

# Sandown Bay Academy

The Fairway, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 9JH

## Inspection dates

15–16 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students' progress in mathematics over Key Stages 3 and 4 is not yet rapid or secure.
- Students' progress in key subjects in Years 8 and 9 is not yet good.
- Disadvantaged students do not achieve as well as others in mathematics and English.
- Some students do not behave well when not closely supervised.
- The way that information about the achievements of different groups of students is presented does not make it easy enough for teachers and leaders to see how each is getting on.
- Some teaching is not addressing the needs of all students, making learning interesting enough, or ensuring that students work hard enough.
- Some teachers do not use assessment well enough in lessons to gain a clear understanding of what students already know and how well they are currently learning.
- Not all teachers are contributing well enough to improving students' literacy skills.
- Some middle leaders are not able to bring about the necessary improvements in teaching and learning in their areas without strong senior staff intervention and support.

### The school has the following strengths

- The Principal provides excellent leadership. Because of this, the academy is now improving strongly. Students and staff have a new-found sense of confidence, and take pride in their work.
- The academy is a safe and happy environment for students. Students' behaviour has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Students achieve well in English by the end of Key Stage 4.
- The management board offers very good levels of challenge and support to the Principal and his senior staff.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well. They are very well supported, and encouraged to be ambitious.
- Some very useful links with other schools are being developed.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as the fifth monitoring visit in connection with the academy being judged to require special measures at its previous inspection. Inspectors deemed the monitoring visit a section 5 inspection at the end of the first day.
- Inspectors observed 30 lessons, some jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors met with senior staff, a representative of the management board, other staff, groups of students and a representative of the local authority. There were also telephone conversations with the Chair of the Management Board, who is also the representative and regional director of Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), and a representative of Hampshire local authority who oversees education provision on the island.
- The academy's development planning and self-evaluation documents, policies and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- The 24 responses to Parent View were taken into account.

## Inspection team

Alan Taylor-Bennett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Bull

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- Sandown Bay Academy is larger than the average-size school. It is sponsored by Academies Enterprise Trust (AET).
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs (as defined by the previous Special Educational Needs Code of Practice), is near the national average. The proportion supported at school action is also average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is similar to the national average. Some students are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The academy serves a community with relatively little ethnic or cultural diversity. Nearly all students are of White British heritage.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 attend alternative provision for part of their timetable. Nine students attend WISE workshop, an engagement programme teaching woodwork and mechanics, the majority for half a day each week. One Year 11 student attends full time at HTP Training and is following a catering course.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The academy has a special unit to support the needs of up to 12 students with autistic spectrum disorders.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, ensuring all middle leaders have the skills to help with this, so it is at least good with examples of outstanding practice in every subject by:
  - using assessment better throughout lessons to give teachers a clear understanding of how well students understand the work at key points
  - responding to students' needs by providing work that offers appropriate levels of challenge to everyone
  - requiring students to work hard in lessons to make rapid and secure progress
  - using the good systems developed recently to enable teachers to work together to offer each other support and challenge to develop their skills to a high level
  - making use of the links developing with other schools to challenge practice and stimulate thinking about new teaching strategies.
- Improve achievement, especially in mathematics, by:
  - making sure that students currently in Years 8 and 9 are very well supported so that achievement improves quickly and they gain more confidence about their learning
  - accelerating the learning of disadvantaged students to catch up faster with other students of their ages
  - improving students' literacy skills by using strong and clear strategies consistently across the academy
  - making sure that the regular analyses of students' achievements convey the important messages about achievement clearly so staff find it easy to plan their teaching to meet students' needs.
- Make sure that all students behave at least as well as the majority do now, by:
  - making all teaching challenging, relevant and stimulating, as well as supportive, so that students enjoy learning more for its own sake
  - embedding high expectations through the consistent application of the academy's behaviour policy.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- The Principal has provided very strong leadership since arriving at the academy nearly a year ago. He quickly and accurately identified what needed improving, gained the respect and trust of the sponsors, the local authority, the management board, staff, students and parents, and began to transform the academy. There have been very significant changes already to the staffing, structures, and organisation of the academy. The result is that this is now an improving academy, across all aspects of its work, and one which has the capacity to continue to improve.
- Senior staff and middle leaders are now clear about their roles. The majority are demonstrating they can rise to the challenges in delivering the Principal's vision. Some are beginning to take a strong lead in delivering improvements in their areas, but others are still dependent on the Principal for a strong lead. A small number are struggling to make the improvements required, but are being well supported by senior leaders to learn how to do this.
- The Principal has made imaginative responses to the significant challenge of staff recruitment, and many staff appointments have been successful. The academy is giving great emphasis to developing its current staff. For example, unqualified teachers and cover supervisors are encouraged to undertake training, including some following a programme of teacher training through the academy's involvement in the island's teacher training programme. Others are supported to take on leadership roles. Departments are sometimes grouped together to maximise the impact of good leadership. This work is often successful. Sometimes, however, compromises lead to weak provision.
- The quality of teaching is well managed. It is judged accurately by senior staff and increasingly by middle leaders. Many staff work with a small number of their colleagues to address specific aspects of their teaching, and bring about improvements. Others are supported individually by good or outstanding teachers in the academy. A few are on special programmes of support designed to bring about important improvements rapidly. All of this has been effective so far.
- The curriculum provides for the needs of students well. It involves a very wide range of courses and there are specific 'pathways' for students with different academic and vocational skills. Provision includes the separate sciences for the more able, BTEC courses in art, music, and sport, and vocational courses, for example in horticulture and child development. Students gain a good understanding of life in modern day Britain and the need for tolerance towards issues such as diversity and equalities.
- Students receive good information, advice and guidance about which curriculum pathway is most appropriate for them, and good quality information is provided about further education, training and employment, both in the curriculum and to individuals. The academy has a real sense of ambition for its students: they are encouraged to aim high. There is a range of interesting opportunities, including activity weeks on the Isle of Arran, day trips to East Dene, drama productions and performances at The Bestival.
- Senior leaders are highly attentive to monitoring the achievement of all groups of students and intervene when necessary. Specific groups and individuals are targeted for experiences and opportunities which they would not usually consider due to under-confidence, or their parents not being able to afford them. As a consequence, there is now equality of opportunity in the academy for students from all backgrounds.
- The safety and welfare of students who attend alternative provision are good and are carefully monitored; the academy keeps in close contact with these providers and maintains oversight of students' well-being and achievement.
- There is a clear strategy for how the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funds are used, and information for parents is provided on the academy's website. The money is spent well and is bringing about year-on-year improvements in the achievements of disadvantaged students and those who arrive at the academy with very low levels of literacy and numeracy. For example, special provision to improve the attendance of these groups has been successful. More disadvantaged students joined the sixth form as a result of targeted advice and guidance, and the provision of specialist equipment for use in the curriculum has helped students to achieve in, and enjoy, a wider range of learning activities.
- All aspects of the systems to ensure the safety, safeguarding and welfare of students are of good quality and are maintained with rigorous attention to detail. There is close checking and vetting of staff and other adults who work with students, good and regular safeguarding training, and a strong culture of responding rapidly and appropriately to child protection issues.
- The academy is now working more closely with parents. The Parents' Forum is a lively and effective group which offers useful challenge to the academy around aspects of its development planning and how well targets are met.

- The quality of support provided by the sponsors, AET, has improved over the last year. Around the time of the first visit it was too distant and 'light touch'; since then the sponsors have offered the academy effective strategic and practical support and have helped the Principal to bring about the changes that were required. This includes subject-specific, and literacy and numeracy, adviser support, assistance with human resources, finance and buildings and site development, the opportunity to network across other AET schools, and the good advice and support from the academy improvement adviser.
- Hampshire local education authority has also provided very valuable support for the academy. It has brokered: useful links with two local teaching alliances; leadership support from senior staff in two other schools on the mainland; offered good subject-specific support; assistance developing provision for students with disabilities and special educational needs; and involved the Principal in the development of an island-wide strategy for school improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The management board replaced the previous governing body. It is a much smaller group that maintains a very close working relationship with the Principal and senior staff. The Chair is a representative of the sponsors and is also regional director for AET. She brings significant educational experience to the board. All members of the management board scrutinise the academy's progress against its development plans, as well as exercising all of the legal responsibilities of a governing body. They hold senior staff to account frequently and appropriately assertively for the improvements that are required. They have a very good understanding of the vital importance of teaching being consistently good or better and maintain close oversight of its quality and its impact on achievement. They work closely with the Principal to ensure that good teaching is rewarded and that the performance management policy is used to benefit the experiences of students in the academy.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. This is because not all students behave well enough.
- Most students show an understanding of the academy's expectations of them in lessons and around the site. But some move through the corridors and between buildings noisily, and there is some pushing and play-fighting at times. A few students cannot moderate their behaviour and need continual oversight and reminders to behave well. There is often a lot of litter after break and lunch times because a minority do not use the bins provided.
- In lessons, the majority of students are willing to learn and to do what is expected of them. Too many, however, do not rise to the challenge of difficult work confidently enough. As a consequence, learning is sometimes punctuated by chatter and a lack of urgency. When the teaching is stimulating and the work interesting, the vast majority of students are drawn in, will participate well and enjoy the lesson.
- Students say that there is little bullying in the academy now. This is because of a successful and high profile response to this issue over the last year. Parents are happier now with the academy's work to tackle any bullying that takes place.
- Attendance has improved recently and is now near the national average. This is because of the effective work of the academy in tackling persistent absence, and students' sense of the academy being a better place to be. The improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged students is particularly significant.
- The use of exclusions as a sanction is becoming much less frequent as teaching improves, staffing becomes more stable and teachers use the academy's rewards and discipline policy better. The number of students excluded so far this year is about a fifth of the number in the same period last year. There is some inconsistency still, however, in teachers' application of the good systems and procedures in place, and opportunities to raise expectations of behaviour are not always taken.

### Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. As a consequence, students say they feel safe in the academy, and they are well looked after.
- There is good curriculum information provided about potential risks to students' safety, and good health and safety practices are followed in lessons. Students are taught well about e-safety and specifically the risks associated with the use of social media.
- Staff exercise appropriate diligence in practical subjects and work with students to educate them about the nature of specific risks. For example, experiments in science are conducted safely because students understand the specific nature of the dangers involved and have been taught to handle apparatus safely. Some staff working in areas outside their immediate experience and expertise, in workshops for example, would benefit from extra training.

**The quality of teaching****requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching in the academy has improved since the last inspection so that more is good or better and very little is now inadequate.
- Teaching is not yet good because it does not promote good learning consistently. The best teaching engages students' interest, and enables students to connect new learning with their existing understanding. It challenges what they thought they understood already with new and interesting information. When this happens, students rise to the challenge and make rapid progress. This was seen, for example, in a computing lesson where students were encouraged to dismantle a base unit and identify the nature and purpose of all of the components. This generated much interest, and learning was lively and secure.
- The vast majority of teachers want the best for students. At best, this translates into high expectations and a real sense of urgency in students' attitudes to learning. However, too many lessons involve students following a clear lead given by the teacher, but not engaging with enough enthusiasm. For example, in one mathematics lesson observed, students were set a range of questions with the aim of giving them practice in basic techniques of algebra, number work and shape and space. The questions did not offer sufficient challenge to everyone, and there were no alternative, more difficult ones to try. This meant that students were rather half-hearted in their attempts, and became easily distracted.
- Many students arrive at the academy with low literacy skills, including weak spoken English with a limited range of technical and general vocabulary, and basic sentence structures. The academy is well aware of the importance of addressing this and has given much thought to teaching these skills across all subjects, as well as in English. There are signs of some success; work in books is now better organised, and some books show students becoming better at writing at length. However, some teachers are not yet supporting this policy consistently enough.
- Teaching assistants are making a better contribution to students' learning. Some good examples of staff supporting individual students, and challenging them to achieve, were seen in lesson observations, and these staff are now working more closely with teachers to adapt the work for individuals.

**The achievement of pupils****requires improvement**

- Achievement is not yet good because although achievement in some subjects has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good, students' achievement in too many still requires improvement.
- Students' achievements in English are now good. A higher proportion of students than nationally made the progress expected of them by end of Key Stage 4 this year, and a good number made even better progress. This meant that, despite students entering the academy in Year 7 with lower than average Key Stage 2 scores, a greater than average proportion left with a grade C or better in English.
- Achievement in mathematics is improving more slowly. Outcomes in Key Stage 4 in 2014 were broadly similar to 2013 and before. The quality of students' current learning in mathematics is improving, however, and is no longer inadequate.
- The effects of previously poor teaching and learning are still apparent in Years 8 and 9. The morale of some students is not yet good, and they still need to catch up in some subjects in order to achieve well in Key Stage 4.
- More students eligible for the pupil premium have made the progress expected of them by the end of Key Stage 4 over the last three years, and the gaps in attainment between them and other students are reducing. These gaps remain higher than average, however, because the steps being taken to close them are still relatively new. There was the equivalent of just over a whole grade difference between the attainment of students eligible for the pupil premium and others in both English and mathematics in 2014.
- Students follow a wide range of courses and the overwhelming majority leave with useful qualifications, not all of which are recorded in the national performance tables. For example, some good work is done in BTEC child development and in horticulture, which benefits those students and gives them the capacity to move on to further education and training, and into employment.
- The most able are now challenged better and expectations of their achievement are higher. There is an awareness developed early in Key Stage 4 of the significance of good GCSE grades for university applications, as part of the academy's programme of raising aspirations. Sixth form students speak with students in Key Stage 4 who should be aiming to go to university. These measures are improving students' attitudes to learning.



- The practice of entering students early for examinations has been discontinued, except when it is to the benefit of individual students who may be at risk of not completing full time education. It was found to be limiting the ambition of middle ability students; some were content to achieve a grade C early and did not understand the benefits of continuing studying to improve their grade.
- Students with disabilities and special educational needs are now making better progress as a result of a thorough and extensive reorganisation of provision in this area. Outcomes for students supported at school action improved in 2014, but those supported at school action plus and with statements have been targeted for further improvement. Overall, the achievement of these students is no longer inadequate, but requires improvement if it is to become good. The new systems in place to support these students have much better capacity to ensure that their achievements by the end of Key Stage 4 will improve.
- Students supported by the autistic spectrum resource centre are becoming better integrated into the general life of the academy. They are supported to gain experience and confidence in more challenging situations. Their learning needs are met well by the well-qualified staff in this unit.
- The achievement of students in alternative provision is monitored closely, and the small number involved currently are benefiting from the specialised courses they are following. There is appropriate provision for the development of their literacy and numeracy skills; the vast majority take GCSEs in English and mathematics and some other subjects. As a consequence, their progress matches that of their peers in school.
- Special provision to boost the literacy skills of those arriving with low Key Stage 2 scores in reading and writing is having impact, and a good proportion of students make faster than average gains in their reading ages. The academy is beginning to use a wider range of strategies to speed up the progress these students make.

### The sixth form provision

is good

- Students make good progress and achieve well in the sixth form because of the good teaching. Students achieve good grades in many subjects, including physics, mathematics, English, fine art, drama and history. Outcomes in a few other subjects, such as geography, media studies and travel and tourism, are less strong, but are usually still broadly in line with national averages. Students also make good progress in level 3 BTEC qualifications, particularly sport and exercise science.
- Much of the teaching encourages students to develop intellectual curiosity, and to apply their learning in new contexts; as a consequence, students can develop a deep understanding of topics. Students spoken with showed great appreciation of how much their teachers are prepared to support them outside of lesson time.
- A good proportion of students move on from Year 12 into Year 13. All of those that still need to secure good passes in English or mathematics GCSE follow appropriate courses in the sixth form and the conversion rates are good, particularly in English.
- The sixth form is well led. There is clear ambition for all students to achieve well and to set their sights high. A 'MEDROX' group strongly supports everyone considering medicine, Russell Group and Oxford and Cambridge applications. Several students have taken up places at Oxford and Cambridge over recent years. Other opportunities exist to visit and take part in the work of several universities, such as Southampton, Portsmouth and Chichester. There are good links nurtured via social networking between ex-students and current students to provide information and advice about courses and applications, and very good support for UCAS applications.
- There is a positive culture of friendship and mutual respect in the sixth form. The academy works well to keep students safe. Many sixth formers play an important part in supporting younger students. Several have been involved in anti-bullying programmes, serve on the academy council, contribute to buddying and mentoring, are sports leaders, and support reading catch-up programmes.
- Sixth form students say that they are well supported, both during their time in the sixth form and in terms of preparing them to move on. However, more should be done to deepen their understanding of different faiths, cultures, and equality issues so they can do even more to support younger students.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136751
<b>Local authority</b>	Isle of Wight
<b>Inspection number</b>	446190

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1405
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	260
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Beverley Perin
<b>Principal</b>	Eric Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 January 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01983 409142
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