

Shireland Collegiate Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135170
Local Authority	Not Applicable
Inspection number	362983
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Brooker HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Academy
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1278
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	393
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Murray
Headteacher	Sir Mark Grundy (Executive Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2010
School address	Waterloo Road Smethwick, Birmingham B66 4ND
Telephone number	0121 5588086
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Age group	11–19
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
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Registered Childcare provision	First Steps Nursery
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	45
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

Age group	11–19
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors who observed 35 teachers teaching 35 lessons; observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at a range of documents including students' work, the academy's raising attainment plan, student tracking data, the academy's analysis of examination results and arrangements for safeguarding. Parental questionnaires were not distributed as part of this inspection, although the academy surveys parents for their opinions on how well it is performing.

The inspection team evaluated the academy's progress since the last inspection and since the previous monitoring visit and looked in detail at the following.

- To what extent has the academy increased the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and eradicated inadequacies in order to accelerate the progress made by students in lessons?
- How successful are the academy's strategies to reduce levels of absence, including persistent absence, and improve behaviour?
- What is the impact of developments in the curriculum?
- How effectively do leaders at all levels, including in the sixth form, implement rigorous self-evaluation to secure sustained improvement?

Information about the school

The academy opened in September 2007 in a federation with George Salter Collegiate Academy. The two academies have an overarching governing body which oversees core functions, a Chief Executive and joint post-16 provision. Each academy has its own local governing body and senior leadership team. The Executive Principal is the statutory headteacher of both academies, but has day-to-day management responsibility for Shireland Collegiate Academy.

The academy serves an area that has significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is far higher than the national average. Most students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest proportions of Pakistani and Indian heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well above average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational need is below the national figure. The academy's specialism is the arts and it has achieved the national Healthy School platinum award. The Early Years provision on the site is managed by the Collegiate Academy Trust.

When the academy was last inspected in January 2010 it was deemed to require special measures. Its progress was monitored by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in June 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

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.

At the time of the last inspection, the academy had significant weaknesses in provision and less than satisfactory outcomes. All these inadequacies have been eradicated and the shortcomings addressed so effectively that most are now notable strengths. This remarkably rapid turnaround has been achieved by exceptional leadership, robust support from external partners and an almost obsessive desire on the behalf of all staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Since the last inspection, the climate for learning has been transformed: students behave well and want to succeed; classrooms are stimulating places to learn; and lessons have a buzz of activity that reflects students' positive attitudes and teachers' rediscovered confidence. This affirmative environment is underpinned by important improvements in the curriculum, and rigorous intervention and support for any individuals in danger of falling behind. Survey responses from staff, parents and carers, and students testify to the academy's astonishing metamorphosis. Students say that they enjoy their lessons and like coming to school. Their positive response is most evident in their good attitudes to learning and the vast increase in attendance, which in less than a year has gone from well below to well above the national figure.

The academy's overall provision is outstanding because so many elements are excellent. Students are making exceptional progress because of consistently high-quality teaching, exemplary use of assessment, rigorous tracking, sharply focused interventions, and excellent support and guidance. Modern technology is used exceptionally well to support the learning and well-being of students. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace because teachers have the highest expectations of what students should and might achieve and plan accordingly activities to engage and challenge them. Students respond by working hard, although many are still prone to be passive because they lack the confidence to articulate or share their ideas.

The academy recognises that, although standards are rising quickly, many students do not develop the basic skills or the associated self-confidence and independence that will better assure their future success. The revised curriculum provides students with clear pathways that meet their different needs and aptitudes, and further opportunity to gain accreditation and examination success. Nowhere is accelerated progress more evident than in Years 7 and 8 where the excellent competency-based curriculum has had a remarkable impact on the standard of students' work in English and mathematics, as well as their wider personal development.

The Executive Principal, with his excellent senior team, has galvanised the staff and empowered them to realise the necessary changes. The academy works outstandingly well with parents and carers and also with an impressive range of external partners to achieve

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good outcomes for students. Rigorous self-evaluation and ambitious target-setting have been at the heart of development planning, and staff at all levels have been inextricably engaged in the process through self-scrutiny, collaborative planning and peer review. The academy's journey has been steered by robust external evaluation, particularly by the School Improvement Partner and the sponsor's school improvement adviser, and by some outstandingly effective staff training. The speed, success and evident sustainability of all the improvements demonstrate the academy's outstanding capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that students of all ages aspire to the highest possible achievement and hone the skills and personal qualities that are essential for the next stage of their education and later life, particularly their:
 - literacy and numeracy
 - confidence, independence and leadership skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Attainment is low, but there is a strong upward trend of improvement across all year groups, including in the sixth form. Despite significant challenges last year, the academy exceeded its challenging targets for examinations in 2010. All groups of students, including those with special educational need and/or disabilities, made good progress. Rigorous tracking data indicate that progress has accelerated significantly this year and that in 2011 and beyond the academy is firmly on course to far exceed all previous results. Evidence from lesson observations confirms the exceptional progress that students make, often from very low starting points.

Students enjoy school and respond to the academy's high expectations by behaving well and working hard. Their attitudes contribute positively to their outstanding progress and good achievement. In lessons, students are attentive and compliant and collaborate very well when working together in pairs and small groups. Importantly, they take responsibility for their learning by critically evaluating their own progress and by making excellent use of the academy's technology to support their studies. The student portal on the academy's 'learning gateway' is accessed 3000 times each day.

Students have a strong voice in decisions relating to their learning and well-being, and play an active role in shaping the academy's development through the multifarious sub-committees of the student council. Students have suggested and developed a number of classroom initiatives to improve teaching and learning. Their interaction in the wider community is also highly valued and influential. The Young Voices project, for example, received international recognition as an example of outstanding practice in raising religious and cultural awareness in the community through its innovative use of technology. Initiatives such as these exemplify students' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The academy is a harmonious community where students from diverse backgrounds get on very well together and feel completely safe. They understand how to stay healthy and respond impressively when given opportunities to take responsibility for their own well-being and that of others. Many students readily participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is consistently high because teachers have worked relentlessly to implement agreed strategies for behaviour management, lesson planning and assessment. As a consequence, almost all lessons are sharply focused, skilfully managed, well paced and free from disruption. Technology is used very well in lesson planning and delivery, and the use of assessment is an outstanding feature of teaching and learning. Teachers use assessment information to set suitably ambitious outcomes and challenging tasks that are well matched for different students. They use an excellent range of strategies, including skilful questioning, to assess how well the students have understood their new learning. Furthermore, students know how to improve because marking and oral feedback are so rigorous, and students are routinely involved in peer assessment and self review.

The expectation that students themselves will be actively engaged in lessons challenges the natural reticence of many students. This is particularly the case when learning is fun and when students are given licence to be creative or independent, for example when asked to improvise in drama, video one another in art, create an imaginative role-play presentation in business studies, drum the table in response to poetic devices in English or critically evaluate their physical education teacher's ineptitudes in badminton! Many lessons are outstanding because teachers are skilful and imaginative in achieving rapid and secure gains in students' skills and understanding.

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The academy's curriculum is constantly under review to ensure that it better meets the needs and aspirations of all its students, notably through the development of suitable pathways at Key Stage 4. It is a mixture of developing and excellent features, such as the 'Literacy for Life' programme in Years 7 and 8 which is imaginative and already highly effective. Enrichment opportunities are varied and have a high take-up. In addition to sport, students enjoy a wide range of creative activities many of which are linked with the academy's arts specialism.

The care, guidance and support provided by the academy are outstandingly effective because the individual needs of students are understood, and because staff pay meticulous attention to detail. The academy's work with families and a range of agencies to promote and support the development and well-being of individual students is deeply embedded and highly effective. Students trust staff and feel confident that they will be given effective advice and guidance. Excellent procedures have significantly increased attendance, and greatly reduced persistent absenteeism and incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The academy has been relentless and highly successful in its drive to strengthen teaching, raise standards and eradicate underachievement. Senior and middle leaders have been conspicuously successful in creating a learning community where teachers are motivated, supported and enabled to improve their practice. Staff drive school improvement through, for example, 'change teams' that initiate and implement developments and 'learning communities' which successfully embed the process of self-review and accelerate the dissemination of best practice. Improvements are underpinned by high-quality professional development and targeted support. Morale is very high and staff are united by a shared vision and ambition. This unity of purpose has brought about remarkably rapid and sustained improvement since the last inspection. The students themselves have also been closely involved in the process of school improvement so that the academy is now a calm and purposeful environment for learning. Rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and constant self-challenge enable the academy to adapt its well-focused plans as circumstances change. The governing body is fully and systematically involved in evaluating the academy.

The academy places the promotion of equality of opportunity and the individual needs of each student at the heart of its work. Any unevenness between different groups is quickly identified and addressed. Understanding the needs of its immediate and wider community

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enables the academy to make an exceptional contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. In this regard, as with so many other initiatives, the academy is outward-looking in its search for partnerships and strategies that might possibly improve the outcomes for its students. It successfully encourages engagement with a wide range of different groups and maintains a highly cohesive community in which students from different backgrounds get on noticeably well.

Staff at all levels work tirelessly to develop highly positive relationship with all groups of parents and carers, particularly those whose circumstances have made them hard to engage. The academy explores every possible avenue to communicate with parents and enable the parents themselves to be involved in their children's achievement and well-being. The academy has excellent procedures for safeguarding students which are implemented and reviewed with exceptional rigour so that staff at all levels and members of the governing body are aware of their responsibilities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Pre-school provision has strengthened since the last inspection and is outstanding. The needs of all children, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational need and/or disabilities, are exceptionally well met. All elements of care and support, including safeguarding, are excellent. Children happily engage in a wide range of different activities, whether in the lively and engaging indoor learning environment or using the stimulating equipment in the remodelled outdoor play area. Staff are meticulous in recording the progress that children make and use their in-depth knowledge of the needs of each individual to guide them appropriately. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children are encouraged to

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make their own choices so that they develop greater independence, confidence and social skills.

The nursery leader has made systematic use of rigorous self-evaluation to further improve provision. Excellent links with parents make a hugely positive contribution to the children's development, because the nursery works in partnership to promote the children's learning and well-being. The healthy eating workshops are just one example of the exceptional promotion of healthy lifestyles. The nursery complies with the requirements for registration.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Sixth form

The provision is part of a well-established local consortium arrangement which gives sixth-form students an appropriate range of courses at different levels of accreditation to meet their needs and aspirations. Many students enter the sixth form with levels of attainment that are well below average. Results are therefore significantly lower than national figures, but nonetheless indicate good progress from the students' starting points. Moreover, the quality of learning has been strengthened and students' progress has been accelerated by the dramatic improvements in teaching and in the use of assessment which have been realised across the academy. Sixth-form lessons are characterised by activity-led sessions that place suitable emphasis on developing students' independence and embedding their skills and understanding through structured self-review. Ambitious target setting and rigorous tracking, underpinned by clear guidance, ensure that students feel well supported. Students respond to the academy's high expectations and develop mature attitudes. They make a positive contribution to their own academy and the wider community, particularly through their support for sports teams, extra-curricular clubs and weekend and holiday programmes. Their contribution to decision-making through the 'student voice' is at an early stage of development.

The recent appointment of a head of sixth form has strengthened day-to-day management. In the past, some students were admitted onto courses for which they were not well matched because progression routes into the sixth form were unsuitable. Advice, guidance and support, including monitoring of students' progress and attendance, are good. Strategic leadership of the sixth form is excellent. Robust self-evaluation ensures that any weaknesses in provision are identified and addressed. Sixth-form provision and outcomes are, therefore, improving strongly.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 December 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Shireland Collegiate Academy, Sandwell, B66 4ND

Thank you for making such a positive contribution to our recent inspection. We enjoyed speaking with you and seeing your work, and are delighted to see the changes since the last inspection. At that time, there were so many weaknesses that inspectors judged that the academy required additional support and monitoring. The improvements have been so remarkable that it now no longer requires special measures. Some aspects that were criticised in the last report are now outstanding.

The most dramatic changes over the last year have been in improving the climate for learning and the quality of teaching. You have each played a role in this transformation by behaving well and taking responsibility for your own learning and progress. We were particularly impressed by:

- the exceptional progress that you make as a result of high quality teaching and the excellent use assessment in lessons and through marking
- the outstandingly effective care, guidance and support and its impact on ensuring your safety and on improving attendance and behaviour
- the academy's innovative strategies for sustaining such a cohesive school community and the way that it involves you all and engages your parents.

Technology is central to much of this, and we were very impressed by the way that you, your parents and staff use the Learning Gateway to support your progress and development. Everyone has worked really hard to improve your academy, but there is always room for improvement, so we have asked the academy to focus on:

- honing the skills and personal qualities that are essential for the next stage of your education and later life, particularly your literacy and numeracy and your self-confidence and independence.

You can help by coming to school regularly and by making the most of all the opportunities that the academy offers. We wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Paul Brooker

Her Majesty's Inspector

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