

The Petchey Academy

Shackelwell Lane, London, E8 2HD

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Outstanding leadership and management at all levels have propelled the academy forward. This is because there is a sharp focus on raising standards through high quality teaching. Staff demonstrate commitment to leaders' vision for improvement.
- The academy's work to keep students safe is exemplary. The well-being of students, including provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is paramount to their learning. As a result, well-thought-out approaches to supporting them mean they are prepared for learning and achieving well.
- Achievement in the GCSE examinations and sixth form is good. Most students are making rapid progress, with disadvantaged students exceeding the standard expected nationally and performing as well as their peers.
- Behaviour is mostly good and students apply themselves to their work primarily because they believe in and apply the Petchey Way, 'If I think I can...I can. Students therefore demonstrate resilience and a 'can do' approach as they strive to achieve well.
- A combination of good-quality teaching, a broad and innovative curriculum and enhanced activities to accelerate learning leads to students achieving well.
- The sixth form is very well led. Regardless of their starting points, students thrive in The University Gateway. This results in most moving on to higher education, with an increasing number entering the Russell Group universities.
- The governing body is skilful and its approach to strategic management means that the governors do not stand still; forward planning and challenging staff underpins their work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching is not consistently good in all subjects and this affects students' overall attainment.
- The attitudes and behaviour of a very small minority of students is not good. This leads to low-level disruption affecting teaching and learning in a few lessons.
- Achievement in English, a key subject, is not as consistently good as it is in mathematics.
- Some of the most able students are not all making rapid progress to gain the highest grades possible in the GCSE examinations.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 41 parts of lessons, 10 of them jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons to observe the quality of assessment and students' behaviour and attitudes.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, the Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders, four groups of students, a few parents and the safer neighbourhood officer. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority. A separate meeting was held with three other governors on safeguarding matters.
- Inspectors looked very closely at the academy's work, including the self-evaluation, minutes of the governing body meetings, students' work, information on students' progress over time, documents relating to the curriculum, monitoring and evaluation, and teaching and learning. A range of policies on, for example, safeguarding, behaviour, marking, equal opportunity and provision for students with a disability and/or special educational needs were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 54 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire.
- The academy's most recent student survey was also evaluated and 76 completed Ofsted inspection questionnaires for staff were analysed and considered.

Inspection team

Carmen Rodney, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector
Michael O'Sullivan	Additional Inspector
Tim Body	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school and has more boys than girls.
- The vast majority of students are from minority ethnic groups, and the proportion is much higher than the national average. The three largest groups are from Any Other Black background, those of Caribbean heritage and those from Any Other White background.
- A high proportion of students are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding provided for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority, or with parents in the armed forces).
- The proportion of students who speak a first language other than English is high.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well above the national average.
- The academy specialist provision is in health, care and medical science. It was awarded the Investors in People and Artsmark Gold level accreditation in 2014.
- The academy meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eradicate teaching that falls below good over time so that:
 - all teaching is good or better, leading to students attaining average and above average standards, and making exceptionally good progress in all subjects,
 - teaching consistently challenges all students, in particular the most-able students
 - teachers apply the academy's marking policy rigorously to help students improve their work.
- Eradicate all instances of unacceptable low-level disruption in lessons through consistent applications of the academy's classroom management policy.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The outstanding leadership and management of senior leaders, including the governing body, have sustained the momentum of improvement since the previous inspection. Senior leaders are very committed to moving the school forward and constantly challenge staff to give their best.
- Staff at all levels, and governors, show commitment and share the academy's vision of helping students to achieve against all odds. They use innovative and highly effective pastoral systems to support students very well. Hence, the vision statement, 'inspiring and supporting every child' is fundamental to working with students.
- The 'can do culture' of high expectations emanates from the senior leaders, trickling from the governing body through to the staff, students and parents. Staff, under the outstanding leadership of the Principal and other senior and middle leaders, are highly responsive and sensitive to the needs of students.
- Leaders know the students exceptionally well and information about personal circumstances or local challenges are not accepted as excuses for low expectations. Rather, students are compelled to achieve well because their well-being is prioritised and staff have high expectations of academic achievement. A strengthened welfare service in terms of people, time and resources means that students receive exemplary support. This is linked to the restructuring of the academy day and the Renaissance unit.
- The Principal is very well supported by senior and middle leaders; she has won their respect and loyalty to the academy. Team effort is tangible, roles are clearly defined and distributed, and aspiring leaders are trained in-house. Planning for the academy's future leadership is well thought out; extensive professional development, linked to the needs of individuals and the corporate plan, leads to staff embracing opportunities to influence change. For example, middle leaders were instrumental in using international research to reshape the pastoral system. Similarly, staff teaching the new computer science course are pursuing further studies.
- A key strength of the academy's work is the outstanding practice used to safeguard students. Staff alertness and the sensitive and timely manner in which interventions and referrals are handled internally contribute to students knowing that help and protection are always available.
- Very good systems are used to monitor and develop students' behaviour and attitudes to learning and provide additional support, as necessary.
- Robust procedures to monitor students' progress ensure that the Equality Act 2010 is fully implemented. Consequently, all students can have full access to the resources provided to support their academic and pastoral development. Information on students' progress is used effectively with senior leaders acting decisively and doing whatever it takes to prevent students underachieving. As a result, the attainment gap has decreased significantly and the vast majority of disadvantaged students are making rapid progress.
- The unrelenting focus on the quality of teaching means that overall; the quality of teaching is good. This strength has been sustained despite a minority of staff leaving each school year. The monitoring cycle draws on a range of initiatives to develop teaching further. Learning communities, mentors, lead teachers, for example, are able to spread the benefits of their expertise widely. There is a sharp focus on providing targeted and intensive support, and staff know the consequences when the quality of their work fails to meet the Petchey and national Teaching Standards. Senior leaders recognise that all teaching is not consistently good and there is still more to do. Nevertheless, since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and, as a result, virtually all students are exceeding their target grades from low starting points.
- Performance management is robust and linked to a personal premium and a corporate award known as the academy premium. The academy award is used very well to incentivise staff to work as a corporate body to attain high outcomes for student attainment and attendance. In comparison, the staff personal premium is given if all objectives are achieved.
- An innovative curriculum based on seven learning powers (areas of learning) stimulates learning and contributes to students being well-prepared for Key Stage 4. The primary aims to make learners resilient, successful, creative and curious, and risk focus were evident in the good outcomes achieved in 2014. The breadth of provision has increased with the new 'Explore' curriculum, which provides a sharp focus on developing Year 7 students with low reading ages. Very good use is made of the additional funding to promote learning and support students' well-being. For example, reading is promoted well in all subjects, particularly in English and the humanities. Tracking information shows that the majority of students are making accelerated progress in improving their reading. Similarly, pastorally, case studies show successful outcomes when help is timely for students at risk of harm and neglect.
- The range of choices at Key Stages 4 and 5, as well as the extensive enrichment activities, ensure that

pathways selected enhance students' learning. For example, the most-able students in the 'Excelsior' set receive projects as part of the GCSE offer while lower-attaining students are offered foundation learning courses. The Renaissance Centre personalises courses very well through the Ying programme for students with behavioural difficulties and the Yang programme for those with specific learning needs. The specialist provision is used very well to extend students' understanding working in academic and business settings.

- Strong emphasis on developing students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeates the curriculum. Ethical and moral concerns on topics such as fair trade permeate the academy's work in assemblies and daily seminars. Cultural development is extensive; students relish opportunities offered to showcase their artistic talents in drama, fashion and design, music and literature, for example. Equally, participation in the Hackney Youth Parliament provides insight into democratic values. Students' spiritual development, for instance, puts emphases on equality of access to a prayer room and respecting each other's faith without fear.
- As a diverse community, students are very well prepared for living in modern Britain. This is primarily linked to the Petchey Way which explicitly instils them with skills to respect traditions, show tolerance, stay safe, and uphold equality. Students in all key stages, including the sixth form, explore British history and values in all subjects, including the seminars. For example, they did not shy away from discussing the impact and wider implications of radicalism on individuals, communities and countries following the attack in Paris in January 2015.
- Relationships throughout the academy show that students have a good rapport with adults and with one another. Students embrace the positive ethos and harmonious relationship between the diverse population and say that they can immerse themselves in each other's religion and culture. Community cohesion is very well promoted and students feel that the Petchey Way reflects British values, including tolerance and respect.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the academy's ethos, its leadership and work with their children. The few spoken to were keen to emphasise the very good and regular communication system which keeps them well informed about all aspects of the academy's work.
- The academy works well with the local authority on specific initiatives and with other local schools on focusing on driving up standards for all community students.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The quality of governors' strategic management oversight is excellent, particularly in relation to safeguarding matters. Governors are reflective and very knowledgeable. They combine their governance skills with a range of skills from education and the corporate worlds including banking, finance, business and law. This helps them very well in fulfilling their statutory duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and safeguarding students.
 - Governors ensure that the link between policies and day-to-day practices are aligned. Consequently, the monitoring of safeguarding concerns and reporting lines is systematic. Governors understand the risks faced by students, and keep up-to-date with training on topical issues such as Prevent, radicalisation and/or extremism, e-safety, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, enforced marriages and gang-related crimes.
 - Governors work closely with senior leaders, providing support as critical friends and holding them to account for students' achievement through direct and regular meetings, visits and written reports. They use their knowledge of academic standards well and seek independent guidance to compare academic outcomes with local and national averages. Governors are thorough in triangulating evidence and use benchmarking very well to monitor how well targets are met.
 - Spending is kept under review and the governing body is fully in control of budgets and personnel.
 - Governors use and impact of additional funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students is kept under review. They are very knowledgeable about how well different groups of students are achieving. Academic and pastoral outcomes are well linked to teachers' performance and there is a clear message that payment is linked to the quality of teaching and outcomes. In 2014, few staff received a full reward because the expected corporate targets were not achieved at 5A*-C grades, including English and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. In most lessons, students show good attitudes and are positive about their learning because they believe in the Petchey Way and have adopted the 'If I think I can, I can' aspirational motto.

- Students take part enthusiastically in student leadership committees. These groups provide opportunities for the students to evaluate provision for their well-being, teaching and learning, and wider issues affecting the academy. Students undertake other roles such as mentors and councillors.
- Social skills, including etiquette and the ability to show off good conversational skills are developed well during the 'family service' at lunch time. Students learn about belonging to and being a part of a community when they wait on and serve each in their selected family group. While the vast majority of students are keen to learn, low-level disruption affects learning in a small minority of lessons. Nonetheless, students say that behaviour is improving and inappropriate behaviour is dealt with quickly and firmly; most parents and staff confirm this view.
- Students with challenging behaviours are responsive to the range of provision available to support them. As a result, incidents of inappropriate behaviour have fallen and the proportion of fixed-term exclusion is very low when compared with other local schools.
- Students are proud of their academy and enjoy attending regularly. Attendance is above average and persistent absence is well below average for the very few known groups who do not attend regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Students in all key stages and in the sixth form say they feel safe and very well cared for.
- The time given to personal safety in seminar sessions leads to students being very positive about the attention given to their personal development. They say, 'It's the time in the day, which is all about me.' The seminars are a focal point in the curriculum for students to explore and reflect on issues on managing risks outside of school as well as during lessons when using the internet. Without exception, students are very well informed about potential risks and how to minimise them because the academy staff do not flinch from dealing with the realities of events as they occur locally, nationally and wider afield.
- Students are emphatic that there is very little bullying and say that if it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly. They recognise that incidents of bullying linked to differences such as race, gender and sexual orientation are dealt with firmly. As a result, students know that the academy is a protective community where they can receive help. Case studies show that students at risk of harm are successfully supported to receive the help and support needed to handle personal difficulties and potential fears.
- Steps to secure the safety of students are well known beyond the boundaries of the academy: staff are highly visible throughout the day and mobile phones are banned.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most teaching is effective and leads to students learning well. Since the last inspection, the proportion of teaching that is good or better is higher and improving because of the sharp focus on developing skills to accelerate students' progress. The academy is aware that a small minority of teaching is not consistently good; leaders maintain an uncompromising stance when working with staff to develop their teaching.
- Good subject knowledge and understanding of students' starting points are used well to plan and structure lessons. Tasks are well thought out and used to build on prior learning, and students are keen to share ideas. As a result, the pace of learning is fast, and students' confidence increases. They respond quickly and accurately to quick-fire questioning and demonstrate original ideas. This was seen when Year 7 students were asked to create a script for a graphic novel in English.
- Students are highly responsive when the working environment is underpinned by good classroom management. When this happens, there is mutual respect between all parties, work is stimulating and challenges students to think because expectations of what they can achieve are shared.
- Good use is made of open-ended questioning; good attention is given to ensure that key vocabulary is used accurately and students are briefed well about how to give perceptive answers. Teachers demonstrate the standard of work expected; students are well prepared for assessments and examinations and this also helps them to learn well.
- A very small minority of teaching does not provide enough challenge. Discussion with students indicates that work in these lessons does not always take into account their individual needs and is occasionally repetitive. In a number of instances observed during the inspection, the most able students were not always challenged sufficiently. Likewise, even in lower-attaining sets, a few students were of the opinion that they could be pushed more. The pace of learning is typically slow when attention is not given to using discussion well to explore students' learning. Progress is also affected when planning is unstructured and prior learning is not used effectively to develop new skills. On these occasions, questions and activities are not targeted well, planning is unstructured and there is insufficient extension of students' knowledge.

When classroom management breaks down, few students manage to do any work. While this is not typical, it is a reason why teaching and behaviour are not better than good.

- Students are generally well supported in lessons, particularly in the Renaissance centre. Teaching assistants are well deployed and good attention is given to matching their specialist skills to the needs of students receiving either behaviour or academic support.
- The marking policy is not implemented consistently. Technical errors are not always corrected; comments lack detail about strengths and areas for improvement to help students know what needs to improve.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' achievement is good. They enter the academy with standards that are well below average in both English and mathematics. As a result of effective teaching and support, and students' willingness to learn, the vast majority make good progress over time. An increasing majority make exceptionally good progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Standards of attainment in the GCSE examinations at 5A*-C, including English and mathematics, have been sustained since the last inspection. At the time, they were above but not significantly different from the national average. Standards were particularly high in history, Spanish and psychology, hospitality and catering, business, core science, and information and communication technology.
- Students' achievement in 2014 was the best of the last three years. However, standards achieved and progress made masks the relatively lower underperformance of students in English, the performing arts and additional science. Difficulties with marking some aspects of work in English and the performing arts subjects depressed the number of students achieving higher GCSE A*-C grades. Senior leaders have moved swiftly to resolve the issues by using external examiners to increase the capacity of staff to moderate students' work accurately. As a result, the academy expects standards in English and the performing arts to rise well above the previous performance. Current information on students' performance shows that over two thirds are on target. The predicted GCSE grades are, however, much higher. During the inspection, lessons seen indicated that students were achieving well in English.
- The most-able students in Year 10 take GCSE mathematics one year early with all achieving good outcomes. In 2014, of those entered, 77% achieved GCSE grades A*/A in the subject.
- Performance for the most-able students was above average in the GCSE examinations; nevertheless, overall, the level of progress was slower than that expected nationally for this group and below their peers. Most are not gaining the highest grades A*/A. Those spoken to during the inspection enjoy the project work in the 'Excelsior' group but say that work could still be more challenging.
- Students with a disability or special educational needs performed above the average expected for their group. Students supported with school action plus and school action achieved a similar average GCSE Grade C to their peers in the school. The very few with a statement of special educational needs made sound progress.
- Disadvantaged students are making significantly good progress and the attainment gap narrowed in 2014. In English, they were at least one quarter of a grade behind their peers in the school while in mathematics; they were at least one third of a grade behind in mathematics. These students achieve similar results to their peers in the school and their rate of progress exceeds the national average for their group.
- Most ethnic groups achieved better outcomes than the average expected for their respective group nationally and overall, their average grade was similar to their peers in the school. This includes the majority of students in the cohort who speak English as an additional language. The very few students of Asian heritage, Any Other ethnic group, and Irish heritage achieved the higher GCSE grades. The few White British students achieved as well as others but those with a statement of special educational need depressed the outcomes, overall. Students from Caribbean background and Any Other Black background made slightly slower progress than their peers in the school.
- As a result of high expectations, students on average were entered for 10 GCSE subjects, with the most able taking 12 or more subjects. No group underachieves because staff know students very well. Staff use very good tracking systems to analyse data, spot underachievement and provide effective specialist support for those who are likely to struggle with personal matters and/or academic work.

The sixth form provision is good

- Sixth form students make very good use of the opportunities offered to them in University Gateway. They

act as excellent role models for younger students in relation to their behaviour and attitudes to learning, by demonstrating how Petchey students can use every opening available to improve their life chances.

- The overwhelming majority of students go on to higher education, including 33% entering Russell Group universities and a further 14% going on to medical-related studies. Preparation for higher education builds on the exemplary advice and support provided in earlier years so that students are well prepared for the rigour of academic studies. Students draw on the support of the academy careers advisor whose work with them is well supplemented by an external consultant, talks, visits to universities, and access to appropriate software.
- Students enter the sixth form below average starting points, and make good progress and achieve average results in the AS-level and A-level courses. In comparison, above average results are achieved in the Cambridge Pre-U, vocational and applied studies courses.
- Consistently good-quality teaching leads to students being stretched and achieving well by the end of Year 13. Effective use is made of research and project work, as seen in business education and applied information and communication technology. Such work contributes to students developing a range of study skills which are supplemented by work experience and high-quality exposure to experiencing internships in the city.
- Students' exemplary behaviour and attitudes propel them to learn well. Their attendance is well above average; however, at 70%, the proportion of students staying on from Year 12 to Year 13 is relatively low when compared with the national average.
- Students make a positive contribution to the academy, acting as ambassadors and senior leaders in the student leadership team. Their input on sub-committees, which include evaluating the quality of teaching, provides them with opportunity to critique and provide feedback to senior leaders on students' perception of best practice. They are of the opinion that their views have had an impact on improving the quality of teaching in the academy. As mentors, they act as positive role models when tutoring young students, for example in mathematics.
- Without exception, all sixth form students feel safe in the academy. In keeping with the rest of the student population, the staff actively demonstrate how well preventative work is integrated in the courses offered to stop students from falling into potential pitfalls that would compromise their safety.
- The excellent leadership and management are contributory factors to the academy being responsive to the needs of students and improving outcomes since the last inspection.

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	131062
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	449993

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,190
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dorothy Dalton
Principal	Olivia Cole
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 March 2012
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