

St Peter's Academy

Fenton Manor, Fenton, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 2RR

Inspection dates	14-15 January 2015		
Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate		4
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 requires special measures

- Weak leadership at all levels has limited the academy's improvement. Consequently, students' achievement is inadequate.
- Until recently the academy's local governing body did not have an accurate overview of strengths and weaknesses. It was too slow to tackle underperformance and did not effectively hold the Principal to account.
- Teaching is inadequate and, in many lessons, fails to engage students' interest. This occasionally leads to poor behaviour and low-level disruption.
- Most teachers do not have high expectations of students. As a result, the work teachers set for students limits their opportunities to make at least expected progress.
- Attainment and progress for all groups of students in English and mathematics are too low and have been below the national average for many years. In 2014, students' progress in both subjects declined sharply from the previous year. Too few students, particularly boys, gain a grade C or above in their GCSE examinations.
- Disadvantaged students do not achieve as well as other students in the school and students nationally. Over recent years, this gap has widened.

The school has the following strengths

- The new Interim Principal has a clear view of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. He is supported well by the Woodard Academies Trust's Education Director.
- Students make good progress in humanities subjects.
- Students are friendly and welcoming to visitors. Relationships with staff are usually positive. The vast majority of students say that they feel safe in school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons. Some of these observations were made jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors observed the behaviour of students around the academy, in lessons, at break times, lunchtimes, and at the beginning and end of the day.
- Interviews were held with the Interim Principal, senior leaders and middle leaders such as the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders. Inspectors also spoke with the Woodard Academy Trust's Education Director, a Trustee, the Woodard Academy Partner, students and some parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised students' work and academy documents, including: minutes of the Interim Executive Board; records of visits and support from the Woodard Academy Trust; policies and assessment information; performance management procedures and students' records.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 37 parents who completed the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The views of the 32 staff who completed questionnaires about the academy were also considered.

Inspection team

Michelle Parker, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alan Parkinson

Additional Inspector

Fiona Dixon

Additional Inspector

Ian Hodgkinson

Her Majesty's 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 special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this academy

- The academy was opened in September 2011, as a result of the merger of the former St Peter's High School and Berry Hill High School. The Woodard Academy Trust and the Diocese of Lichfield jointly sponsor the academy. The Woodard Academy Partner works to provide an objective external view of the academy's performance.
- The academy moved to its new site in September 2013.
- The initial turbulence in leadership identified at the previous inspection has continued. The current Interim Principal took up post on 5 January 2015. The previous Principal was in post for two years and two terms. The academy's council, which was the academy's local governing body, has been disbanded. An Interim Executive Board was set up from November 2014.
- The academy is larger than most secondary schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average. This is the extra government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of students are White British. There is a significant proportion of students from different ethnic backgrounds, the largest group has Pakistani heritage. The proportion of students who do not speak English as a first language is higher than nationally.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is slightly lower than the national average.
- A small number of students are enrolled with alternative providers: REACH, a local authority provision for students in danger of permanent exclusion; Merit, provision for students who have medical needs; Sporting Stars; Kinetic Education; and PM Training.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that the progress of all groups of students, particularly disadvantaged students and boys, is at least good, by ensuring that all:
 - students' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in all subjects
 - work is planned to meet the needs of students, and takes account their reading ages and what they already know and can do
 - lessons stimulate, engage and challenge all students well
 - teachers have high expectations of what all students, and in particular the most able, can achieve
 - teachers' questioning is probing and requires students to consider their answers and respond in full sentences
 - teachers implement the academy's marking policy and check that advice and guidance are followed.
- Ensure that the Interim Executive Board holds senior leaders to account for regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and providing accurate and timely information on the performance of staff and the progress of all groups of students.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring all leaders rigorously monitor teaching so that weaknesses are effectively addressed within robust performance management procedures

- ensuring that the impact of additional funding, including pupil premium and that for the Year 7 catch-up programme, is evaluated so that disadvantaged students benefit and gaps in attainment close
- implementing a broad and balanced curriculum which provides good opportunities for students' personal development, in particular their understanding of how to avoid becoming vulnerable to influences of radicalisation and sexual grooming.

An external review of the academy's use of 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 are inadequate

- Senior leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching have been inaccurate and have hindered improvements. Assessment information is inaccurate or misleading. The lack of a shared ethos and a clear overarching strategy to ensure effective implementation of initiatives limits the capacity of the academy to improve.
- The monitoring of policies and procedures has not been sufficiently rigorous. Until recently, senior leaders did not monitor the use of additional catch up monies to support Year 7 students and those who are supported by the pupil premium. Consequently, the impact of this funding has been limited and the good practice in the academy has not been fully developed and shared.
- Performance management systems are inadequate. Too often teachers have not been held sufficiently to account for the progress of different groups of students. Targets for staff have not been matched to the academy's priorities. Staff have not received support and training to enable them to develop their practice.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders is variable. Many do not monitor marking and feedback to students. Inadequate checks are made to ensure that students respond to points for improvement provided in marking. Middle leaders have been constrained by meetings that did not focus sufficiently on promoting good teaching and sharing good practice.
- The curriculum has begun to focus on developing students' skills in literacy and reading, particularly in Key Stage 3. These developments have yet to make sufficient impact on older students in Key Stage 4 because not all staff consistently implement initiatives. Vocational opportunities, linked to careers guidance, support students well. The take up of college places, and further training and employment, is improving.
- Religious education, citizenship and the creative subjects make a strong contribution to developing tolerance, respect and students' good understanding of different faiths and communities, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. In this way, the curriculum reflects British values. The promotion of equality of opportunity is improving. Senior leaders have acted promptly to foster good relations between different ethnic groups. Racist comments and any form of discriminatory behaviour are not tolerated. The academy is developing a stronger sense of community now that it is housed on one site. However the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for all students to gain a full understanding of the risks of sexual exploitation and radicalisation.
- Senior leaders' monitoring of the attendance, safety, behaviour and achievement of students in alternative provision has improved such that the provision, which was inconsistent, has improved. Consequently students are now beginning to make better progress.
- The support provided by the Woodard Academy Trust has improved. It now receives an increasingly accurate analysis of the quality of teaching and learning because of the accurate information provided by the Woodard Academy Partner. Since June 2014, the Academy Partner has strategically reviewed areas of the academy to provide an objective evaluation. This information is shared with the Interim Executive Board and senior leaders. The Trust has established leadership networks to promote improvement and share good practice. For example, the Principals work together across all of the academies to foster strong leadership and consistent procedures, and special educational needs coordinators collectively analyse data and share good practice. The Trust has appropriately commissioned lead teachers from outside the academy to support teaching and learning.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure students are safe, both on and off site and the academy works well with other agencies to promote students' good safety and welfare.
- The new Interim Principal has not been in post long enough to change the culture of the academy and tackle underperformance. He demonstrates clearly the attitudes and values he wants the academy to promote. He is keen for every student to reach his or her potential. He has the confidence of staff because he is highly visible around the site at all times of the day and has taken a keen interest in the students, some of whom he already knows by name. He has an accurate view of the work needed to improve students' progress and attainment.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers without first consulting with the monitoring HMI.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Until recently, governance has been inadequate. The previous academy council did not hold the Principal and senior leaders tightly to account for identifying and tackling weaknesses.

- The Interim Executive Board has already begun to take action to ensure that the academy complies with the Woodard Academy Trust's policies and procedures. It has an accurate view of the quality of teaching, data on the academy's performance and performance management systems based on the thorough reviews of the Woodard Academy partner. It has not yet had time to demonstrate the impact it is having in tackling underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Students are too passive in the majority of lessons and they do not make the best use of time. In some classes, when the work is not well explained or too difficult, they sit and wait for the teacher to come and help them. This occasionally results in low level disruption, such as off-task talking, pen-tapping and rocking on chairs. Students do not always take a pride in their work. They become enthusiastic learners when teaching is interesting and takes appropriate account of what they already know and can do.
- Handwriting is careless and presentation of work is often untidy, particularly in the work of some boys. When teachers expect high standards, work is well presented and care is taken.
- Too much litter is dropped at break and lunch times particularly in the main concourse area.
- Students are friendly and welcoming to visitors. The large majority of students are polite. The vast majority get on well with each other and are respectful of differences in religion, ethnicity and sexuality. Bullying is decreasing and students stated they are confident they can talk to staff, who will take action. Despite the site being complex to supervise, the level of staff supervision at break and lunchtimes is appropriate and ensures the safety and well-being of students. Prefects work well with staff to encourage responsible behaviour. Older students enjoy the opportunities this provides for leadership. Younger students stated that behaviour in the academy has improved.
- Students are punctual to lessons. Attendance is slowly improving and staff work well with the large number of students who join part way through the school year, many of whom come with a history of poor attendance.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement. The academy has identified with other agencies, including the local police, what dangers students might face. Appropriate training has been provided for staff. Staff understand the changes in behaviour which might indicate that a student may be at risk of being groomed and know the action they must take. The vast majority of students stated they felt safe at the academy and understood what constitutes risky behaviour and what they needed to do to keep themselves safe. Nevertheless, a small number of students did not realise that they might be at risk of exploitation or radicalisation.
- The academy is aware that permanent and fixed-term exclusions have increased. It has analysed its data and identified the groups most at risk and has started work to ensure exclusions reduce. Leaders now check students in alternative provision are safe.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teachers' expectations of students are too low, particularly of the most able students. Too many lessons lack challenge and do not fully engage the interest of students. This results in students making inadequate or, at best, only expected progress. Teachers rely too much on the 'setting' of students into ability groups instead of using information about students' reading levels and previous learning to ensure work is sufficiently demanding. For example, in English, one Year 9 student was still working at Level 5; the level he had started at in Year 7. When teachers take account of students' previous learning and build on it, students make better progress in the development of ideas and skills. In a Year 11 physical education lesson, the teacher knew the class well and used this information to group students for the task, setting high expectations of what students had to do. Consequently, they rose to the challenge and supported each other to improve.
- In most lessons observed, boys do not make as much progress as girls. Teachers do not address the poor concentration of boys, particularly in some of the lower sets in Key Stage 4. Consequently, they do not complete their work in a timely fashion or to as high a standard as achieved by girls. Boys' animation in

classroom discussions does not transfer to their written work.

- Teachers' questioning does not accurately identify students' misconceptions and so adjustments to learning are not made to meet their needs. Students are not enabled to elaborate their answers and develop their ideas.
- In English, there are insufficient opportunities for students to write at greater length. Literacy links in other subjects are underdeveloped as not all teachers check spelling, punctuation and grammar. Students are not encouraged to speak in grammatically correct terms. In Key Stage 3, all students' reading ages are tested and this information is used to help them develop their reading. However, improvement is inconsistent because some teachers do not take students' reading ages into account when they plan work. The introduction of the 'word of the week' is beginning to extend students' vocabulary. The academy celebrates the rich variety of language backgrounds that students have, and in modern foreign languages each week students have a 'word of the week' that celebrates this linguistic diversity.
- In mathematics, teachers do not always demonstrate how to solve mathematical problems. This leads to students becoming confused about how to proceed and some lose interest in trying to solve the problem. When mathematical concepts are used in other subjects, teachers do not make sufficient checks on students' understanding to ensure they have mastery of the method required. Infrequent marking in mathematics books has led to untidy work. Corrections and feedback are not followed up by staff. Poorly set out work limits its usefulness when students need to refer back to it.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback is inconsistent. When marking conforms to the academy's policy, students understand what they have to do to improve and teachers check that students have responded to advice and guidance. In a well-organised Year 11 GCSE history lesson, the teacher explained how marks would be awarded and students responded well to the very specific advice given.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are better catered for in small intervention groups because the work is well matched to their starting points and builds well on their literacy skills. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson the well-structured work enabled students to develop their communication skills and their interpretation and understanding of the play. The parents who spoke to inspectors were fulsome in their praise for the support and progress of their child, and the work of staff to meet their child's special educational needs.
- Teaching assistants work well helping disabled students and those who have special educational needs to remain on task. For example, in a Year 11 GCSE art lesson the teaching assistant ensured that the student could follow the detailed feedback from the teacher to improve his work and tackle the research to develop his ideas further.

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- For the last three years, the overall attainment of students at the end of Key Stage 4 has been substantially below the national average. At the end of 2014, the proportion of students gaining five A*-C grades including English and mathematics declined sharply from 2013. Only 37% of boys gained five A*-C grades including English and mathematics compared with 50% of girls.
- Students entered Key Stage 3 with significantly lower levels of literacy and numeracy than nationally. The academy has been slow to address these weaknesses and as a consequence, too many students are unable to access the Key Stage 4 curriculum. The Year 7 catch-up programme has had little impact on improving students' literacy and numeracy skills.
- At the end of Key Stage 4, the proportion of all groups of students, including White British, Pakistani students and those who have English as an additional language, who made expected progress in English and mathematics, was significantly below the national figure.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who made expected progress was smaller than other students in the academy and also when compared with other students nationally. Students who had a statement of special educational need made better progress than others in the academy because they receive carefully tailored specialist support in English and mathematics.
- The most able students do not make good progress. The proportion of these students who made better than expected progress in English and mathematics in 2014 was much lower than similar students nationally. Work in the books of the most able students indicates that they are not challenged sufficiently and set tasks do not enable them to deepen or apply their learning across an appropriately wide range of contexts.
- In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged students in English was one and half GCSE grades behind others in the academy and students nationally. In mathematics, their attainment was nearly two grades

behind others in the academy and over two grades behind others nationally. Over time, gaps in their overall attainment and progress have not closed with others in the academy or with students nationally.

- Early entry to GCSE mathematics in 2014, limited the attainment of the majority of students and the proportion that made better than expected progress is half the national figure.
- Students who attend alternative provision make similar poor progress to others in the academy because poor literacy and numeracy skills hold back their learning.
- In 2014, the overall progress of students in humanities subjects was good and a significantly greater proportion than students nationally attained at least a C grade at GCSE.

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	136824
Local authority	Stoke on Trent
Inspection number	453826

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	1062
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Rosemary Myers
Principal Interim	Richard Butler
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2013
Telephone number	01782 882500
Fax number	01782 848965
Email address	office@spa.woodard.co.uk

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