

Colne Primet Academy

Dent Street, Colne, Lancashire, BB8 8JF

Inspection dates 25–26 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Inadequate 4
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Inadequate 4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate 4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Over time, students have underachieved across a range of subjects, including in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching, over time, is inadequate because it has not enabled students to make the progress they should. Expectations are too low and the work set for students does not match their learning needs.
- The use of additional government funding to help disadvantaged students to achieve better standards has been ineffective and the progress of these students is also inadequate.
- Those students with disabilities and special educational needs have not been supported well enough, consequently, they too underachieve.
- The quality of marking is highly variable across and within subjects. There is lack of specific guidance for students to know what that they have to do to improve their work.
- Poor skills in writing are not being tackled across all year groups in the academy and this is impeding students' progress, particularly that of boys, across the different subjects.
- Students' behaviour requires improvement because often students do not respond and improve their work when given helpful guidance. When teaching is not good, students do not contribute well enough to their learning.
- Students' safety requires improvement because a few do not have enough regard for their own health and safety, with some smoking on the academy site.
- Subject leaders do not check the quality of teaching and the work of students well enough to make sure that students are making good progress and achieving well. Senior leaders and governors have previously not always held them to account for their work well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and the sponsor have a clear understanding of the academy's strengths and how to tackle its weaknesses.
- The appropriate changes made by the new leadership are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. This is clear evidence of the academy's capacity for sustained improvement.
- There are some subjects, particularly English, where students make good progress due to improvements in teaching and the support of leaders and managers to drive improvement.
- Leaders' drive to improve reading is helping students to read better, particularly in Key Stage 3. Improvements in students' attendance across the school indicate better attitudes to learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons taught by 15 teachers and a cover supervisor. One observation was undertaken jointly with a leader from the academy.
- Inspectors spoke with two groups of students about their learning in lessons and their safety in the academy. An inspector also listened to some students reading.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of Governing Body, three other governors and a representative of the academy’s sponsors. Meetings were held with academy staff, including middle and senior leaders, and the academy’s improvement partner.
- Inspectors also looked at the academy’s review of its own performance, development plan, academy policies and the minutes of the governing body meetings. Inspectors also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at students’ work in lessons and analysed samples of students’ books.
- There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for parents’ views to be recorded. Inspectors analysed response to an academy questionnaire recently completed by parents. There were 25 questionnaires completed by staff which were analysed by inspectors.

Inspection team

James McGrath, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Tim Long	Additional Inspector
Kathleen Harris	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 significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- This academy opened in January 2013. The sponsor is Nelson and Colne College.
- The academy is much smaller than the average sized secondary school.
- There are more boys than girls in the academy.
- Most students are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, those supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free academy meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students or those with special educational needs is average.
- There are three providers of alternative education used by the academy for a few students. They are Coal Clough High School, Training 2000 and Nelson and Colne College.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The new headteacher was appointed and took up post on 20 January 2014.
- There have been significant staff and leadership changes in the past year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the achievement of all groups of students and the quality of teaching so both are consistently good or better, especially in mathematics, by making sure that teachers:
 - have high expectations of what all students, including the most able, can achieve
 - plan and set work that matches the needs and abilities of all groups of students, particularly for those students who are disadvantaged, those with disabilities and those with special educational needs
 - check students' knowledge and deepen their understanding of what they are learning by asking searching questions
 - frequently mark students' work to provide them with clear and specific advice about what they need to do to improve and insist that students act upon this advice
 - raise expectations of the quality of students' written work, presentation, spelling, grammar and punctuation, especially of boys
 - make effective use of students' mathematical skills in other subjects
 - improve students' attitudes to learning by ensuring they are fully engaged in, and make a good contribution to, improving their progress
 - manage the additional support for students more effectively in class to ensure that the help they are given is at least good.

- Improve the impact of leaders, managers and governors by acting swiftly to ensure that:
 - the quality of teaching and achievement in mathematics, history, geography and science improve so they are consistently good or better and there is no inadequate teaching in the academy
 - subject leaders are always fully held to account for rigorously checking the quality and impact of teachers' marking and of students' learning in order to make sure that students are making at least good progress
 - staff are diligent in ensuring that no students smoke on site and that all students are made fully aware of the dangers of smoking
 - governors rigorously check the impact of the pupil premium funding to make sure standards are swiftly improving for disadvantaged students.

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 academy'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

requires improvement

- Subject leaders have not always been held accountable enough for checking the work of their staff with sufficient rigour and accuracy. In particular, they have not been checking the quality of marking well enough to ensure it is helping students make good progress. Consequently, the quality of teaching and students' achievement over time have declined.
- The new headteacher, the sponsor and the governing body have a very clear understanding of the performance of the academy and a very clear view of how successful it can be. They have identified what needs to be done to improve standards and secured the support of all the staff to drive their ambitions forward; all staff said they know what they are trying to achieve as an academy. New leaders and staff are keen to ensure the plans for improvement are driven forward successfully.
- Leaders have made some significant, sustainable improvements in the academy since the appointment of the new headteacher. For example, effective systems are now in place to check and improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement. These identify clearly where additional support for individual

students, particularly disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs is best deployed. As a result, there are signs of improvement in progress for these students particularly at Key Stage 3 due to improvements in teaching. However, while leadership fosters good relations and is tackling discrimination, there is much to do to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

- Systems to check the performance of teachers and holding them to account for the performance of students are now more robust. Training to meeting the needs of students has been identified and as a result, teaching is beginning to help students make better progress. Appropriate action is taken when teaching falls short of what is expected.
- Leaders have ensured that behaviour is improving and students confirm this. The headteacher and governors have improved facilities, such as the 'Oracle area', as well as refurbishing sections of the school. Improvements are well respected by students and are providing a good platform to establish better learning. Greater diligence in chasing up absenteeism has improved attendance.
- The curriculum has been developed to better meet the needs of the students. There are now more students following appropriate courses at Key Stage 4 and more are now interested in their learning. A stronger emphasis on the development of literacy and mathematical skills in Key Stage 3 is showing improvements in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 3. Students are given good information, advice and guidance to move in to employment or training. Almost all students continue in education, training or employment. Leaders check the safety and attendance of students in off-site provision well.
- The academy's 'Building Bridges' programme focuses well on British identity, community issues and diversity. The school's focus on democracy, its use of the 'Prevent Strategy', the different cultural experiences and visits prepare students well for life in modern Britain. Collective worship and study of other faiths is contributing well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The academy sponsor has high aspirations for the students and is supporting the academy well. It has provided good support for re-structuring leadership and strengthening teaching. It has brokered support from good schools across the North West to support developments in teaching and achievement, as well as brokering support for subject leaders. Improvements are evident due to the actions of the sponsor. For example, the sponsor has purchased local authority support to check the effectiveness of the academy and provide support for the development of teaching and leadership, particularly in mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Over time, governors have not been sufficiently diligent in challenging the academy's leadership to avoid underachievement. They are now more challenging and are supporting the new headteacher to improve the academy. Governors now have a better understanding of national data against which to check the performance of specific groups of students. They are now holding subject leaders to account and checking plans for improvement to increase their understanding of the quality of teaching. They understand the link between performance management and pay progression. Governors confirm the use of the pupil premium funding but fail to ensure that its impact has prevented disadvantaged students from underachieving. They have a clear understanding of the academy's finances and are supported well by the sponsor in restructuring leadership. Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and the governing body checks this appropriately.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Students' attitudes to learning vary according to the quality of teaching they receive. They do not respond well enough to comments to improve their work and this limits their progress. While students mostly do what they are asked to do by their teachers but they do not do more than this to further improve their learning.
- Students wear their uniform with pride and are dressed smartly. They welcome visitors and enjoy telling them about the things they do in academy. Around the academy, students treat each other with dignity and respect moving sensibly and safely between lessons.
- Students say that behaviour is much better than it used to be due to clear rules and the direction given to them by new leaders and staff. They say teachers are managing behaviour much better.
- Attendance has improved and is now average. Fewer students are regularly absent from the academy. This is due to the new systems in place to reduce absenteeism and follow up absence quickly.
- Students say that 'the academy is a better place to be in than it used to be'. They like the Oracle area and

the newly decorated areas in the academy. They speak highly of the new headteacher and new leaders.

- Students know they are listened to and have a say in the development of the academy.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement.
- The programme for personal and social development teaches students about how to keep safe. However, there are a few students who smoke on the academy site and this prevents them from maintaining a safe and healthy lifestyle.
- Students are clear about what constitutes bullying and are confident it is dealt with effectively by the academy. They have a good understanding of internet safety. There are good links with the local community police officer, who contributes to students' understanding of how to assess risk.
- The academy uses alternative provision appropriately for a small number of pupils; it checks on their safety and attendance well. For those pupils attending vocational courses at college, there are well-developed links and procedures to ensure they are safe.
- Arrangements to support vulnerable students are good. There are good links to outside agencies to support these students.
- All students spoken to said they feel safe in the academy. Parents and staff share the same, positive views about students' safety.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Weak teaching over time has led to students underachieving and making inadequate progress particularly in mathematics and particularly by disadvantaged students, those with disabilities and those with special educational needs.
- Since the appointment of the new headteacher, there have been significant changes in staffing. Inspectors found that the sustained efforts of leaders and managers were supporting improvements in the quality of teaching. However, the quality of teaching remains variable.
- An analysis of students' work shows that marking is inconsistent across and within subjects. Comments for improvement in students' books are not precise enough for them to know what to do to improve. The analysis showed that there is little use of consistent strategies to improve students' writing skills. Too little attention is paid to making sure that spelling, punctuation and grammar is of a high quality. As a result, writing skills are not developing well enough, especially for boys. There are not enough opportunities for students to use mathematical skills in other subjects. This limits students' understanding of mathematics and impedes their progress in subjects where mathematics should be used regularly.
- Form teachers promote reading well. They discuss the books they are reading and encourage students to read widely. The school has helped students in Year 7 to choose a book they are interested in and given it to them without any charge; students are excited by this. Teaching assistants are well trained in developing students' reading skills and are supporting students well in Key Stage 3.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough. Too many students do not make an effort to improve their work and this is accepted and not tackled appropriately to help students to do better. Work set does not match the ability of all students and is not challenging enough so that students make enough progress from their low starting points.
- Questioning is not always used skilfully by teachers to involve students in their learning. Often it is not used well enough to assess what an individual student understands or not. Too often it does not check the knowledge of others students or deepen their understanding. As a result, students do not engage well enough with their learning to make good progress.
- The headteacher and other leaders have focused strongly on improving the quality of teaching and some improvements are clearly evident. Examples of high quality marking and good student responses were seen, particularly in English. Examples of good questioning, which engaged all students well in thinking about their learning, were seen in science. Interesting work pitched at the right level for each student was seen in French and information and communication technology (ICT) giving students the opportunity to contribute well to their learning and make good progress.
- Teaching assistants support students well outside the classroom in small groups, particularly for reading. In class, they are keen to help students, but teachers' skills in managing them is inconsistent and, as a result, the support from teaching assistants is not as consistently effective as it could be in ensuring

students make good progress. Too often they do not question students skilfully to enable them to improve their learning.

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- As a result of weak teaching over time, students' achievement is inadequate. Students have underachieved in mathematics, history and geography. Also, students' progress in science is very variable and some is inadequate. Low expectations and work set has failed to meet students' needs well enough and has led to underachievement.
- Students enter the academy with attainment that is below average. The standards of those leaving Year 11 in 2013 were significantly below average, with only a minority of students attaining five or more GCSE grades between A* to C, including English and mathematics; this represents inadequate progress.
- Standards were even lower for those students leaving in 2014 and again demonstrate the inadequate progress they made. Exceptionally weak progress in mathematics, history, geography, and some science courses led to only a small minority of students gaining five or more GCSE grades between A* to C, including English and mathematics. Also, there was not enough progress made in English to prevent students' achievement being below the government's minimum expectations. Students' attainment is better in those few vocational courses equivalent to GCSE. Boys generally attain even lower standards than girls, as seen, for example, in the 2013 and 2014 GCSE results. Their progress is slow in too many subjects due to weak writing skills, which have not been addressed appropriately by the academy.
- The work set for the most able students, as with others in the academy, is not challenging enough. In comparison to similar students nationally, they do not make enough progress in English and with progress being inadequate in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged students make much less progress than others in the academy and other students nationally. The use of the pupil premium funding has been ineffective in supporting these students. Few disadvantaged students attained five or more GCSE grades between A* to C, including mathematics and English, in 2014. The attainment gap between the disadvantaged students and others in the academy has widened. Academy information shows that in comparison to others in the school, disadvantaged students were two-thirds of a grade behind in English and one grade behind in mathematics. In comparison to 2013 national averages, disadvantaged students in the school, in 2014, were one GCSE grade behind in English and two GCSE grades behind in mathematics. The progress made by disadvantaged students is well below other students in the school and nationally in English and mathematics.
- Those students with disabilities and those with special educational needs make much less progress than others because the work set does not match students' needs. Over time, leaders have not managed the deployment of teaching support assistants for these students well enough to ensure students make better progress.
- Scrutiny of students' books showed that work produced by disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs is beginning to show improvement. Recently, leaders and managers are deploying staff more effectively and training teachers to set work that matches students' needs.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding, government funding for those entering secondary school with below average standards in English and mathematics, is now being used well to provide additional support to improve students' reading and mathematical skills.
- In January 2014, in the short time she had available to her before students undertook examinations, the new headteacher focused on improving the GCSE English results for Year 11 students. As a result, students' progress and the number of students reaching grade C or above in English improved. This exemplifies leaders' capacity to further improve students' achievement.
- Leaders have introduced a new reading programme, additional time to read in class and engaged the full support of staff to promote reading in form time. Additional teaching for weak readers is very effective, particularly, for example, in Key Stage 3, where students have benefited considerably due to this strong focus on improving their reading skills. Students are enthusiastic about reading and their skills are improving quickly.
- Good progress is made by students in physical education, art, psychology and business studies, because teachers ensure the work interests them and because the students contribute well to their learning.
- The academy does not use early entry to GCSE examinations.

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	139130
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	447872

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Melton
Headteacher	Lynne Blomley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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