

Sutherland Co-operative Academy

Gibbons Road, Trench, Telford, TF2 7JR

Inspection dates 3–4 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- Academy leaders have been too slow in improving the quality of teaching and the progress students make. Their evaluation of the academy's impact has been too optimistic. Leaders have not been robust enough in challenging inadequate teaching.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is inadequate. Not enough students make the progress they should. As a result, too few students gain five GCSEs graded C or above including English and mathematics.
- In 2014, the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students supported by additional government funding and their classmates widened.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not make the progress they should.
- The most able students in the school, although small in number, considerably underachieve.
- Teachers do not plan work which is appropriately challenging for all groups of students, particularly the most able. Teachers do not ensure that students have secured their skills and understanding before moving on to harder work.
- Teaching is inadequate. As a consequence of the quality of teaching over time, too few students have made enough progress in a range of GCSE subjects.
- Teachers' questioning in lessons does not always enthuse and inspire students to engage and respond in enough detail.
- Student's behaviour in lessons and their attitudes to their learning are not consistently good.
- Teachers' marking does not always give students sufficiently precise subject-specific next steps for improvement.
- Not all leaders of subjects are effective at improving teaching and the achievement of groups of students.
- The academy's targets for improving students' achievement and teachers' performance are not clear enough to be effective or to allow leaders to judge whether they have been achieved.
- Governors have not made sure that the academy's pupil premium funding has made a positive difference to the achievement of disadvantaged students.

The school has the following strengths

- The academy is a calm and orderly community.
- Students say they feel safe and well cared for in the academy. Good care is provided for students who face challenging circumstances.
- The reading skills of the weakest readers are improving, often rapidly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students’ learning and behaviour in 27 classes. Senior leaders joined inspectors on the majority of these visits. Inspectors also observed an assembly, breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised students’ books and folders during lessons and as a separate activity.
- Meetings were held with groups of students to discuss their experiences of the academy, including their views of behaviour, safety and lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Principal, other senior leaders, middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, the Finance Director of the Telford Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust and a representative of the Midlands Co-operative Society. Informal discussions also took place with staff. One inspector spoke by telephone to the centres providing alternative provision.
- Inspectors considered 12 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the 30 responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors analysed a variety of information about students’ progress, attendance and behaviour. They looked at a range of documentation including the school’s self-evaluation and development plans, and minutes from governing body meetings. The inspection team looked at the school’s safeguarding policies and at its records relating to the safeguarding of students.

Inspection team

Mark Capel, Lead inspector	Associate Inspector
Gillian Martin	Additional Inspector
Linda Lyn-Cook	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, 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 school

- Sutherland Co-operative Academy converted to become an academy school on 1st April 2013. When its predecessor school, Sutherland Business and Enterprise College, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be Grade 2 overall. Sutherland Co-operative Academy is part of the Telford Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust.
- Sutherland Co-operative Academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The vast majority of students are White British.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below that found nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, who are those supported through the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for students known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority) is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- There are currently six students who attend alternative or off-site provision. Students attend the Telford College of Arts and Technology and AFC Telford.
- The academy is working to develop aspects of its work in partnership with Wood Green Academy.
- In 2014 the academy failed to meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in all subjects, but particularly English and mathematics by making sure that all teachers:
 - have high expectations of what students can achieve
 - plan work at the right level of difficulty and challenge so that students make good progress
 - question students more effectively to assess their learning and progress and to provide them with greater opportunities for reflection and discussion, in order to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are studying
 - help students to secure their knowledge and understanding before moving on to the next level of work
 - mark students' work as effectively as in the best practice seen in some subjects.
- Raise achievement in all subjects, especially English and mathematics by ensuring:
 - all students, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, make the progress they should
 - the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other students nationally is closed
 - the most able students make at least good progress and achieve well.
- Improve leadership and management so that all actions drive improvements in students' achievement by making sure that:
 - leaders' evaluation of the academy's effectiveness and predictions of students' achievement are more rigorous and accurate
 - school improvement plans include precise and measurable targets to improve students' outcomes,

making it clear when these targets have to be achieved

- the desired impact of actions is clearly set out in the school improvement plans and regularly checked by academy leaders and the governing body
- leaders check teaching more effectively and make good use of the information gained to quickly improve its quality
- leaders set clear targets for teachers to improve their work and provide appropriate training to help teachers make the necessary changes
- senior leaders effectively support and challenge subject leaders to speed up the progress made by all groups of students, particularly disadvantaged and disabled students and those who have special educational needs
- the spending of the pupil premium funding has a direct impact on the achievement of the students for whom it is intended.

■ Improve students' behaviour in lessons by:

- ensuring that all teachers regularly check that all students are on task and engaged with their work
- providing more challenging learning opportunities to motivate students, build their confidence and raise their expectations about how much they can achieve.

An external review of the academy's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Academy leaders have experienced a period of significant turbulence as a consequence of joining the multi-academy trust in April 2013. As a result, they did not respond quickly enough to tackle the decline in students' achievement in 2013.
- Academy leaders' self-evaluation and predictions for student achievement have not been accurate. They have focused too much on students' attainment and not on whether they are making rapid enough progress. In 2014, students' achievement further declined and the academy failed to meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' achievement at the end of Key Stage 4.
- Senior leaders have taken action to improve students' achievement since September 2014. Academy records show that students are now making better progress. However, inaccurate assessment and unreliable predictions in the past mean leaders are uncertain how well students are likely to achieve in 2015.
- Leaders' plans for improvement correctly indicate the main priorities needed to improve the academy. However, the plans do not have sufficiently sharp targets to improve students' outcomes and to allow leaders to judge the impact of the plans. The plans also include too many additional actions that risk distracting teachers from the key issue of raising students' achievement.
- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching, taking into account students' progress over time, lesson observations and students' work in books. However, the impact of this monitoring is weak because leaders have not been sufficiently robust in using the information gained to challenge weak teaching and identify appropriate training for all members of staff.
- Spending of the pupil premium funding has not been effective in improving the achievement of disadvantaged students. Leaders now have a detailed spending plan for pupil premium funding but this does not have precise enough targets to enable them to measure what impact the spending is having on improving outcomes for these students.
- Academy staff are now more focused on students' progress as well as their attainment. Students are set challenging targets and their progress towards achieving these is now being tracked in detail. Leaders now intervene quickly to provide a range of additional support for students who are not making the progress they should. The impact of this can be seen in current academy records, which show that students' achievement is improving. However, some teachers rely too heavily on senior leaders to lead these interventions.
- Leaders of subjects are now held more rigorously to account for students' performance in their subject areas and this is beginning to secure improvements in a range of subjects. The academy has four specialist leaders in education (SLEs) and these are working in partnership with other academies. As a result, the skills and expertise of subject leaders are improving. Nevertheless, their effectiveness remains inconsistent.
- Academy leaders have reviewed the curriculum and ensured that the range of subjects is broader and more balanced. More students are now able to follow EBACC courses (English, mathematics, a language, history or geography and two sciences). The academy ensures all students are able to study for qualifications suitable to their needs and enables individual students to follow an appropriate and relevant curriculum.
- The personal, social, health, economic and citizenship education curriculum is well planned across subject lessons, the assembly programme and special events. Students in Year 7 and Year 8 develop their understanding of key issues such as equity, equality and democracy well. As a result, the curriculum is effective in developing co-operative values which successfully foster good relations and makes sure that any discrimination is robustly challenged. This, together with the academy's ethos of strongly promoting,

tolerance, respect and understanding of democracy, means that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- The academy provides students with effective information, advice and guidance on the subjects they choose to study in Years 10 and 11 and in preparation for what they will do beyond Year 11. Careers advisors are available in school and offer a service to meet the needs of each student. There are regular careers events in the academy.
- The academy's arrangements for safeguarding students meet requirements. Staff are well informed about child protection procedures. Academy leaders take appropriate action to secure the safety and welfare of students. They check that other agencies are doing everything they can to help potentially vulnerable students or those who need additional support.
- Academy leaders regularly make checks on the small number of students who attend courses away from the school. They make sure these students are safe and making good progress.
- The Telford Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust has not provided the academy with appropriate support or adopted systems which ensure a sufficiently rigorous process to review standards. As a result, the Trust has not prevented the decline in the quality of education provided by the academy. Sutherland Co-operative Academy is in the process of discussing arrangements with an alternative academy sponsor.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not ensured that students achieve well. There has been limited impact of their work in the past.
 - Governors have not been effective in making sure that the academy's spending of pupil premium funding has made a positive difference to the achievement of disadvantaged students.
 - Governors now have a clearer understanding of their role in holding academy leaders more rigorously to account. The Chair of the Governing Body was elected in September 2014 and has a strong background in educational leadership.
 - There is a clear structure to the governing body with well defined roles and responsibilities for governors. Governors undertake regular training to ensure they are best able to fulfil their role.
 - Governors regularly visit the school and now effectively challenge the information provided by the school on the quality of teaching and the academy's performance, particularly through the Floor Standards Monitoring Committee which meets every fortnight. They meet with leaders from all levels and each area of the school to review the progress being made in various aspects of the academy's work.
 - Governors understand how the school uses performance management in deciding whether leaders and teachers should or should not receive pay rises based on their impact on the academy's performance.
 - Governors are efficient in ensuring that statutory duties are met, especially with regard to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In some lessons, particularly in lower sets, a few students are not keen to learn and do not always pay attention. This disturbs the learning of other students.
- The majority of students have good attitudes to learning. They arrive on time at the academy, go to their lessons promptly and quickly settle to their work. They willingly follow clear routines in lessons and listen to staff. Relationships between teachers and students in lessons are very positive. Students co-operate with each other and support each other with their learning.
- At break and lunchtimes students behave sensibly. The academy is calm and orderly and students from different backgrounds get on well with each other. There is very little litter around the academy site.
- There is a harmonious and supportive atmosphere around the academy. Good attitudes are promoted

through a well understood system of co-operative values which are effectively developed through the planned curriculum. This encourages the students to develop the qualities of self-help, self-responsibility, equity, equality, democracy and solidarity.

- Students are polite and helpful. They willingly contribute to academy life. For example, students are trained as peer mentors to support other students with their achievement and others serve as prefects and librarians.
- Academy attendance is broadly in line with the national average and there are good systems in place to ensure that students attend regularly. The number of students who are frequently absent from the academy is the same as the national average.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The safety of students is given a high priority within the academy.
- Students, including the most vulnerable, say that they feel safe and secure in the academy. They were clear that they trust adults in the academy and are confident they will be listened to. The academy has a school nurse and community support officer who are effective in supporting students. The high levels of adult supervision at breaktimes and lunchtimes along with the well-resourced areas provided for students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, ensure students feel safe in the academy.
- The academy records and swiftly acts upon any incidents of bullying. According to students, incidents of bullying are rare and they are confident that if students are unpleasant to each other the school will deal with it quickly and effectively.
- The academy uses the curriculum and special events such as the 'Health Roadshow' well to teach students how to keep themselves safe. Important topics include cyber-bullying, knife crime, safe relationships, sexual health and drugs and alcohol awareness.
- The academy has good procedures for child protection. The staff who lead this area are well trained and knowledgeable. Child protection and safeguarding are a key part of induction for new staff. The academy is robust in ensuring that any incidents are thoroughly dealt with and followed up by other agencies. Staff are trained on how to spot signs and tackle issues related to the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Academy leaders carefully monitor the behaviour, attendance and safety of the small number of students attending alternative provision. An inspector's phone call to the two providers shows that students' behaviour and attendance are good and they are well cared for.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate. Due to weak teaching over time most students have not made the progress they should, particularly in English and mathematics. There is not enough good teaching to make sure that students achieve well and make rapid gains in their learning.
- Teachers' expectations of what students can and should achieve are too low. Teaching does not focus on the needs of different groups because teachers' planning does not take sufficient account of students' achievement or needs. As a result, too many students, including disadvantaged students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs, have not done well enough.
- Teachers' questioning does not always challenge students effectively. Teachers often ask low-level questions or provide students with the answers without giving them time to think. As a result, students rely upon their teachers for answers and solutions instead of developing their own skills in the subject.
- Some teachers do not make sure that all students have acquired necessary knowledge and understanding of what they are learning before moving on to the next level of work. This limits the progress made by

some.

- Students books show that, where teachers give helpful guidance and students act upon the advice, their progress speeds up. However, such effective practice is not sufficiently widespread to ensure all students benefit from teachers' marking.
- Some students, particularly less able students, do not easily focus on their learning. Some teachers do not do enough to help students with this. Sometimes these students lack resilience and wait for the teacher or other adults to provide answers and solutions, rather than work things out for themselves.
- Teachers do not always provide work that is hard enough to sufficiently challenge the most able students. For example, in science there is little evidence of activities or assessment that require more able students to include appropriate depth in their written answers to questions.
- The teaching that results in the best learning is well planned and carefully focused on what all students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs, can and should learn in the lesson and how this links to their progress over time. Teachers in these lessons set high expectations for students. Most students rise to this challenge. Some teachers use a range of teaching materials which match the different needs of groups of students. Effective teachers use their good subject knowledge to pose challenging questions which motivate students to think deeply. As a result of such teaching approaches, students in these lessons are fully engaged with their learning and make good progress.
- The academy has put strategies in place to improve the reading, spelling, handwriting and numerical skills of disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Careful monitoring by the leader of this aspect of the academy's work shows that these strategies are beginning to make a positive difference to the progress these students make, particularly in their reading.

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate because students do not make the progress they should in English, mathematics and several other subjects.
- Students join the academy in Year 7 with below-average attainment in English and mathematics. Their attainment at the end of Year 11 remains below average in a number of subjects. In 2014, the proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at A*-C including English and mathematics fell to 32%. This figure is well-below average and much lower than students should have achieved given their starting points.
- The proportion of students making expected progress in English and mathematics is consistently below average. Their progress is not improving quickly enough and not enough students make more than nationally expected progress in English and mathematics. Disadvantaged students make slower progress than other students in English and mathematics.
- The gap between disadvantaged students and other students in gaining five or more GCSE passes at A*-C including English and mathematics remains wide. Only 16% of students supported through pupil premium funding achieved this measure compared to 44% of other students in the academy. In 2014 the results show that disadvantaged students attained two thirds of a grade lower in English and one and a half grades lower in mathematics compared to other students in the academy. The gap between the grades achieved by disadvantaged students in the school and other students nationally was one and one third of a grade in English and nearly one and a half grades for mathematics.
- The proportion of students achieving the EBACC (achieving a GCSE grade C or above in English, mathematics, a language, history or geography and two sciences) increased to 17% in 2014 but was still below the national average.
- In 2014, the attainment of disabled students and those who have special educational needs was lower than could be reasonably expected, given their starting points. The progress of these students in English

was well below other students nationally. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive well-targeted guidance and are well supported. However, as is the case for all students, teaching is not helping these students to make good progress.

- There are fewer more able students in the academy than is the case nationally. In 2014 these students made less progress in English and mathematics and gained fewer higher grades in other GCSE subjects than similar students nationally. The academy is now more focused on the achievements of these students and current academy records show an improving picture with more students following academic courses.
- Students, particularly boys, join the academy with low literacy skills and reading ages below their chronological age. Academy records show that, as a result of intensive literacy interventions funded by additional government money, the weakest students are quickly improving their reading ability.
- Students achieve well in a range of vocational subjects. All students taking vocational subjects such as information technology (IT), engineering and applied science make good progress.
- School leaders have chosen not to enter students early for GCSE examinations from now on. In 2014, the policy of early entry had no positive or negative impact on the achievement of students, including the most able.
- The progress made by the small number of students in alternative provision is similar to that of other students in following courses which combine GCSEs with vocational and work-related qualifications.

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	139451
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	453302

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rita Chowdhury
Principal	Stephen Wall
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01952 387800
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