

Ryde Academy

Pell Lane, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 3LN

Inspection dates

23–24 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students' achievement requires improvement. Not enough students make the progress that is expected of them.
- Although the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students and their peers is narrowing, it is not closing fast enough.
- Teaching is not yet strong enough to ensure that all students make good progress. A minority of teachers' expectations of students are too low; therefore, the targets set for students are sometimes too easy for them to achieve.
- Teachers do not always make sure that students make improvements to their work following teacher feedback and marking.
- Students' attitudes towards learning require improvement. Some students lose confidence and not give their best in lessons where teaching is less strong or when the academy's behaviour management policy is not applied consistently.
- Some subject leaders do not routinely check the work of their teams nor hold them to account for the quality of teaching and learning.
- Students' views are not routinely used to plan or sustain improvements in the work of the academy.
- The academy's sponsor does not always provide consistently timely or appropriate support for academy leaders, including governors.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Too many students have not made good enough progress, especially those in Year 13.

The school has the following strengths

- The determined principal and new senior staff have been tenacious in tackling teachers' under performance; teaching is now better for students at the academy.
- As a consequence of recently strengthened leadership, students with disabilities or special educational needs are now making good progress.
- The most able students have been supported well to achieve the highest grades at GCSE. The proportion of students achieving grades A and A* is improving.
- Attendance has improved and is now good. Exclusions have fallen to below the national average.
- Students' behaviour around the school and at social times is good. Students feel safe, are polite, courteous and respectful. Students want to learn and are highly appreciative of teaching that helps them to make progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 22 lessons to observe the progress and engagement of students. Two lesson observations were jointly undertaken with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also visited some lessons for short periods, scrutinised a selection of books to review the quality of students’ work and observed the behaviour and conduct of students at lesson change over and at social times.
- Meetings were held with the principal, senior leaders, middle leaders and a group of teachers. Further meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the academy’s sponsor. A telephone conversation was also held with the regional director of the academy’s sponsor.
- Inspectors talked to students in class and formally met with a group of students from each year group.
- An inspector met with a group of parents during the inspection and took into account the 50 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team took account of 61 questionnaires completed by staff expressing their views about the academy.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the academy’s view of its own performance, improvement plans and records of checks on the quality of teaching. They also studied information about students’ progress, attainment, behaviour, attendance and their safeguarding.

Inspection team

Caroline Dearden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephanie Matthews	Additional Inspector
Venetia Mayman	Additional Inspector
Charles Joseph	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- Ryde Academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school with a sixth form.
- The academy is sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET).
- The majority of students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus, with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- A small number of students attend courses at the local Military Preparation College. The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- At the time of this inspection, the principal had been in substantive post for two terms. Four senior leaders joined as recently as September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to raise attainment and increase rates of progress, especially for disadvantaged students, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers fully engage in the professional development opportunities provided so that the good practice in the academy is shared for the benefit of all students
 - those eligible for additional funding make the same progress as other students
 - all teachers consistently set high expectations of students and provide challenge and support for students when their work is not good enough
 - teachers always check that students regularly make amendments and improvements to their work following feedback from teachers and other adults
 - all teachers establish positive relationships with students, building on their desire to learn and ensuring that attitudes to learning are consistently good.
- Further improve behaviour and safety by ensuring that:
 - teachers apply the academy's behaviour management system consistently
 - implementing more fully the new strategies to track and monitor the progress of students in the care of the local authority.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders make sure that all middle leaders, and especially in mathematics, modern foreign languages and humanities, check the work of teachers and take action to ensure that teachers' work supports students to make good progress
 - further developing student governance so that the views of students are routinely used to help plan and sustain improvements in the academy
 - ensuring that the academy sponsor provides consistent and timely and appropriate support for senior and middle leaders, including governors.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as teaching and achievement are not yet good. There is too much difference in how well students do in some subjects. Until recently, leaders have done too little to make sure that students, particularly those who are disadvantaged, make faster progress and that teaching gets better.
- Not all subject leaders, and especially those new to post, understand the strengths and weaknesses of their departments, hold their teachers to account for the achievement of the students they teach and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to make sure that students' work is correctly assessed. The leadership of mathematics, modern foreign languages and humanities, in particular, does not demonstrate the skills and confidence to develop their teams, particularly in relation to improving the quality of teaching and reliability of their checks on how well students are doing.
- Children in the care of the local authority have not been sufficiently well known by the academy and the academy's sponsor has not ensured accurate accountability for this group of students. Disjointed monitoring of these students resulted in their achievement and attendance not being checked often enough.
- Checks on the quality of teaching have often failed to take account of the impact of teaching on students' achievement. Not all teachers have been willing to engage in the training and development opportunities provided by the academy. This means that some teaching still requires improvement.
- The academy's sponsor has not always provided consistently effective or timely support for leaders; governors have brokered their own support from the local authority. However, the principal does have regular contact with the regional director of the academy's sponsor.
- In the short time since his appointment, the principal has established a clear vision for the academy. He is a determined and capable leader who is very well supported by a new team of senior leaders. The work of this team is effective in leading the improvements in the academy.
- Newly established systems ensure that teachers' strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified and underperformance is quickly tackled. Key staff provide high quality training and effective support for teachers to help them improve their practice. As a result, teaching is improving and is now better for students currently at the academy.
- Effective performance management has been used well to tackle inadequacies in teaching. Management decisions about teachers' movements up the salary scale are now rigorous and there are clear links between teachers' performance and pay rises.
- The curriculum is becoming better matched to the aspirations and needs of all students. The practice of early entry for GCSEs has been withdrawn and students now follow option subjects for the full two years. There are now more opportunities for students to study a range of subjects and, consequently, the number of students not in education, employment or training is low.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is improving steadily. Students are polite and show respect for one another. There are well-planned opportunities within the curriculum, and in assemblies, for students to reflect upon and discuss topical issues and develop a sense of right and wrong. Consequently, students are not only being prepared well for their future lives but also for life in modern Britain.
- The school is now making better use of its additional funding to help support eligible students. This is evident in the way in which students are supported to develop their reading and writing skills during lessons and through specialist support from well-qualified learning support assistants.
- Student governors have recently been elected and are confident that they will be able to represent the views of students and help to improve the work of the academy further. However, students' views are not yet regularly used to plan or sustain improvements.
- Systems to ensure students are safe are effective and meet all statutory requirements. Rigorous checks are undertaken when staff are appointed. Staff are well trained in child protection and referrals are managed effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides appropriate support and challenge for the academy. The governors have the necessary experience and skills to monitor the work of the academy. Governors hold senior leaders to account for the work of the academy. Governors receive regular information about the academy's work and use this in addition to their own visits to the academy to identify the strengths and areas for improvement. They have received good training and support from the local authority to ensure that safeguarding is effective and to help them improve their understanding of

performance data. Governors are rigorous in their work to ensure that teachers' performance management is effective; pay rises are therefore well linked to students' progress. Governors understand how the pupil premium has been allocated and now have systems in place to evaluate the impact of this spending.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Although students behave well around the academy, and many behave well in lessons, they do not always demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning. This because teaching is not always engaging their interests.
- Inspectors confirm students' and parents' concerns about the inconsistencies in teachers' use of the academy's behaviour management systems. This happens when teaching is less than effective or when classroom relationships are poor.
- Attitudes to learning are at their very best when teachers have carefully built up good relationships, students understand what they are doing and feel confident to take on more demanding work.
- Students in all year groups say that bullying is very rare and, when it does happen, it is dealt with swiftly and appropriately by academy staff. Students know who to go to if they need help and all are able to name the staff with responsibility for child protection.
- Good use is made of curriculum time to teach students about the harmful impact of derogatory, homophobic or sexually orientated language. No incidents of name calling or use of inappropriate language were seen during the inspection and very few have been recorded.
- As a consequence of strong leadership, and improved systems for tracking and monitoring students' absence, attendance is improving and is now higher than average. The number of students who are persistently absent is reducing and is now lower than average.
- As a result of careful work since the last inspection, the number of students excluded from school on a fixed-term basis has reduced sharply and is now below average for all groups of students.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement because new strategies to track and monitor children who are in the care of the local authority have yet to have full impact.
- Students say that they feel safe. They are well supervised at school; staff and prefects on duty are easily recognisable by the 'hi-vis' jackets they wear.
- The academy makes very good use of 'drop down days' to provide age-related activities, including use of social networks, to inform students about how to keep themselves safe. For example, students in Year 10 had the opportunity to learn about the dangers of 'grooming' by working with a drama group.
- The single central record is meticulously maintained and all members of staff and governors receive regular training on child protection.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in teaching, which still exist within and between subjects, explain why most students have not learned well enough. The amount of good teaching is not enough for students to make more rapid progress.
- Observations of learning in lessons by inspectors, and evidence from students' books over time, show that teaching requires improvement because a few teachers' expectations of what their students should be achieving are too low to support students' good progress.
- A few teachers do not use their subject knowledge well enough to motivate or excite their students to achieve well. This is most evident in humanities, including humanities in the sixth form.
- Too often, all students complete the same work. This means that it is too easy for some and does not help them to make good progress. For others, the work is confusing because they do not get a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly and, in many cases, students find their teachers' comments helpful. However, the approach to marking is too variable. This means that students do not consistently know what they have done well or what they need to do to improve. Opportunities to move students' learning forward are sometimes missed because students do not always regularly respond to their

teachers' marking and work that has been improved or corrected is sometimes overlooked.

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Inadequate teaching has been virtually eradicated and the proportion of good teaching has increased. There is now strong evidence of good and effective practice within the academy which can be shared for the benefit of all students.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers ensure that there is an appropriate level of challenge to help students make gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in a Year 11 science lesson, students were supported to make very good progress because the practical on stopping distances also helped them to understand the conservation of momentum.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because students do not make consistently good progress in all subjects.
- Students enter the academy with knowledge and skills consistently below those expected for their age. In 2013 the proportion achieving five A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, was below that seen nationally. Unvalidated data for 2014 indicate that the gap will narrow slightly. As the proportion of students making the progress they should in English and mathematics is increasing, achievement is clearly improving for all those currently attending the academy.
- The historic practice of early GCSE entry for students as young as Year 9 has ceased. However, the impact of this meant that many students were not given opportunity to improve their results because courses were withdrawn from the curriculum. Consequently, outcomes in 2014 were lower than they should have been.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students eligible for the pupil premium requires improvement. In 2013, in English and mathematics, the gap between these students and their peers was the equivalent of a whole GCSE grade. Evidence provided by the academy indicates that the gaps between these students and others, both nationally and in the school, are starting to narrow because students' literacy levels are improving. However, the speed at which the gap is closing is too slow.
- The achievement of the most able students is improving and is now good. More of them achieved grades A* to A in 2014 than in previous years. This is because they receive suitably demanding work which better prepares them for examinations and helps them develop their knowledge and understanding more fully.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress. Recent strengthening of the leadership of this aspect of the academy's work has ensured that these students are well known. Learning support assistants provide effective in-class support. They also deliver carefully planned individual or small group work.
- The small number of students who attend courses at the Military Preparation College attend well and make good progress because this provision is carefully matched to their needs.
- The work of the academy to strengthen students' literacy skills is good. Students enjoy reading and are provided with daily opportunities to read. In some cases, this is cleverly linked to subject content which helps students to deepen their understanding.
- Tracking of students' progress towards their targets has been strengthened and is now regular. In most subjects, especially English, moderation of students' work and standardisation of teachers' marking ensure that assessment data are accurate and reliable. This means that, when students fall behind, the need for additional help is quickly identified and put in place. However, this practice is not consistent across all subjects.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- In the sixth form, teaching requires improvement because students are not routinely challenged sufficiently to think deeply. At times, and especially in humanities, teachers' insecure subject knowledge means that learning is not structured effectively enough to enable students to make good progress.
- A small number of students in Year 13 are not following courses that enable them to make suitable choices after Year 13. The sixth form curriculum has been reviewed and, consequently, more students are now taking courses that are suited to their needs.
- The academy's sponsor did not provide sufficient support for the planned joint sixth form provision even though the identified partner academy has the same sponsor. This is why the sixth form curriculum review is continuing into a second stage. Steps are underway to improve choices for 2015.
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive. Actions taken by senior leaders have improved the accuracy

of assessment and increased the regularity of checks on student progress. Therefore, the achievement of sixth form students is improving.

- Support for students in making choices on entry to the sixth form has improved and more students who have begun courses are continuing their studies into Year 13 than in the past.

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	136753
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	447726

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
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	1010
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leslie Holmes
Principal	Rory Fox
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2013
Telephone number	01983 567331
Fax number	01983 618400
Email address	contactus@rydeacademy.org

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