

Hemsworth Arts and Community Academy

Wakefield Road, Hemsworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF9 4AB

Inspection dates

12–13 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and students

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

- Students' achievement during the academy's first year was not good. In particular, students did not make good progress in the core subjects of mathematics and science, and in other key subjects, including geography and languages.
- Students' progress in mathematics and science is not improving as rapidly as it is in English.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough across all subjects to ensure that students make good or better progress.
- Teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment information to plan work that fully stretches or challenges all groups of students, including the most able.
- The rate of progress of disadvantaged students is improving, but there is still a gap between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged students and others in school and nationally.
- Where there is weaker teaching, which lacks challenge and pace, some students lose focus on their learning and become disruptive. This is not dealt with consistently well by all staff.
- Behaviour around the academy is boisterous at times. Too many students do not wear their uniform with pride.
- Attendance, which is below the national average, is improving but not quickly enough.
- Governors have not been fully effective in challenging leaders and the academy trust regarding the impact of their work. Their view of the academy's effectiveness is not fully accurate.

The school has the following strengths

- The Principal and the senior leadership team have established a clear and accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. They are taking decisive action to improve teaching and achievement.
- Significant strength is emerging in middle leadership, particularly in English, history and the arts, where achievement is now good. New leadership in mathematics is already beginning to impact on improved students' attainment.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress overall and are well supported in their studies.
- The academy's work to support weaker readers and disadvantaged students is sharply focused and effective.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is catered for well through a variety of activities in lessons and beyond the school day.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 48 lessons or parts of lessons. They observed teaching and engaged in an extensive scrutiny of students' work in partnership with academy leaders. Five observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Other aspects of the academy day were observed, including; an assembly; tutor time students' behaviour at break, lunchtime and between lessons; and students' arrival and departure from the academy.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, senior staff and subject leaders. A meeting took place with three governors, including the Chair of the Local Governing Body. A separate meeting was held with representatives of Wakefield City Academies Trust.
- Inspectors met with eight groups of students and took account of the views of 15 parents who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents including the school improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, records of students' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and attendance, and minutes of meetings of the local governing body and academy trust. Inspectors also scrutinised the academy's records of recruitment checks on staff and its monitoring of students on alternative placements.

Inspection team

Sir John Townsley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mrs Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector
Mrs Shelley Heseltine	Additional Inspector
Mrs Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector
Mr Liam Trippier	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hemsworth Arts and Community Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 August 2013. It is part of the Wakefield City Academies Trust. When its predecessor school, Hemsworth Arts and Community College, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be inadequate.
- The academy is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, those who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding, is above average. This is additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The academy entered a small number of students early for GCSE mathematics in 2014.
- Six students in Key Stage 4 attend off-site courses at Wakefield College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement in the main school, so that it is at least good, in order that students make good or better progress across the academy in all subjects but especially in mathematics, science and languages, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment information to ensure all students' learning needs are well met
 - ensure there is a higher level of challenge in all lessons and that questioning is used more effectively to explore difficult concepts in greater depth
 - mark work consistently well within all subjects so students have clear advice about how to improve their work
 - ensure students have opportunities to respond to the guidance that teachers give them
 - further develop consistent systems to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness and impact of leadership by:
 - significantly strengthening governance so that it acts as a body which robustly challenges and supports academy leaders and the academy trust
 - developing further the consistency in quality of subject leadership, so that all leaders can be equally effective in improving teaching and holding teachers to account for students' progress.
- Improve the behaviour and safety of students in the main school by:
 - eliminating all lower-level disruptive behaviour in lessons so that all students can get on with their work
 - making sure all staff consistently apply the academy's behaviour management policy
 - continuing to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence through the careful monitoring of all groups of students at the academy
 - insisting upon higher standards of behaviour around the site and on all students wearing the correct uniform with pride.

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

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders, governors and the academy trust have not yet done enough to ensure that teaching and the progress students make across all subjects and age groups are consistently good. Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the development of the academy. Recent improvements, which include new staff appointments and the implementation of a wide range of new systems and procedures, have not had sufficient time to have measurable impact on the overall quality of teaching that students experience.
- The Principal and senior leadership team have a clear understanding of the academy's strengths and weaknesses, and are now taking decisive action to improve teaching through a more robust performance management process.
- There are now rigorous procedures in place to monitor the quality of teaching through lesson visits, checking the standard of work in students' books and undertaking joint lesson observations with colleagues from the academy trust. Although robust, these systems have only recently been introduced and so it is too early to be confident of their impact.
- Not all subject leaders have provided good leadership. Some have lacked rigour in monitoring the quality of work in their curriculum area. They have neither focused on improving the quality of teaching nor raising students' achievement. They have not challenged underperformance of staff or held them sufficiently to account to ensure that they apply policies for improvement consistently well. This has had a clear impact on the weaker achievement of students in mathematics, science, languages and geography.
- The leadership of English, history and the arts is strong and is resulting in rapid improvement in students' achievement.
- Although the academy strives to ensure equality for its students, as a result of inconsistencies in teaching, not all students have had the same opportunities to achieve as well as their peers nationally. The academy is now using data more effectively to identify where additional support and intervention are required to improve the quality of teaching and to raise teachers' and students' expectations of what students can achieve. As an example, the school's work to support weaker readers in Year 7 is now very effective.
- Until recently, leaders have failed to ensure that additional government funding for disadvantaged students has been used effectively. The inspection team saw clear evidence that this is no longer the case. Students who benefit from the support of the pupil premium are now a sharp focus and a key priority for all leaders and teachers at the academy. As a consequence, there is clear evidence of the improved achievement of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Leaders have ensured that the academy's curriculum is broad and balanced. There is an increasingly cohesive approach to the development of students' communication and numeracy skills, and the academy's work to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Key themes are taught in appropriate subjects and reinforced effectively in assemblies and within the PSHEE (personal, social, health and economic education) curriculum.
- Students support a wide range of charities through their fundraising activities. They show enthusiasm and passion when debating key issues in preparation for their life in modern Britain. This was seen, for example, in a very strong Year 9 PSHEE lesson in which students explored with sensitivity and intelligence the challenges nationally and globally presented by drug and alcohol abuse.
- Arrangements to safeguard students are effective and meet requirements.
- Students speak very positively about the careers education and guidance that ensures that they are well advised for the next phase of their education. As a consequence, the vast majority of students are successfully engaged in education, training or employment on leaving the academy.
- The trust's work to support the academy is only now beginning to show impact. This is in part because governance arrangements remain weak and lack challenge. Support for middle leadership from the academy trust is now highly effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not been holding the academy to account well enough. Though they are supportive and committed, their understanding of the academy's effectiveness and its priorities for improvement and development are inaccurate.
 - There is little evidence of appropriate challenge being made by the governing body to senior leaders or the academy trust. Information is readily accepted without detailed consideration and there is a lack of careful monitoring of data and the quality of teaching. Governors do not do enough to ensure that they have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in the academy.
 - Governors have insufficient understanding of the importance of key initiatives within the academy. This includes the support for weaker readers and the continuing development of the strategy to enhance

significantly the achievement of disadvantaged students.

The behaviour and safety of students

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. This is because students' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive in all subjects and with all staff. In lessons which lack challenge and pace, students become bored and chat to friends instead of listening carefully to the teacher and getting on with their work. Such attitudes contribute to the slow progress some students make in their learning.
- The clear systems in place for managing students' behaviour are not applied consistently by all staff. Some students told inspectors that not all staff follow the correct procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- Around the academy, students' behaviour is varied. Many students are courteous and proud of their school. Other students, however, are too boisterous. Students in Year 7 spoke with inspectors about the poor behaviour of a minority of students in Year 8, and this was confirmed in the inspectors' observations in lessons and around the academy. Too many students do not wear their uniform with pride.
- The level of fixed-term and permanent exclusion is higher than the national average and reflects the poor behaviour of a small but significant group of students. Academy records show that incidences of exclusion are now reducing significantly.
- Students' attendance, which is below the national average, is improving but not quickly enough.
- Careful records kept by the academy show that students on alternative placements are monitored carefully during their time away from the academy. They attend regularly and comments from alternative providers show that these students' behaviour is good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement. This is because too many students present challenging behaviour around the academy site. A number of younger students also spoke with inspectors about their concerns regarding behaviour on buses, particularly on the way home from the academy. Some described the journey as an unpleasant experience which they do not look forward to making.
- Overall, students were confident in their view that the academy cares well for them. They are confident that they know who to go to if they have problems, and value the good advice that the academy gives them on how to stay safe, including in their use of the internet.
- Students say that they are given helpful information through assemblies, tutor time and the academy's PSHEE programme about the dangers of alcohol and drug misuse, and how to deal with different kinds of bullying, including homophobic and cyber bullying. They say that bullying is rare, but that when it does occur it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff.
- Students understand what constitutes extremist behaviour and show a high level of respect for different faiths and cultures. They are clear about the need to promote British values of tolerance and respect, and value the way the school represents different cultures.
- The academy works well with the providers of off-site courses to monitor the safety, attendance and behaviour of students.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been sufficiently consistent in a number of subjects. This has resulted in too few students making good progress from their Key Stage 2 starting points, including in key subjects such as mathematics and science.
- The current quality of teaching varies across subjects. There are too many lessons where teachers do not use assessment information to make sure that activities are set at the right level to challenge and engage all abilities of students, so that they successfully move on to the next level of learning.
- Students' enthusiasm and interest in learning vary depending on the subject and the quality of teaching. Students are enthusiastic about their learning when teachers use their good subject knowledge to engage them in lessons which are challenging. When work is not at the right level of difficulty students often lose focus, begin to chatter and distract others.
- Students are not always able to demonstrate that they have understood what they have learnt, or to

deepen their understanding by carrying out further research at home or in the academy library. This is further impaired by some teachers' weaker questioning skills. In Key Stages 3 and 4, there were very few examples seen of students thinking in depth about particular concepts or of challenging questions that require students to present ideas in detail.

- The quality of marking across the academy is inconsistent. Where marking and feedback is strongest, as in English and history, it has a powerful impact on the pace of learning and the quality of achievement. In other curriculum areas, such as science, mathematics and languages, marking and feedback are weaker and provide little guidance to students on how to improve their work.
- Teaching is particularly effective in English. This has secured more rapid progress and significantly improved achievement for all students in this key subject. English teaching promotes a constant dialogue between the teacher and the students, and develops speaking, reading and writing skills very well. For example, in English lessons where learning and progress were effective, the teacher and the teaching assistant developed students' understanding of poetic technique most impressively. This was supported by exemplary marking, which encouraged students to rise to the challenge of difficult texts and concepts.
- The promotion of students' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across the curriculum remains inconsistent. Good policies now in place to promote literacy and numeracy are at an early stage in their implementation, so it is not yet possible to see their full impact.
- Teachers show skill in promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Subject areas are keen to explore with students a range of challenging issues within the curriculum, and students speak very positively about their knowledge and understanding as a result of that teaching.
- Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively in lessons. Examples were seen where they helped students to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding, so students had the confidence to work on their own.

The achievement of students

requires improvement

- Students' achievement requires improvement because the progress that they make over time across all subjects is not yet consistently good. Standards in English are strong, but in mathematics and science they are improving at a much slower rate.
- In 2014, too many students did not make the progress that they should in mathematics and science. There was also underperformance in a number of other subjects across the curriculum, including languages and information and communication technology.
- In 2014, the proportion of students attaining five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was below the national average. The academy's current forecast for 2015, which is based on carefully monitored ongoing assessments, indicate that this proportion is set to rise significantly. This is supported by the observation of learning and the scrutiny of students' work which took place during the inspection.
- The proportion of students who made or exceeded nationally expected progress in 2014 was in line with the national average in English but well below in mathematics. Disadvantaged students also underperformed in mathematics in 2014 with, for example, only 7% making better than expected progress. A detailed scrutiny of students' work in the current Year 11 by the inspection team showed that disadvantaged students are now achieving at higher levels than was the case in 2014, although their progress in mathematics is not yet good.
- The attainment of disadvantaged students is below that of others in the academy and nationally. In 2014, in English they were almost half a GCSE grade behind their peers at the academy and almost a full grade behind other students nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged students were over a full grade behind others at the academy and other students nationally. The progress of disadvantaged students is improving and gaps in progress are narrowing across all year groups at the academy.
- As a result of good support, disabled students and those who have special educational needs are now making good progress. The academy's effective work to support weaker readers in Key Stage 3 is an important part of this improving picture.
- The most-able students in the academy do not achieve their full potential because they are not always given sufficiently challenging work. Not enough of these students reach the higher grades in GCSE examinations. Current information, supported by inspectors' lesson observations and work scrutiny, shows that their progress is improving and that more of the most-able students in Year 11 are likely to secure top GCSE grades this year.
- The academy entered a small number of students early for GCSE mathematics in 2014. All students concerned were in danger of failing to complete the GCSE course and the academy's actions in entering

them early were legitimate.

- Students who study work-related courses off-site make similar progress to others in the academy.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Achievement in the sixth form is good in relation to students' starting points. The academy's tracking data is accurate and shows a rising trend in attainment and progress. Students make particularly good progress in English, media studies and the arts. In almost all A-level subjects, students achieve at least in line with the national average. In vocational and applied subjects, achievement is above the national average.
- The academy takes very seriously its responsibility for ensuring that students who are re-taking GCSE English and mathematics are taught and supported well. As a consequence, success rates are high, particularly when compared to national data.
- Students enjoy being in the sixth form. They speak very positively about their lessons and the support they receive as they prepare for the next stage of their learning or for employment. Relationships between students and teachers are strong, and sixth form students act as positive role models to younger students.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good, with some that is outstanding. For example, in a Year 12 media studies lesson in which students made exceptional progress, the teacher showed excellent subject knowledge and students' files showed outstanding progress over time as a result of meticulous marking and feedback.
- Effective leadership of the sixth form has secured good progress for students and good quality teaching over time. Students' progress is tracked regularly and individual student action plans ensure that they are provided with the necessary support to achieve their targets. The curriculum is highly flexible and caters well for students' particular needs and interests because it is reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

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	139335
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	449852

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	1,448
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Valerie Young
Principal	Pamela Massett
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01977 624220
Fax number	01977 624221
Email address	reception@hemsworthacademy.org

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