

Sir William Robertson Academy, Welbourn

Main Road, Welbourn, Lincoln, LN5 0PA

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction to staff, parents and students. He receives strong support from skilled senior leaders and an effective governing body.
- Effective partnerships with the Redhill Teaching Schools Alliance and the Minster Teaching Schools Alliance have helped improve the quality of teaching, leadership and management in the academy.
- Students study a range of exciting subjects. Learning outside the classroom includes educational visits, residential trips, sporting competitions, work experience, volunteering to support local charitable organisations, drama, music and the arts.
- Students enjoy being at the academy and are completely safe when in it. They understand how to assess risks, and know how to keep safe when they are in the community. The academy's 'theme days' make a valuable contribution to its teaching about safety.
- The academy provides good support for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are courteous and respectful. They cooperate well with adults to make the academy a calm, harmonious and productive place.
- Students make good progress and achieve well across a range of GCSE subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They teach with authority and enthusiasm. Lessons are engaging and enjoyable.
- Teachers mark students' work to a good standard. They tell students precisely what they need to do in order to improve, and consistently follow the academy's marking and assessment policies.
- Disadvantaged students, disabled students, those who have special educational needs and the most-able students all make good progress.
- The sixth form is good. Leadership and teaching are good and students taking academic courses generally achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always challenge Key Stage 3 students to work hard and produce their best.
- Not all teachers use questions effectively to make students think hard and deepen their learning.
- The sixth form does not offer enough vocational courses.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons. Of these observations, six were completed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed students at breaks and lunchtimes, and attended assemblies and tutorial periods.
- Discussions were held with students, staff, governors and the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of the 55 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as correspondence received from parents. They also took account of the 47 responses to staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documents, including samples of students' work, information about students' progress, the school's development plan and self-evaluation, records of any poor behaviour, records of governing body meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to students read, and observed reading support lessons and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clare Considine	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Daws	Additional Inspector
Christine Murrell	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is well below average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The academy has an above-average proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, who receive support through the pupil premium, is below average. This is additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- A very small number of Year 10 students are educated off-site at The Acorn Free School (alternative provision school), Lincoln.
- The academy is involved in partnerships with Redhill Teaching Schools Alliance, The Minster Teaching Schools Alliance and Bishop Grosseteste University.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, particularly in Key Stage 3, so that students' achievement is raised, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - consistently set work that is sufficiently challenging and which encourages students to work hard at all times
 - use questions effectively to make students think hard and deepen their learning.
- Strengthen the sixth form provision by increasing the number of vocational courses available so the options open to all groups of students better reflect their different interests, needs and aptitudes.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher sets high expectations. Strongly supported by senior leaders and governors, he communicates a clear vision for the academy's improvement, which members of staff both understand and accept. His accurate self-evaluation of the academy's strengths and areas for development has been accompanied by effective action to improve the quality of teaching and raise students' achievement.
- There is clear, robust and systematic monitoring of teaching. The leadership of teaching is strong, and the coaching and mentoring leaders provide are effective. Leaders encourage teachers to take part in the 'improving teaching' programmes and exchanges organised by the Redhill Teaching Alliance and the Minister Teaching Schools Alliance. This has improved the quality of teaching and led to students making much faster progress in the past year.
- The academy has improved the way it uses the additional funding provided through the pupil premium to supplement the learning of disadvantaged students and to ensure that, academically and socially, they develop as well as their peers. The attendance of disadvantaged students now matches that of other groups. The academy's effective use of small-group support sessions and one-to-one tuition helps these students to consolidate their knowledge and understanding well. A range of educational visits, sports clubs, residential trips, theatre visits and work-related learning experiences similarly develop these students' character and self-confidence.
- Leaders treat students with fairness and respect. They promote equality of opportunity at all times.
- Leaders take a robust approach to inappropriate behaviour and there is a concerted drive to ensure that behaviour is good throughout the academy. As a result, fixed-term exclusions have reduced for all groups of students and these are now low. Likewise, leaders' efforts have resulted in improved attendance for all groups of students.
- Students attending off-site provision at the Acorn Free School are monitored closely. Members of staff make regular checks on their attendance, behaviour and progress through phone calls and regular visits.
- Subject and other middle leaders are effective. The joint lesson observations they have conducted with senior leaders, together with the rigorous management of their performance by senior leaders, means they are developing the skills they need to lead improvements in their areas well. Most have successfully led significant improvements in the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. They also check students' progress on a regular basis and identify any students who do not meet their targets.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Leaders and governors jointly ensure that members of staff follow local and national guidelines on recruitment and child protection. The training that leaders provide in child protection helps staff remain vigilant and able to detect any signs of child abuse. The academy uses its links with the local police and the children's safeguarding board to promote students' understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and internet grooming.
- The curriculum is broad. It promotes a good understanding of British values. The wide range of subjects taught in the main part of the school captures students' interests and ensures they enjoy all the courses they follow. The academy uses educational visits to places like Berlin and Castle Acre, as well as, residential trips, inter-house sporting competitions and cultural visits to the theatre, very effectively to enhance students' learning. However, the range of courses in the sixth form does not cater fully for students' interests and abilities because the choice of vocational courses is too limited.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is at the heart of the curriculum. The academy provides many opportunities for students to engage in work experience, volunteering in support of local charitable organisations and the National Citizen Service, so that students develop character and civic responsibility. Students learn the value of democracy by participating in ballots to elect school council members and house captains.

- Students benefit from impartial careers advice, which enables them to plan a personal pathway through education, employment and training. Organised visits to careers conventions, university fairs and local employers provide helpful insights into the range of careers available to students and help to raise their aspirations.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors are dedicated and bring a range of knowledge, skills and experience to the governing body. They understand the academy's strengths and areas for development because they are linked to subject departments, visit often, and meet with subject leaders to keep abreast of developments.
 - The governing body monitors students' behaviour, attendance and progress against targets. It receives regular reports on students' progress from the headteacher. Training in data analysis means governors understand what this information is telling them about the academy's performance and ensures they are able to challenge school leaders effectively.
 - Governors have high aspirations and value good teaching. They monitor the quality of teaching and support the headteacher in tackling underperformance. Governors manage the headteacher's performance closely, linking targets to the academy's improvement plan. Staff targets are linked to students' progress and good teaching. Pay rises are awarded only if members of staff meet their targets and their teaching is at least good.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students have positive attitudes to learning, take pride in their appearance and cooperate well with adults. In class, students listen politely to teachers and to one another. They engage with teachers' questions and contribute sensible answers.

- Teachers use praise effectively to build positive relationships, motivate students and reward their efforts and achievement. Students enjoy the range of rewards available, including merit points and celebration breakfasts. The new behaviour system clearly reflects the school's motto, 'ASPIRE', and conveys the school's drive for students to achieve success, support one another, pursue excellence, become involved in school life, respect diversity and extend themselves through challenges. It underpins the increasingly positive attitude to learning shown by most students. Students speak with pride of its good impact on behaviour in the academy.

- They understand the difference between right and wrong, and behave with a high level of maturity, politeness and courtesy so that there is harmony in the academy. Students assist visitors and hold doors open for other people to pass through.

- Attendance has improved for all groups of students, including disadvantaged and disabled students and those who have special educational needs, so that it is now broadly average. The academy responds robustly to any unexplained or unauthorised absence. Members of staff make contact with parents on the first day of any unexpected absence and their close work with families has reduced persistent absence. Students attend the academy punctually and move between classes quickly.

- The academy works with external agencies to support disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Parents and students participate in drafting support plans and setting targets for improvement so those who have trouble in managing their own behaviour learn to do so effectively. Many students who experience behavioural difficulties succeed in improving their behaviour and make a positive contribution to academy life.

- In class, students listen politely to teachers and to one another. They engage with teachers' questions and contribute sensible answers.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Members of staff teach students how to live

healthy lifestyles and make them aware of the risks associated with using the internet and social networking sites. During the inspection, the local police and the children's safeguarding board helped students to gain a good understanding of arson, road safety, cyber-bullying and internet 'grooming'.

- Students are free from discrimination, bullying and harassment. Students feel safe and they are confident that, when unpleasantness such as name-calling arises, teachers will quickly tackle these issues. Incidents of a racist nature are rare and, should they occur, members of staff immediately report them to senior staff and deal with them firmly.
- Students attending off-site placements are improving in their attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning. They are making good progress towards achieving vocational qualifications.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Classrooms are calm, harmonious places. Teachers are skilled in the management of students' behaviour and ensure that high levels of co-operation and respect from students are the norm in all classes.
- Teachers' routine and rigorous checking of students' progress enables them to keep a close eye on students who do not achieve their targets. Members of staff assess students' achievement regularly and identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding quickly through their careful analysis of students' responses. Teachers plan specific lessons to target gaps in students' understanding so that they do not fall further behind. Additional support is provided through supplementary classes.
- Good collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants leads to high-quality support for students who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants are well trained and managed. They plan learning activities that are generally matched closely to students' abilities and which support their good progress.
- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is good. Students make good progress because of effective classroom teaching and the additional support available, including accelerated reading programmes and enrichment activities. The focus on improving reading has led to an increase in the volume of books borrowed from the school library and an increase in students' reading ages, particularly those of boys.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly and accurately, in line with the academy's marking and assessment policy. They provide helpful comments to students, which tell them how to improve their work.
- Teachers invest a great deal of time in lunchtime and after-school support classes, and holiday revision sessions. The academy's 'walking, talking' mock examinations help students to consider appropriate responses to examination questions and to develop good examination technique.
- One of the strengths of teaching is teachers' good subject knowledge. They plan learning activities that are stimulating and engage students' interests. The way teachers make the purpose of each lesson clear to students enables most students to work with understanding and make good progress.
- Teaching is less consistently good in Key Stage 3 than it is in Key Stage 4. Not all teachers use questions effectively to challenge students in Key Stage 3 so that they think hard about what is required and complete work to a high standard.
- In lessons where teachers' expectations are high, students work hard and produce good-quality work. Not all teachers set consistently challenging work for students in Key Stage 3 and encourage them to work hard and achieve their best at all times. This slows students' progress in this key stage.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards are improving across the academy and these are now good. Improvement in the quality of teaching and leadership of the English department has resulted in students attaining much better standards this year than in the past. Students are this year on track to reach standards that are above the 2014 national average.
- Rates of progress are similarly improving. In 2014, fewer students than expected made good progress in English and mathematics. The academy's leaders took swift and effective action to improve students' mastery of examination technique, and this has had a marked impact on their achievement this year. As in English, students are on track to obtain results in mathematics that are expected to be above the 2014 average.
- The very small numbers of students from minority ethnic groups in Year 11 in 2014 made better progress than classmates. Teachers know the abilities of these students well and plan carefully to meet their particular learning needs so that they achieve in line with their ability.
- Students educated offsite achieved well in their vocational courses in 2014.
- Students have joined the academy in Year 7 with broadly average attainment and, in the past, have left the academy in Year 11 with below-average results. In 2014, the proportion of Year 11 students gaining five grades A* to C GCSEs, including English and mathematics, was below average. Attainment in mathematics was better than attainment in English, although both were below their respective national averages.
- In 2014, disadvantaged students in Year 11, in 2014, did not achieve as well as their classmates or other students nationally in English and mathematics. On average, they were half a GCSE grade behind classmates in English and one GCSE grade behind classmates in mathematics. When compared to other students nationally, they were approximately three quarters of a GCSE grade behind in English and one and a half GCSE grades behind in mathematics. Improvements to the quality of teaching and effective interventions are supporting disadvantaged students well. Students now make good progress and are on track to greatly narrow the attainment gaps in both subjects in 2015.
- In 2014, disabled students and those who have special education needs did not progress as well as their classmates in English or mathematics. Their progress in English was not as good as it was in mathematics. The academy has now improved the provision for this group of students and this is making a considerable difference to their motivation and academic progress. These students are also on track to make good progress in 2015.
- Some of the most-able Year 11 students in 2014 did not make good progress. The introduction of holiday booster classes, after-school revision and master classes has enabled this year's most-able Year 11 students to consolidate and extend their learning so they are on track to make good progress in 2015.
- The academy did not enter students early for GCSEs in 2014.

The sixth form provision is good

- From slightly below-average starting points, students make good progress and achieve broadly average results by the time they leave the sixth form.
- Teachers plan learning with a clear purpose. They use questions well to help students reflect on their learning. Students engage with teachers' questions well and their thoughtful responses demonstrate good knowledge and understanding. Students make good progress towards their targets. They are on track to achieve higher results in 2015.
- In the main, students enjoy their studies, particularly those following academic courses. An above-average

proportion of students stay on to complete their courses. The academy's provision of good, impartial careers advice helps them to plan their futures. Virtually all students progress to higher education, employment or training. The vast majority of students have high aspirations. An increasing proportion goes on to study at Russell Group universities.

- There are no marked differences in the attainment and progress of different groups but students have too few opportunities to follow vocational courses.
- The behaviour and safety of students are good. Students are mature, courteous, polite and friendly. They are smart in their appearance and participate well in school life. For instance, sixth form students are mentors to younger students, and participate in the National Citizen Service. Students raise large sums of money for charitable causes. Sixth form students are good role models for younger students.
- Attendance and punctuality are high. The academy makes sure that sixth form students are safe and that they understand the dangers posed by extremist ideology and by unsafe use of the internet.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Leaders are ambitious for students to do well and have a clear plan for improvement. The leader's rigorous checking of the quality of teaching and analyses of students' performance are resulting in continuous improvement. The academy's close partnership work with Redhill and Minister Teaching School Alliances has helped improved the quality of teaching and leadership. Work with Bishop Grosseteste University is helping to raise the aspirations of students.

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	138839
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	461998

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	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	745
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Venerable Brian Lucas
Headteacher	Mark Guest
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2013
Telephone number	01400 272422
Fax number	01400 273780
Email address	enquiries@swracademy.org

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