

East Point Academy

Kirkley Run, Lowestoft, NR33 0UQ

Inspection dates 3–4 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement in science, history and geography is lagging behind that of other subjects.
- In some lessons, teachers do not match work fully to the needs and abilities of all groups of students, including the most able students.
- Teachers do not always expect students to work hard throughout the whole of the lesson in every subject.
- Some teachers do not give enough attention to developing students' ability to express their ideas clearly out loud.
- Teachers do not always provide sufficient guidance for students on how to improve their writing skills.
- There are too few opportunities for students to practise their writing in extended pieces of written work or to improve their skills in mathematics through problem-solving activities.
- Students' behaviour requires improvement. There are times when teachers allow students to lose focus. When this happens, they do not concentrate on their work as well as they should.
- Some students do not take sufficient pride in their work. Their handwriting and presentation are untidy.
- Attendance is below average.

The school has the following strengths

- The academy's new Principal, other leaders, governors and representatives of the academy trust have restored teachers' and students' morale and are bringing about rapid improvements in teaching and achievement.
- Students' progress in English and mathematics, including that of disadvantaged students, is now much closer to the rates expected and to those seen nationally.
- The previous decline in the proportion of students attaining 5 A*-C GCSE examination passes, including in English and mathematics, has been reversed. Standards are now rising rapidly across the academy.
- The academy's work to keep students safe is good.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are prepared increasingly well for life in modern Britain, and for the next stage of their education and the world of work.
- The governing body and senior officers of the new academy trust are very knowledgeable about all aspects of the academy's work and are providing leaders with excellent support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students during lessons and looked at the work in their books. Inspectors conducted some of the observations jointly with the Principal or with other members of the leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Principal, the Executive Principal, senior and middle leaders, groups of students, members of the governing body and representatives of the Inspiration Trust.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's on line survey Parent View to trigger an analysis. Inspectors considered the views expressed in the school's own recent survey of parents' opinions. They also considered 54 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's data about students' attainment, progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also considered documents evaluating the academy's performance, its plans for improvement, notes about the work of the governing body and policies concerning the arrangements for safeguarding students.

Inspection team

Godfrey Bancroft, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sarah Roscoe	Additional Inspector
Russell Ayling	Additional Inspector
Mark McGrath	Additional Inspector

Full report

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.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized secondary academy.
- The school became an academy in September 2011. At that time it was sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust. Since December 2014 it has been sponsored by the Inspiration Trust.
- The academy's last inspection was in March 2013, when it was judged to require special measures. Since then it has received four visits from Her Majesty's Inspectors to check on its progress.
- The proportion of students entitled to the pupil premium (additional government funding to support students who are in the care of the local authority or who are entitled to a free school meal) is well above average.
- Most students are White British. The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups, and the percentage who speak English as an additional language, are both well below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is broadly average.
- The academy currently does not have any students who are taught off site or use any form of alternative provision.
- The Principal took up his post in January 2015. The academy is supported by an Executive Principal provided by the Inspiration Trust.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality and consistency of teaching and accelerate students' progress by ensuring all teachers:
 - check regularly on students' progress in class and make sure they understand the next steps they should take in their learning
 - set work that is always matched closely to the needs of all students, and especially the most able
 - insist that students should try to do their best at all times, work hard in all lessons and present their work neatly
 - help students to become more confident and articulate when speaking aloud and explaining their ideas in class
 - improve student' skills in writing by providing more opportunities and guidance so that they are able to write accurately and confidently at length
 - improve students' problem solving skills by setting more tasks that develop these skills in mathematics lessons.
- Sustain the academy's focus on improving attendance, including supporting parents in helping their children attend as often as they should.
- Fully embed the initiatives leaders have recently introduced to help students make better progress, by:
 - rapidly improving achievement in those subjects where it is lagging behind, for example in science, geography and history, so that it matches the improvement seen in the most successful subjects
 - establishing better arrangements for staff to work with each other, and with teachers from other academies, to sustain the recent rapid improvements in their performance.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal, academy leaders, staff and governors are working effectively to improve the academy. They are ambitious and are bringing about rapid improvements in staff morale, students' behaviour, teaching and achievement. Standards are rising and more students than ever before are making good progress. Senior leaders are well placed to oversee sustained improvements in the future.
- There is an increasing commitment to ensuring that students are able to do their best. Everything possible is done to avoid discrimination in its various forms and to ensure all groups of students have the same good opportunities to succeed.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of the academy's performance. They also know that some recent innovations have yet to reap their full benefit. They know what remains to be done and have clear plans in place to sustain the current improvements.
- Academy leaders are working very effectively to bring rapid improvements in teaching. They share examples of the best teaching practice available in the academy with other staff and make clear that only the best teaching will do. Arrangements to check on the quality of teaching are increasingly effective. The Principal is committed to the mantra of, 'Check, challenge and support.' School leaders know where weaknesses still exist and are committed to addressing them.
- The current rate of rapid improvement means that the academy is able to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- Most middle leaders, such as those with responsibility for subjects, support their colleagues well. Subject leaders collate assessment information for their subjects systematically. Together with senior leaders and governors, they consider the implications of their findings and identify strategies designed to bring further improvements in progress. They share ideas to help teachers in other subjects to improve. Academy leaders are clear that improvements in the impact of subject leadership on teaching will continue. They will not be satisfied until all teachers are performing at the highest level.
- Arrangements for the continued professional development of staff, and to improve teachers' skills, are good. Leaders make full use of the National Teaching Standards to provide a benchmark for measuring good practice. They link any rewards for good practice closely to teachers' success in meeting their targets for improving attainment and progress.
- Parents are increasingly positive about the academy and their children's progress. During the inspection the number of parents who attended a parents' evening was the highest ever. Despite the academy's best efforts, there are still too many parents who do not do enough to ensure their children attend as often as they should.
- The range of learning opportunities the academy provides is supporting students' academic and personal development well. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn about key ideas and values, such as the rights of the individual and the rule of law, and are tolerant and respectful of the beliefs of others. Consequently, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They also receive helpful careers advice to prepare them for the next stage of their education and for the world of work. The range of vocational courses available to students has been streamlined so that it is better suited to their interests. Arrangements to assess students' progress take full account of the national expectations regarding age-related progress.
- The academy uses all additional funding effectively. The Year 7 catch up funding is having a very positive impact on the improvement of students' reading skills. The academy uses the pupil premium funding effectively to bridge the gap between these students' achievement and the others. There is now little discernible difference between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged students currently in the school and those of other groups. A rising proportion of pupils eligible for support from the additional funding are doing even better than their peers.

- The academy trust is making a significant and highly effective contribution to the current range of improvements. Staff have good opportunities to share good practice, to visit other academies and to evaluate the quality of their own practice this is helping to raise standards. However, leaders acknowledge that they need to provide even more opportunities to secure the improvements they seek. The Executive Principal liaises closely with the academy's Principal and provides highly effective support. The trust is helping re-establish links between the academy, the local authority and nearby primary schools.
- Arrangements to ensure that students are safe and secure meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide the academy with exceptional support. They are ambitious for the academy to become the best it can be. Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They are very well informed about students' progress and exercise prudent control over the academy's budget. They also provide thoughtful challenge to the academy's leaders about all aspects of its work. Governors are very well informed about the quality of teaching and ensure that rewards for good teaching are linked appropriately to targets for improvements in students' progress. Governors fulfil their duties to ensure that students are safe and secure effectively. They are also meticulous in checking that the academy spends the additional funding, such as the pupil premium and Year 7 catch up funding, wisely and that it provides good value for money.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. While lessons are rarely disrupted, some students are slow to begin their work, do not always sustain their concentration and too easily lose momentum. When this occurs, their progress slows down. Untidy presentation and poor handwriting remain weaknesses in the work of some students.
- Academy records show that instances of unacceptable behaviour are reducing rapidly. The numbers of students who are excluded for poor behaviour is also reducing significantly. Students and their parents told inspectors that behaviour is much better than it used to be.
- Staff manage behaviour well. However, not all staff respond promptly when students lose concentration or students present work that is not as neat and tidy as it should be.
- Attendance, while improving, remains below the national average. The proportion of students who are persistent absentees is also reducing but is still higher than the national average. The academy is working closely with parents and with students to promote better attendance. This work is gradually paying dividends.
- More and more students relish the opportunity to undertake responsibility. Prefects are proud of their role and take it very seriously. Student sports leaders regularly help organise events, which they do with great aplomb.
- The academy is effective in promoting students' understanding of traditional British values and other cultures. The academy is a racially harmonious institution in which students get along well together. Students have good insights into moral issues and comment reflectively on features such as justice and injustice. They are sensitive towards each other's needs. They support each other if they have any concerns or worries and celebrate each other's successes. Trips abroad and visits to the academy by foreign students help to provide valuable insights into the beliefs and traditions of others.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is secure. Procedures to appoint staff and to ensure they are suitable to work with young people meet current requirements.
- Students say they feel well cared for and their parents are confident that this is the case. Students who spoke with inspectors expressed their confidence that, should they face any problems, either academic or

personal, staff would do their best to give them all the help they need.

- Students have a good understanding of bullying in its various guises. They said that bullying is rare and that staff would help them to resolve any issues that might arise. Academy records support this view. Students have an appropriate understanding of the potential dangers posed by misuse of the internet and social media.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although academy leaders are bringing about rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics, the strategies they have introduced have yet to have enough impact in all subjects, for example science, history and geography.
- Whilst most students are well motivated and work hard, there is a residue who do not concentrate sufficiently in lessons. Teachers do not identify these students or respond swiftly enough when this happens. This slows their progress.
- In some lessons, teachers, regardless of students' abilities or the stage they have reached in their learning, provide the same work for all groups. This means the work is too hard for the less able students and too easy for the most able. Many teachers are responding well to the challenge to provide work that is properly matched to the needs of all students but this is not consistently the case across the academy.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for students to produce extended pieces of writing and, where these are available, teachers do not always provide students with the guidance they need to complete them to a good standard.
- The teaching of reading, particularly in Years 7 to 9, is increasingly good. Many students, particularly in Year 7, are making rapid progress in developing good reading skills. However, not all teachers take advantage of opportunities to consolidate and promote students' confidence and skill in explaining their ideas aloud.
- There are too few opportunities for students to develop their mathematical skills through well-designed problem-solving activities, either in mathematics lessons or other subjects.
- The support for disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs is an improving feature of the academy's work. Teachers and teaching assistants are astute in identifying those students who are risk of falling behind or who have arrived at the academy below the stage they should be at. Work is carefully planned to meet the needs of these students. They thrive, especially when they are taught individually or in small groups.
- Senior leaders have taken a close look at how students' progress is assessed and ensured that assessments are now accurate across the academy. In the past this was not always the case. Teachers and subject leaders measure students' progress against the rates expected nationally. Teachers set challenging targets for each student and check that students understand what they need to do to improve their progress. Marking is helpful and informative. It is a strength of teaching.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The work in students' books and that seen during lessons shows that standards are rising rapidly and that rates of progress are increasing in many subjects. However, this is not yet the case for all subjects, with science, geography and history lagging behind.
- In 2014 the proportion of students gaining the key measure of 5 A*- C passes in GCSE examinations, including English and mathematics, was well below average. This year, the proportion is set to rise significantly and standards are on course to be much closer to last year's national average. The academy no longer enters students early for GCSE examination.

- In 2014, progress in mathematics lagged behind that in English. This remains the case for the key subject of science. However, progress in both English and mathematics is now safely on course to compare favourably with national averages. This applies both to the proportions of students making the expected progress and to those who will exceed this measure.
- The progress and standards attained by the most able students is improving in many subjects. However, there are still times when the work set does not challenge them sufficiently and is not matched closely enough to their needs.
- Academy assessment data, which the inspection affirms as accurate, indicates that the recent pattern of improving progress is on course to be sustained in future years. The growing strength of the academy is also confirmed by the work seen in students' books. Younger students, including those in Year 10, are now performing to a much better standard in science, although they still do not make as much progress in this subject and a small number of others, as they should.
- Academy assessment data and inspection findings show that students are doing well in art and design, design and technology, drama, media studies and physical education.
- The academy makes good use of the Year 7 catch up funding to promote better reading. It is doing this with great success in Year 7 and across Years 8 and 9. Progress is also improving in writing and mathematics, although not as quickly as in reading. In writing, students still do not consistently show the ability to write accurately throughout longer pieces of writing. The lack of confidence of some students to express their thoughts when speaking aloud also constrains their progress on occasion.
- Disabled students and those who have a special educational need receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants, and are now making good progress from their starting points.
- In 2014, the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students and their peers in the academy, in English, was one grade, and one and two-thirds when compared with other students nationally. In mathematics, they were one and a half grades behind other students in the academy and over two grades behind other students nationally. For students in the current Year 11 and younger students these gaps in attainment are closing rapidly. In terms of their progress, there is no discernible gap between disadvantaged students and others in the academy. In many cases the progress of disadvantaged students is outstripping that of others. Disadvantaged students in the current Year 11 are on course to do every bit as well as other students.

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	137134
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	453792

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	630
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sir Theodore Agnew
Principal	Kevin Blakey
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2013
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