

Lodge Park Academy

Shetland Way, Corby, NN17 2JH

Inspection dates 18–19 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good 2
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 do not make good progress in a wide range of subjects, including mathematics.
- Although the quality of teaching has improved, it is not yet consistently good across subjects or year groups.
- Teachers do not always make full use of the good information they have about students' achievement to match learning activities and support closely to their abilities, particularly for the most and least able students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students is not as good as that of other students. Leaders have not checked the effectiveness of the actions taken to improve the results for these students, particularly in relation to mathematics.
- Teachers do not tackle students' misconceptions well in mathematics, and do not give them enough chance to practise mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers' marking does not always help students to improve their work. They do not routinely check to make sure students respond to their comments and advice.
- Leaders have introduced a range of initiatives to improve teaching and raise achievement, but they have not yet had a full impact. Neither the senior leaders nor the governors have checked their effectiveness or value for money.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers benefit from access to good support from the David Ross Education Trust. They are growing in effectiveness.
- Leaders have improved the behaviour of students. The academy is safe and secure. Attitudes to learning have improved and support better achievement. The majority of students are polite, courteous and considerate.
- The curriculum matches well to students' abilities and interests. Extensive sport, art, music and social, cultural and moral experiences support their personal growth.
- Good leadership of the sixth form has led to better teaching and good achievement. A wider range of subjects means that students now have more choice. They receive impartial careers advice and good support when applying to university, training or employment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons. Eight of these observations were completed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed students at breaks and lunchtimes and attended tutorial periods.
- Discussions were held with students, staff, governors, the headteacher, and a representative from the David Ross Education Trust.
- Inspectors took account of the 78 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of 49 responses to staff questionnaires.
- A wide range of documents was examined including samples of students' work, information about students' progress, the academy's development plan and self-evaluation, records of any poor behaviour, records of governors' meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to students read, and observed reading support lessons and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector
Dorothy Martin	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Macfarlane	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lodge Park Academy converted to become an academy on 1 January 2013. When its predecessor school Lodge Park Technology College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was deemed to require special measures.
- The academy is larger than the average-sized secondary academy.
- Most students are White British. The proportion of minority ethnic students is average, although the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- At around 29%, the proportion of disadvantaged students supported by the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free academy meals.
- About 3% of the students are disabled or have special educational needs. This is well below average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The academy is part of the David Ross Education Trust chain.
- Five students in Key Stage 4 currently attend off-site courses at the Complementary Education Academy.
- The academy's 'maths master classes' are supported by Uppingham Public School.
- The Principal was appointed in April 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and make teaching good across the academy by:
 - evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken to raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching
 - consistently marking work in line with the academy policy, so comments indicate clear next steps and students respond to advice and suggestions
 - strengthening teaching in mathematics in order to build students' resilience and ensure that their misconceptions are corrected
 - giving students more opportunities to practise basic mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects
 - making full use of information about students' attainment and progress to set learning activities that challenge students of all abilities to do well.

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

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Despite some emerging strengths, leadership and management have not been strong enough to ensure that teaching and achievement are good across the academy.
- The Principal leads the academy well. She receives good support from governors, parents, staff and students. Clear, effective strategies for improving teaching are beginning to take effect.
- The performance of staff is managed well. Their individual targets are linked to the academy development plan and help to drive improvement. The academy's evaluation of its own work is accurate but the effectiveness of the strategies used to bring about improvement has not been evaluated.
- The academy has addressed the key issues identified by the last inspection. Teaching is better and results have improved, particularly in English. Senior leaders are working to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics to ensure that all students make good progress, but this has not yet had a full impact.
- The David Ross Education Trust is providing good support for leaders at all levels to raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching. Subject leaders are growing in skill and effectiveness through guidance from senior leaders, participation in joint lesson observations, and checking students' work and progress with the senior team.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning systematically. A good programme of guidance and training for staff is helping to improve teaching. Regular checks on students' work and careful tracking of their progress help to identify any underperformance. Leaders are growing in their understanding of how to check work and ensure staff follow the agreed marking and assessment policy, but teachers are not yet marking students' work effectively.
- The academy has developed a range of 'learning pathways' for students so they can access learning in line with their ability. The range of academic and work-related subjects caters for a variety of interests in both Key Stages 4 and 5.
- The curriculum includes a good range of artistic, technical, cultural, mathematical and linguistic subjects. Classroom learning is enhanced through assemblies, personal, social and health education, visiting speakers and extra activities at lunchtime, after school and during the extended day, covering sport, drama, music and art. In addition, educational visits and residential trips help to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The academy has taken some effective measures to ensure that all groups of students have an equal opportunity to succeed. It has effectively tackled inappropriate behaviour, reducing the level of discrimination and bullying some students experienced in the past. Students from all backgrounds and abilities are helped to get on together and an increasing proportion has begun to make good progress. The pupil premium is used to provide extra activities and academic support for eligible students. These opportunities are supporting an increasing proportion of students to develop good social skills and study habits which, in turn, are beginning to help students to make better progress in their learning.
- Leaders have developed good relationships with parents and carers. They say that the academy is led well, and support its drive to raise students' aspirations and improve results.
- The progress and attendance of students studying off site are monitored closely, so they are safe and progress as well as their peers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a range of knowledge, skills and experience to their role. They are dedicated and ambitious for students to do well. Governors monitor students' behaviour and academic progress

against set targets. They understand and interpret information on students' progress and performance because they are well trained in this and other areas of governance.

- Governors understand the academy's strengths and areas for development. They effectively monitor progress in implementing the initiatives in the academy development plan, including those aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning, through reports from the headteacher at governing body meetings. However, governors have not yet checked how well the actions taken are raising standards.
- Governors understand the value of good teaching in securing high standards. They manage the headteacher's performance closely. The Principal's own targets are used to determine the targets of other staff and help to drive improvement. Any pay rises or promotion for teachers are linked appropriately to students' progress and good teaching.
- Governors make sure the academy's safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet statutory requirements. They have not checked sufficiently that the use of the pupil premium is effective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. They have positive attitudes to learning and their relationships with adults in the academy are harmonious. Students have a good understanding of right and wrong, and the majority behave in a mature, polite and courteous manner. They show a good level of consideration, for example by holding doors open for others.
- In lessons where high expectations are set, students respond well and listen politely to teachers and each other, taking turns to make contributions to discussions. They value the opportunities to serve the academy as house captains and junior leaders.
- Rewards are used effectively to motivate students to work hard and achieve well, and the vast majority respond well across all the key stages. Year 7 students spoke with pride of receiving credits. Year 11 students were keen to exchange these for rewards. The sharp reduction in fixed-term exclusions seen in 2013 has continued and there are now far fewer. Care is taken to record and report unacceptable behaviour and keep parents and carers informed.
- Students enjoy coming to the academy. Attendance is below the national average but improving steadily. The academy has forged good links with parents and closely monitors the attendance of all groups of students. Students attend academy punctually and move between classes well so that lessons start on time and continue without disruption. The pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the attendance of eligible students.
- The academy works well to support disabled students and those who have special educational needs and/or challenging behaviour. Good links with parents and carers and external agencies, and the full involvement of students in decisions about the support they receive, result in clear support plans. Students are developing better techniques to help manage their own behaviour.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The academy helps students to understand risk, including when using the internet. Students feel safe in the academy. They spoke of the good improvements to behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Students say that although there is some unpleasantness in the form of name-calling, they are confident that teachers will deal with it when it is reported. Any rare incidents of a racist nature are reported and dealt with firmly. Parents expressed overwhelming support for the academy and the improvements to behaviour. About 97% of those who completed questionnaires said that their child was safe at the academy, and 90% felt that behaviour was managed well.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving, teachers do not use the information they have about what students know

and can do to match learning activities closely to their abilities. As a result, some complete work which is too hard or too easy. There is sometimes not enough support for the least able and not enough stretch and challenge for the most able to support good progress.

- A significant number of students struggle to grasp the basics in mathematics and this hinders their progress. Students lack resilience when working to solve problems because they have not mastered the basics. Teachers do not always explain answers clearly, and students do not have sufficient opportunities across a range of subjects to practise basic mathematical skills.
- Teachers do not use the school's marking policy consistently well when they mark students' work. Comments do not clearly show students what they need to do to improve their work and teachers do not routinely check that students respond to these comments and make the necessary improvements.
- Most teachers set high expectations regarding the quality of work and presentation expected from students. They manage classes well, and students rise to the challenge, behave well and show good levels of cooperation with staff. This leads to a positive environment in the classroom where students feel confident to engage with learning and ask questions.
- Regular meetings to check students' progress allows staff to identify those who are not progressing as well as expected. Support through small group and one-to-one sessions helps students close the gaps. These sessions are having a good effect and students are making better progress as a result.
- Teachers make effective use of a range of questions to probe students' understanding and draw out learning. Students respond with insight, enjoyment and enthusiasm and contribute thoughtful answers, as seen in a Year 13 lesson which explored 'plastic' theatre in Tennessee Williams' play *A Street Car Named Desire*.
- Where there is good collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants, there is effective support for students who have a disability or special educational need. For instance, in a Year 7 lesson on medieval castles and warfare, a teaching assistant led a small group in discussion using well-designed resources. This led to a deeper knowledge and understanding, as well as, to an improvement in their speaking and listening skills.
- Reading is taught well and students demonstrate a good grasp of phonics and other reading strategies. Some students explained how they were helped to make better progress as a result of the additional support they receive. Regular use of the academy library during lessons exposes students to books, and the use of a systematic reading programme is building their confidence and skills.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the academy with below-average attainment, and in 2014 they left Year 11 with below-average attainment in a broad range of GCSE subjects, including English and mathematics. There has been some improvement to the quality of teaching but it is not yet consistently good enough to speed up students' progress.
- In 2014, an above-average proportion of students in Year 11 made good progress in English. A well-below-average proportion made good progress in mathematics. The academy's tracking information shows that more students are making or exceeding expected progress this year. Students are on track to achieve higher standards in both English and mathematics in 2015.
- The attainment of disadvantaged students eligible for the pupil premium funding has not been as high as that of other students. In 2014, the eligible Year 11 students were, on average, more than a GCSE grade behind other students in English and mathematics. Well-planned support is beginning to take effect, although the effectiveness of these strategies has not yet been checked. Academy information currently shows that the progress made by eligible students is improving, and the attainment gap compared to their classmates, and all students nationally, is reducing in English and mathematics.

- In 2014, some of the most able students did not make good progress. The academy recognises that this group of students did not reach their full potential and that learning in the classroom does not always stretch and challenge them. Tighter checking of their progress and improved support through enrichment activities such as the mathematics master classes with Uppingham Public School are enabling a higher proportion to make good progress.
- Some of the disabled students and those who have special educational needs did not make enough progress in 2014, particularly in mathematics. Progress is improving this year due to good support in the form of academic mentoring, small group sessions and after-academy catch-up classes. However, learning activities in the classroom are often not closely matched to students' abilities.
- Year 7 'catch-up' funding for students who join the academy with limited attainment in English and mathematics is used to address gaps in students' learning. This aims to help them develop literacy and mathematical skills that are appropriate to their age. The impact of this support is good. Academy data show that the majority of students in Year 7 make good progress.
- The progress made by minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is good. These students have positive attitudes to learning and benefit from additional support with reading and writing where required.
- In 2013, some students were entered early for GCSE mathematics to give them the opportunity to improve their grades. The policy was not as successful as hoped. Students did not achieve as well as they might have done if they had studied the subject in greater depth.

The sixth form provision is good

- The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Leaders have a clear plan for improvement. The curriculum has been remodelled so that it caters well for all abilities and interests.
- Students benefit from studying academic or work-related subjects, as appropriate. They have good impartial careers advice and progress to university, employment or training. The academy carefully tracks the destination of leavers. An increasing number gained entry to Russell Group and other universities this year. Retention rates have improved and achievement is rising on both academic and work-related courses so that it is now good.
- The behaviour and safety of students are good. Students are smart in their appearance, participate well in academy life and contribute to developing younger students' personal and academic skills. They attend punctually and with mature attitudes.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved and is now good. Teachers plan learning carefully and make sure students have challenging work in line with their differing abilities.

What inspection judgements mean

Academy		
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 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>

Academy details

Unique reference number	139060
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	447861

This inspection of the academy 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	894
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Lovett
Principal	Alison Hayes
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01536 203817
Fax number	01536 403562
Email address	enquiries@lodgeparkacademy.co.uk

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