

# Gilbert Inglefield Academy

Vandyke Road, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 3FU

## Inspection dates

14–15 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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.

- Achievement in mathematics is inadequate. Too many students fell below the standards expected in the 2014 national tests for Year 6 pupils.
- Achievement in reading and writing is too variable. Too few students reached the expected level in the Year 6 national tests in 2014 in writing and spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Not all teachers have sufficient knowledge to teach mathematics effectively. Practical activities are poorly planned. Teachers do not give students sufficient time to practise their mathematical skills.
- Achievement in Key Stage 3 is better than it is in Key Stage 2 but students currently in the school are not making fast enough progress to make up for lost ground when they were in Key Stage 2.
- Poorly presented, incomplete work and the inaccurate use of written English are often left unchecked by teachers.
- The attendance of disadvantaged students has been too variable. The gap between the achievement of these students and others is not closing quickly enough.
- The most able students underachieve because the work they are given is not challenging. They are not moved on to harder tasks quickly enough.
- Teachers' marking and feedback are ineffective because they are rarely detailed enough to help students to improve their work. Students' work is sometimes not marked for long periods of time.
- Some students lose concentration too easily, especially when lessons fail to challenge them at an appropriate level.
- Leaders and managers have failed to maintain the good standards that were reported at the last inspection in 2012 and have not demonstrated the capacity to improve the academy.
- Leaders at all levels do not check the progress of groups of students in sufficient depth.
- The lack of training for subject leaders means that many have failed to check their areas accurately or ensure that teaching and achievement are good.
- The governing body is ineffective. Governors do not adequately monitor the academy's work, especially the quality of teaching and the use and impact of additional funding.
- Governors do not have an accurate view of the academy's weaknesses and do not hold senior leaders to account for their plans and actions.

### The school has the following strengths

- The academy is starting to improve because the new headteacher has an accurate understanding of the weaknesses. She has worked swiftly to prioritise improvements and address shortcomings.
- Teaching is usually good in music and personal, social and health education.
- Many students are polite, courteous and dress smartly.
- The academy makes sure that students feel safe.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 26 lessons, nine of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. The inspection team made several short visits to other lessons to check on the progress and behaviour of different groups of students. Inspectors also looked at a wide range of students' work in their books.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students from all year groups. Other meetings were held with members of the governing body and with senior leaders and staff, including those responsible for leading subjects.
- Inspectors analysed the 52 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors observed the work of the academy and looked at a number of documents, including those relating to the monitoring of teaching and the targets set for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at records relating to attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding, the academy's development plan and data on students' progress.

## Inspection team

Richard Sutton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Annabel Bolt

Additional Inspector

Suha Ahmad

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

- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school (although the academy is a middle school, it is deemed to be a secondary school).
- Nine out of ten students are from White British backgrounds. There are no other significant groups of students in the academy and almost all students speak English as their first language.
- At 18.8%, the proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is a little above average.
- The pupil premium, which is additional funding given to schools for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals, provides support for just under one fifth of students. This is below average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- No students are educated off-site or through alternative provision.
- The academy did not have a substantive headteacher in post from January 2014 to August 2014.
- The headteacher joined the academy in September 2014.
- A new mathematics leader took up post a week before the inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of all groups of students, particularly the most able students and disadvantaged students, so achievement rapidly improves by making sure that:
  - work is engaging and set at the right level for students of different abilities in all subjects
  - students' work is marked frequently and teachers give guidance on how students can improve their work
  - students are moved on to new work as soon as they are ready
  - all teachers insist on students presenting their work neatly and accurately
  - students' spelling, punctuation and grammar are checked in all subjects
  - work which is missed or unfinished is caught up.
- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
  - ensuring that all mathematics teachers have a good level of knowledge about the subject
  - making sure that students are given sufficient time to practise particular skills
  - providing the most able students with regular opportunities to study more complicated mathematical problems
  - making sure that practical activities are well matched to the key skills and concepts that students are learning.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - governors develop the skills required to carefully monitor the impact of the pupil premium and other funding, and robustly hold the academy to account for the quality of its teaching and students' achievement.
  - the mathematics action plan is rapidly implemented and regularly monitored for its impact on students' achievement
  - students' achievement is checked in detail so that any underachievement or differences between the achievement of different groups of students can be tackled quickly

- subject leaders are sufficiently skilled to check achievement and teaching in their areas and that they are held to account for how this information is used to secure improvements
- the attendance of different groups of students is regularly checked, particularly for disadvantaged students
- all students feel confident that any bullying will be dealt with quickly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school'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

- Leaders have not demonstrated the capacity to improve the academy because they have failed to maintain the good standards of teaching, achievement and behaviour that were reported in the previous Ofsted inspection in 2012. Prior to the arrival of the headteacher in September 2014, the governing body presided over the school's decline without holding senior leaders to account.
- Leaders, including governors, have not checked the achievement of all the different groups of students in sufficient detail in recent years. As a result, they have been unable to identify how teaching needs to improve to quickly help different groups of students to catch up or reach their full potential. Consequently, leaders do not adequately make sure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Leaders do not check the attendance of different groups of students which is one reason why the attendance of disadvantaged students has been too low for the past two years.
- Subject leaders have not received appropriate and regular training. As a result, checks which they do on the quality of teaching and achievement are not accurate enough. In addition, subject leaders have not been adequately held to account for the impact of their actions by senior leaders or the governing body.
- The academy does not use effectively its additional funds, such as the pupil premium. Gaps between disadvantaged students and others are not closing quickly enough either at the end of Year 6 or Year 8, though the difference did narrow in writing in 2014. The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are currently in the academy is too variable, overall.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- The curriculum is not well matched to students' different abilities. For example, the way the curriculum is planned in mathematics means that students are unable to practise important skills for sufficient time in mathematics lessons and in other subjects. In addition, the importance of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar is not adequately taught or checked in different subjects across the curriculum.
- There are some strengths in the curriculum such as a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are enjoyed by students and the Year 8 options programme. Many of these activities, including visits to religious sites, music concerts and citizenship days help students to learn about other cultures and develop their understanding of life in modern Britain. These activities, as well as the assembly programme, help students to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The academy is reviewing its curriculum and assessment arrangements in the light of changes to the National Curriculum.
- The academy has used the additional primary sport funding well. It has been able to improve the range of sporting activities available and this has significantly improved participation. In addition, students enjoy the wider range of competitive sports that are available to them. As a result, students are improving their attainment in PE as well as developing a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
- Students in Year 8 receive appropriate independent careers advice and guidance and they are able to explore their future career options through personal, social and health education lessons.
- Leaders have ensured that the vast majority of students and staff show a good level of respect for each other. There is no hint of discrimination anywhere in the academy. Arrangements for keeping students safe meet requirements.
- Since joining the academy in September 2014, the headteacher has quickly and accurately identified almost all of the issues that this inspection has highlighted and she has begun to deal with the most important ones, including the creation of an appropriately focused mathematics action plan. The headteacher has introduced new systems and structures to check the school's work and plan improvement by establishing clear lines of accountability, including for governors. This has sharpened the focus of the governing body, and has strengthened academy leadership, but it is too early to see the impact of this

work in terms of provision and outcomes for students.

#### ■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has not systematically held the academy to account for its effectiveness. Poor monitoring means that governors have an inadequate understanding of the academy's weaknesses.
- The governing body is not as skilled as it should be in interpreting students' achievement data and this is a significant barrier to its ability to hold the academy to account.
- Governors do not have a good enough strategic overview of how the additional pupil premium funding is used and they have not held the academy to account for the underachievement of eligible students. They have very little knowledge about how the additional Year 7 'catch-up' funding is used and they do not check this.
- Governors have ensured there are appropriate procedures in place to tackle underperformance of staff, should these be required, but do not have a sufficiently detailed understanding about the quality of teaching and the management of staff performance. They have not been involved in making decisions about whether teachers should receive pay rises in relation to meeting their targets in the past.
- The governing body carries out its statutory responsibilities regarding safeguarding: appropriate checks are in place for visitors to the academy, and all staff have been checked as required and are trained to keep students safe and free from harm.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

**requires improvement**

#### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Although most students are attentive, even when teaching is not as good as it could be, some students too easily lose concentration.
- Students do not take enough pride in their work. Too often it is untidy, poorly presented, unfinished and inaccurate.
- Attendance is below average but it is improving. The attendance of disadvantaged students has been too low for the past two years though the attendance of this group of students is also improving.
- Many students are polite, well-mannered and take pride in their appearance. Students arrive to the academy and lessons on time and they show a good level of respect towards each other as well as the academy environment; the site is tidy and free from litter.
- Behaviour is improving as a result of steps taken by the headteacher. The number of students who are excluded from the academy is reducing and exclusions are below average.

#### **Safety**

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The academy has made sure that students have a good understanding of safety matters, including how to keep safe when working online.
- Bullying is rare at the academy and, as a result, students feel safe. When it does occur, most students are confident that staff deal with matters effectively. Students are taught about the different forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying, and they are appropriately equipped to manage such situations should they occur. They are also aware of wider safety issues. For example, in Year 5, students were learning about keeping safe on the roads.
- Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are robust and comprehensive.

### **The quality of teaching**

**is inadequate**

- Teaching is inadequate because it fails to meet the needs of the students, particularly the most able students and those who are disadvantaged. Teaching in mathematics is inadequate which means that many students are not developing key mathematical skills well enough. The teaching of reading and

writing is variable and not consistently good for all groups of students. In particular, spelling, punctuation and grammar are not checked or taught consistently well in all subjects.

- Teaching for disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement because students do not benefit from consistently good teaching. Work is sometimes too easy or too hard for these students. However, those who receive additional support in small groups make better progress because teachers and teaching assistants have a good understanding of students' particular needs.
- Teaching for the most able students is not challenging enough. Teachers do not consistently plan work which is hard enough which means that these students are not achieving their full potential in many subjects.
- Teachers' marking rarely provides sufficient guidance to students on how to improve their work. As a result, many students do not know how to improve. Too many books go unmarked for long periods of time. This means that inaccurate work goes unchecked and students continue to make the same mistakes, including spelling, punctuation, grammar and basic mathematical skills.
- Teachers do not insist that students present neat and tidy work. In addition, some teachers do not require students to complete unfinished work or catch up missed work due to absence. This is particularly important for disadvantaged students, who have higher rates of absence than other students.
- Time is often lost in lessons because teachers do not make sure that students move on to harder work quickly once they have completed tasks. This is frequently the case in mathematics lessons.
- Not all mathematics teachers have a strong understanding of the subject. As a result, practical activities, for example, are often inaccurately matched to the tasks that students are working on.
- Teaching is usually good in music and personal, social and health education, for example. Most students enjoy these subjects because teachers make sure that activities are varied and appropriately challenging. Marking is particularly effective in personal, social and health education because it requires students to reflect on their learning and think hard about challenging concepts.

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- The achievement of students who are currently in the academy, particularly disadvantaged students and the most able students, is inadequate, because teaching is not good enough. Achievement across all year groups and for most groups of students in mathematics is inadequate and shows little sign of improvement.
- When students join the academy in Year 5 their attainment in writing varies from year to year, though it is often average in reading and below average in mathematics compared to what is typical for students of this age. In the national Key Stage 2 tests in 2014, a significant proportion of students failed to reach the expected level in mathematics, writing and in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test. Overall, students' attainment was one and a half terms behind other students nationally and in mathematics students were two and a half terms behind.
- Academy assessment data indicates that students make better progress in their two years in Key Stage 3 than in Key Stage 2. However, inspection evidence indicates that this acceleration is not rapid enough to make up for lost ground in Key Stage 2. This applies particularly for the most able students, disadvantaged students and for the majority of students in mathematics.
- In 2014, disadvantaged students in Year 6 achieved levels in reading and writing which were almost one year behind other students in the academy. In mathematics, students were just over a year behind. Compared to all students nationally, Year 6 students achieved levels in reading which were one year and one term behind other students, just over a year behind in writing and almost two years behind in mathematics. These differences have been getting wider since 2012 and show little sign of narrowing. In addition, in 2014, the academy's own data indicate that disadvantaged students make too little progress

by the time they reach the end of Year 8, compared to other students in the school. Gaps between their attainment and other academy students did not narrow in mathematics, reading and science.

- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is too variable and there are wide gaps between the achievement of many of these students and others. However, students often make good progress when they benefit from additional support in small groups.
- The most able students make slow progress because teachers do not plan work which is hard enough. Students spend too much time working on tasks and activities which they can already do or which they finish quickly because the work is too easy.
- Some students are supported by additional Year 7 'catch-up' funding, which helps those with attainment below the expected level in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. The academy uses this funding effectively to provide additional small group classes. Most students are catching up in English and mathematics.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138003
<b>Local authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	456064

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9-13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	468
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Bowater
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Swaffield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01525 372266
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