

Woodlands Academy

Broad Lane, Coventry, CV5 7FF

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement is too variable across subjects and year groups in the main school.
- For the past two years, too many students have not made good progress in science, modern foreign languages, history, geography and religious studies.
- Teachers do not do enough to help students improve handwriting or present work neatly and accurately.
- Teachers' marking and feedback do not always show students how to improve their work.
- Some teachers do not set hard enough work for the most able students.
- Too many sixth form students leave before completing their courses.
- Too few sixth form students who are re-taking GCSE English or mathematics achieve a good pass.
- Sixth form attendance is not as good as it should be.
- Leaders do not check teaching and achievement in sufficient detail. Improvements in science and modern foreign languages are not happening quickly enough.
- The targets which are set to help teachers improve their work are not detailed enough.
- Some subject leaders have not had sufficient training to help them to check and improve teaching and achievement.
- The governing body does not check achievement in the sixth form as well as it should, and it does not monitor the impact that additional Year 7 'catch-up' funding has for eligible students.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching and achievement in English are good.
- The leadership for disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good because many students make good progress.
- Achievement and teaching are improving in mathematics.
- Students have good attitudes to learning. Most behave well and are polite, courteous and well mannered.
- Students feel safe at the academy. Bullying is rare and students have a good understanding of a wide range of safety issues.
- The sixth form is improving because students are making better progress than they have in the past.
- The curriculum helps students in the main school and the sixth form to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding as well as their understanding of British values.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 31 lessons, 16 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 work in students' 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 58 responses to Ofsted's online parental 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
Cathryn Richards	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector
David Wolfson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Eight out of ten students are from White British backgrounds.
- Almost one student in five is from minority ethnic heritages. This is below the national average.
- Just over one in ten students speak English as an additional language which is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well 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 over one quarter of students. This is average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 attend City College and Henley College on a part-time basis to study vocational courses.
- The academy caters for boys only in Years 7 to 11. It admits girls into the sixth form which is called the West Coventry Sixth Form. This is a group of sixth forms that work with each other so that students have a wide range of courses to choose from.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement in the main school so that they are consistently good or better, particularly in science and modern foreign languages, by making sure that:
 - the most able students are always challenged to reach their full potential
 - marking and feedback always give students precise advice on how they can improve their work and that teachers check that the advice has been acted on
 - all teachers help students who have difficulties with handwriting to improve this and insist on neat and accurate presentation of work.
- Improve achievement in the sixth form by ensuring that:
 - students are given good information, advice and guidance so that they are following courses which are well matched to their needs and that they finish their courses
 - teaching is always effective in helping the most able students to achieve the highest grades
 - students who re-take GCSE mathematics or English achieve a good pass grade or follow a suitable course in which they can be successful
 - all students attend regularly.
- Improve the impact that leaders and managers have on achievement and teaching, particularly in science and modern foreign languages, in the main school and the sixth form by making sure that:
 - the checks that are made on the quality of teaching use all of the available information
 - all subject leaders have the skills to check achievement and teaching in detail
 - the targets which are set to help teachers improve their work are precisely focused on areas of teaching which need to improve
 - the governing body robustly checks achievement in the sixth form and monitors the impact of the additional Year 7 'catch-up' funding for eligible students.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not ensured that students consistently benefit from good or better teaching. As a result, students' achievement is too variable. In particular, senior leaders have not acted quickly enough to improve teaching and achievement in science and modern foreign languages.
- Senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching in the academy. However, up until recently, they have not used all the information that is available to establish how good teaching is. As a result, teachers do not always receive sufficient detail about how to improve their teaching.
- Subject leaders regularly check achievement and teaching in their areas. The impact of this is not always as good as it could be because some subject leaders have not been trained well enough to do this. This is an important reason why there is too much variability in teaching and achievement in the academy.
- All teachers are set targets to help them to improve their work. The targets do not have enough impact on the quality of teaching because the feedback they receive on their teaching is not detailed enough to show them how their teaching needs to improve to enable them to achieve their targets.
- The impact of the academy's additional funds, such as the pupil premium, is variable across year groups. The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and others in Year 11 in 2014 widened in mathematics and, to a lesser extent, in English.
- The curriculum is adequately matched to students' interest and abilities. While the curriculum does not have a consistently good impact on students' academic achievement because it is not always taught as well as it should be, it does have a good impact on students' behaviour and personal development. It is particularly effective in helping students in the main school and the sixth form to understand spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through the good focus days each half term. The topics covered also help students of all ages to understand a wide range of safety issues and develop an understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Students benefit from appropriate careers advice and guidance from Year 7, and they have plenty of opportunity to explore their future career options, as well as research GCSE and A level courses. However, the advice and guidance offered to students in Year 11 with regard to the sixth form have not always been as good as they should be.
- The leadership which supports disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good. Leaders make sure that any additional support is quickly put in place for individual students, and leaders make good use of external agencies, as appropriate.
- 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 pupils safe are good.
- Leaders check achievement and teaching for those students who attend alternative provision well, and keep a close eye on their behaviour and attendance. As a result, all students passed their courses last year.
- Leaders have demonstrated that they have the ability to improve the academy. Since the last inspection in 2013, leaders have improved the academy in many important ways, particularly teaching and achievement in English and mathematics. They have also sustained students' good behaviour and safety, which were also judged as good in 2013.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body does not hold sixth form leaders to account as well as it should. Governors do not

monitor students' achievement in the sixth form in the same detail as they do in the main school and they do not use national achievement data well enough to compare the academy's sixth form performance with others nationally.

- Governors know how the additional pupil premium funding is used and they check the impact of this funding for eligible students regularly. However, they do not monitor the impact of the additional Year 7 'catch-up' funding and, consequently, do not hold the academy to account for the impact that this funding has.
- In the main school, the governing body is skilled in interpreting students' achievement data and it knows how good teaching is. As a result, it holds leaders to account well for their plans and actions but it has failed to secure good teaching and achievement in science and modern foreign languages quickly enough.
- Governors are appropriately involved in making decisions about whether teachers should receive pay rises in relation to students making good progress. The governing body also has appropriate procedures in place for tackling staff underperformance.
- The governing body carries out its statutory duties fully. For example, governors ensure that the academy fulfils 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 are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students behave well in class and around the academy during break times. The vast majority of students are respectful of each other and their teachers. Most are polite, well-mannered and courteous and dress smartly. These qualities are regularly reinforced through a well-planned assembly programme.
- Students have many opportunities to take responsibility for behaviour in the academy. These include 'house captain' and prefect responsibilities, and they are an important reason why behaviour is good. Students enjoy these positions of responsibility.
- The house system gives students opportunities to work with others of different ages, and this is valued by students. As a result, students of all ages work well together and show a high level of cooperation.
- Most students have good attitudes to learning and work hard, try their best and show a good determination to succeed, even when teaching is not as good as it should be.
- Attendance is above average and improving. Students arrive punctually to lessons and most are well-prepared with the appropriate equipment.
- The proportion of students who are excluded is below average and has decreased considerably in recent years.
- Key Stage 4 students who attend alternative provision behave well and the academy checks this at regular points throughout the year. Students attend their courses regularly and leaders make sure that the students' attendance is checked on each day that students are working at these alternative venues.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students have a good understanding of safety matters, including how to keep safe when working online. They benefit from well-planned personal, social, health and citizenship days each half term which help them to understand a wide range of safety matters.
- Students overwhelmingly agree that bullying is rare and, as a result, students feel safe at the academy. Students learn about the different forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying, and they are appropriately equipped to manage such situations should they arise. Student 'bullying ambassadors'

provide support for any students who may be experiencing bullying.

- Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are comprehensive. All staff have received good training with respect to a wide range of safety matters and all are equipped with the skills to recognise students who may be at risk.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, teaching has improved in some areas such as English and mathematics, but in others it has not improved quickly enough, such as science and modern foreign languages. As a result, all groups of students, including those from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language, do not benefit from consistently good or better teaching and this variability is the main reason why teaching requires improvement.
- Teaching for the most able students is not always as well matched to the higher levels of skill and ability that these students have. Sometimes, work is too easy or students are not sufficiently challenged to think hard throughout the lesson.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback is variable. Some teachers offer students extremely well targeted feedback which results in students making good improvements to their work. However, this is not what students typically benefit from because much marking and feedback does not guide students well enough on how they can improve. Teachers do not regularly check that advice has been acted upon by students.
- A significant minority of students find handwriting difficult. Teachers do not always help students to develop their handwriting skills and this results in some students underachieving.
- Some teachers do not always insist that students produce neat and accurate work. As a result, work is sometimes difficult to read. This does not help students with revision.
- Most disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive good additional support from teaching assistants, and this has a good impact on their achievement in English, in particular. Some students benefit from working in small groups to improve their literacy skills. This is an effective strategy because teaching is well matched to students' skills and abilities.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving, and students are developing essential mathematical skills well. Mathematics teachers use detailed assessment information effectively to make sure that work is usually accurately matched to students' skills, though there is some variability.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because it is not consistently good or better for most groups of students across all subjects and year groups. As a result, by the time students complete Year 11, their grades are not as high as they could be in some subjects.
- In 2014, the proportion of students who achieved five or more good GCSE passes at grades A*-C, including English and mathematics, was average, but no better, when compared to boys nationally. This represented good progress for many students, but many students significantly underachieved in science, modern foreign languages, history, geography and religious studies as they have for the past two years. Achievement is beginning to improve in these subjects, but it is not happening quickly enough in science and modern foreign languages to ensure students are achieving well.
- Many of the most able students do not achieve as highly as they should because teaching is not always accurately matched to the students' skills and abilities. Consequently, over the past few years, the proportion of students who have achieved the highest grades in several subjects at GCSE has been too variable.

- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress, particularly in English. Although improving, these students do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English.
- The academy spends the additional pupil premium funding on additional staff who offer one-to-one or small-group academic and personal support when it is needed. In 2014, disadvantaged students in Year 11 achieved results that were, on average, almost a third of a grade lower in English and almost a full grade lower in mathematics. Compared to all students nationally, students achieved two thirds of a grade lower in English and just over one grade lower in mathematics. In English, the difference widened from 2013 compared to others in the academy but narrowed compared to others nationally. In mathematics, the gap widened compared to others in the academy and other students nationally. However, disadvantaged students who are currently in Year 11 are catching up and the gap is narrowing in both subjects, though it is more variable in other year groups.
- Some students in Year 7 are supported by additional 'catch-up' funding, which helps those who join the academy with attainment below the expected level in English and mathematics. The academy uses this funding to provide support for students at the summer school which it operates before students join the academy, as well as supporting reading through the use of various commercial computer-based reading packages, for example. The impact of this is inconsistent, though students currently in Year 7 are catching up quicker than those who are now in Year 8.
- In recent years, many students have taken examinations early at the end of Year 10. This has not been a good strategy as many students have underachieved, particularly in science. The academy has changed this policy and students now sit their examinations at the end of Year 11.
- The small number of students who attended local colleges to study vocational courses last year were successful in their chosen courses, and all of the students secured employment with training.
- In 2014, an above average proportion of students in Year 11 made the progress that is expected of them in English and an average proportion made the progress that is expected in mathematics. Although below average, the proportion of students who made progress that is better than expected in both English and mathematics improved considerably from 2013.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- The sixth form requires improvement because achievement and teaching are not consistently good. In particular, the most able students do not always benefit from teaching which fully challenges them throughout lessons, and other students do not always achieve the grades that they are capable of achieving.
- The West Coventry Sixth Form provides a wide range of courses to choose from, and students from the academy study some courses on other sites. However, leaders do not ensure that the quality of information, advice and guidance which students receive to help them decide which courses to study in the sixth form is always good. As a result, too many students have left the sixth form at the end of Year 12 and many have not completed their two-year courses.
- Students who re-take GCSE English or mathematics do not achieve well, and too many fail to achieve a good pass grade in either subject. An important reason for this is that some students have not been ready to work at this level and leaders have failed to offer students alternative qualifications which meet national requirements.
- Sixth form students have good attitudes to learning. Most students work hard and show a good commitment to succeed. However, some students do not attend as regularly as they should.
- Leaders are aware of the areas for improvement identified in this inspection and they are improving the sixth form. For example, they have implemented a good approach to checking each student's progress which helps them to quickly identify any underachievement and help students to catch up. As a result, students are making better progress and achieving higher grades than they have in the past.

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	137165
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	462583

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	795
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Walter Dye
Headteacher	Neil Charlton
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2013
Telephone number	024 7646 2634
Fax number	024 7646 7190
Email address	thewoodlands@woodlands.coventry.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and *inspects* to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234)
Textphone: [0161 618 8524](tel:01616188524)
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

