now extremely rare because school leaders have devised effective strategies to stop problems escalating. As a result, the rate of exclusion, which was high, has dropped dramatically.
- Students who attend the 'Dove Centre' behave well. The support they receive is tailored to suit their individual needs. Students respond well to their teachers in lessons and their attendance has improved substantially, compared to when they attended the main school.
- Racist incidents are very rare and dealt with appropriately when they occur.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. This is because school leaders ensure the safety of students is paramount and central to the school's core purpose.
- Students spoken to during the inspection said they feel safe and that incidences of bullying are rare because teachers step in and sort out any problems. Students were aware of the different forms that

bullying can take and seemed proud of the fact that, in their school, prejudice of any description is not tolerated.

- Students are taught well how to keep themselves safe and assess risks in a wide variety of situations, such as, for example, when using the internet. In this way, the school prepares students effectively to look after themselves beyond the school gates and in the future.
- Attendance has improved considerably since the previous inspection, albeit from a very low base. This is because any non-attendance is followed up promptly and rigorously.
- School leaders are unrelenting in their attempts to help students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, maintaining strong home-to-school contact which is meticulously recorded. As a result, the rate of persistent absenteeism is slowly reducing, although it is still too high.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Teaching over time has been inadequate, leading to underachievement on a large scale across many subjects and particularly in English and mathematics. Most teachers do not adapt their lessons sufficiently well to suit the needs and abilities of their students. As a result, the work is too easy for some students and too hard for others.
- There has been much turbulence in staffing and considerable staff absence, leading to the school becoming dependent on a succession of temporary teachers of variable quality. This has led to inconsistency of practice and a lack of continuity, undermining the efforts the school has made to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, the overall quality of teaching has not improved at a swift enough pace. During the inspection, there were some tentative signs of improvement in the quality of teaching. As staffing is now considerably more stable, the school is better placed to go forward.
- The teaching of the most able students is inadequate because teachers' expectations of what these students can achieve are far too low. This is a major obstacle to the most able students making gains in their learning. For example, in one exercise book examined by inspectors during the inspection, a student in Year 8 had written an extended piece of writing which demonstrated a commendable command of English. The teacher had commented very favourably on this piece of work. However, in a subsequent lesson, the work was far too simple and the level of challenge non-existent.
- Teachers do not always plan work that builds effectively on what students already know. For example, during the inspection, some of the most able students in Year 7 were completing work that they could easily have done in primary school. This holds them back from making adequate progress.
- Students' weak communication and literacy skills are a considerable barrier to their learning and few teachers have developed effective strategies to sort this out. As a result, most students, particularly those with special educational needs, make inadequate progress.
- Teachers' assessment of students' work has been overgenerous, leading to students having an unrealistic view of their current performance.
- Teachers manage behaviour well, for the most part. They create a calm, well ordered climate for learning. Voices are rarely raised and, on the whole, lessons proceed with little interruption. However, in a minority of lessons, when the teaching is insufficiently engaging, students lose interest, start chatting and disturb the lesson.
- Homework is set regularly but it is not always sufficiently challenging. Teachers mark students' work thoroughly, providing helpful guidance on how to improve. However, students do not always follow the advice that teachers give them. As a result, the impact that teachers' marking has on students' progress is limited.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively for the most part, particularly when providing one-to-one support for the students most in need of help. Teaching assistants contribute well in the 'Dove Centre', where the sensitive approach taken to support students' individual needs has helped to improve their sense of self worth and attitude to learning.
- The physical education department is a beacon to the school of excellent practice. This committed team of teachers is very well led. The level of challenge is high for students of all abilities and the imaginative curriculum is designed in such a way that all students, whatever their interests or aptitude, can make excellent progress. As a result, students' achievement in this subject is outstanding. Practically every student spoken to during the inspection said that physical education was one of their favourite subjects.

The achievement of pupils**is inadequate**

- Standards have dropped dramatically since the previous inspection. In 2013, students who reached the end of Key Stage 4 had made inadequate progress in English, mathematics and science. In 2014, only just over a quarter of students achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE level, including English and mathematics. This is well below the current national average. The progress that these students made in both English and mathematics was again inadequate.
- The progress that the most able students make is inadequate. Teachers' expectations of what these students can achieve are far too low, and often the work they are given is too easy.
- The progress of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is inadequate. Where support has been provided to a small minority of these students, progress is stronger. However, for the vast majority, support has been inadequate. In short, three quarters of the students with special educational needs do not receive the support they need to make good progress. This is because teachers do not meet the needs of these students effectively and school leaders have not ensured that they receive the necessary training or resources in order to do so.
- In 2013, there was a significant gap between the achievement of boys compared to that of girls. This gap closed quickly in 2014.
- The gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged students and that of other students are wide and are not closing. In both English and mathematics at GCSE, disadvantaged students achieve about a grade below that of other students in the school. The gaps between the achievement of these students and that of all students nationally are even wider, for example, these students are as much as two grades behind in mathematics.
- Students' weak literacy, communication and numeracy skills are a great impediment to them making better progress across most subjects. This is because school leaders' actions to tackle this have been weak and ineffectual.
- Too few students have been given specific literacy support, and those that have received this support have not improved swiftly enough. Overall, teachers do not fully appreciate their role in helping students surmount this barrier to their learning and therefore the development of these basic skills across the school has been ineffective.
- The use of the Year 7 catch-up funding has been ineffective. This funding is available to support all students who enter the school with weak literacy and numeracy skills. School leaders have underestimated the scale of this problem and too few students who have weak skills in reading, writing and mathematics have had the necessary support to make up the ground they have lost.
- The students who attend the 'Dove Centre' make reasonable progress given their individual starting points and the fact that they had previously been at risk of disengagement from education. The school works productively with these students to improve their attendance and self esteem. However, sometimes the work they are given is too easy and this stands in the way of them making better progress.
- Teaching assistants have been given specific training to support the needs of students who have access to the specially resourced provision. As this provision is very new to the school, it is too early to comment more fully on the progress made by these students.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.
- Information provided by the school suggests that there are the very early signs of improvement in students' progress. This was to some extent confirmed by inspection evidence.
- Both historically and currently, students make the best progress in art and physical education. This is because these subjects are well taught, expectations are high and teachers are skilful in adapting their lessons to suit the needs and abilities of their students. As a result, achievement in both subjects is well above average.

The sixth form provision**requires improvement**

- School leaders have been successful in establishing a harmonious sixth form where students receive informative advice and guidance on the next steps in their lives. Rigorous checks are made on students' attendance and their progress; students acknowledge that this is in their best interests and as a result feel valued and well supported.
- Although inspection evidence suggests that teaching is more effective in the sixth form than in the rest of the school, it remains of variable quality and therefore requires further improvement. Students achieve well in a range of subjects, for example, art, biology, history and physical education. This is because teaching is strong in these subjects. However, teaching is weaker in other subjects, such as applied

information and communication technology and government and politics. Leadership of the sixth form has been insufficiently effective in ironing out these inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. As a result, students' achievement is uneven across different subjects.

- Provision for English and mathematics in the sixth form is a weakness, just as it is in the rest of the school. Too few students who have not already achieved a GCSE manage to achieve this qualification when they re-sit their examinations in the sixth form.
- Students appreciate the extra responsibilities they are given, such as supporting students lower down the school in their reading or providing sports leadership. Students in the sixth form dress smartly and act as good role models to other students in the school.
- Students spoken to during the inspection feel confident that their views matter. They participate well in a developing range of additional opportunities that help to enrich their studies and personal development.
- There is a good range of academic courses on offer supplemented by an appropriate selection of vocational qualifications. Staff work effectively to ensure that students follow courses that suit their talents and aspirations. As a result, a much lower-than-average proportion of students leave the sixth form without achieving a suitable qualification.
- Overall, prior attainment at GCSE for those joining the sixth form is modest and below the national average. Given their starting points, the majority of students make reasonable progress. In 2014, there was a slight dip in performance in A level examinations but AS level results improved. Commendably, all students completed their courses and a higher proportion of students than was previously the case were able to fulfil their ambitions to go on to higher education.

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

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| Unique reference number | 136119 |
| Local authority | Liverpool |
| Inspection number | 442419 |

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

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|---|--------------------------|
| 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 | 236 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Keith Sexton |
| Headteacher | Jack Pendlebury |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 October 2012 |
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