

The Chafford School, A Specialist Business and Enterprise College

Lambs Lane South, Rainham, RM13 9XD

Inspection dates 3–4 June 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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not consistently good. Students' progress varies across different subjects and year groups.
- Expectations of what students can achieve are not high enough so they do not make the rapid progress they could.
- Too many students present their work carelessly.
- Progress in science is not good enough. Teaching has in the recent past been weak and is still not consistently strong.
- The most able students do not make as much progress as they could. Too few students reach the highest GCSE grades because they are not challenged enough.
- Students have limited opportunities to practise their literacy skills in a range of subjects.
- Teachers do not always give clear and specific advice in their marking to help students to improve their work. Students are not given enough opportunities to read and act upon marking.
- Some teachers do not use questioning well enough to deepen students' thinking and understanding.
- Leaders, including subject leaders, do not always fully evaluate the effectiveness of their actions to raise achievement so they can quickly make the necessary changes. In a few lessons, when teaching is not good, a small minority of students do not concentrate and they disrupt the learning of others. Not all teachers manage behaviour consistently well.

The school has the following strengths

- The large majority of students are polite and friendly. They are respectful towards each other and to adults. They enjoy coming to the academy, are proud of the academy and enjoy their learning. They want to learn and do well.
- Students say they feel very safe in the academy.
- Leaders now track students' achievement closely and many teachers are using the information well in their planning.
- Governors are highly skilled and knowledgeable about the academy and provide very good support and challenge.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 41 lessons, 20 of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. They also looked at a wide range of work in students’ books.
- Inspectors observed behaviour around the academy at break and lunch times. They observed tutor groups and visited the library.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students from Year 7 to Year 10. Meetings were also held with five members of the governing body, with the headteacher and with senior leaders and academy staff, including those responsible for leading subjects. Telephone conversations were held with a representative of the college where students attend alternative provision and with the academy improvement partner, who works for an independent organisation.
- Inspectors analysed the 47 responses to Ofsted’s online parental questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of information collected by the academy from its own surveys of parents. They analysed 32 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The team scrutinised academy documents, including the academy’s own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school development plan, the reports from a number of reviews conducted by external consultants and details of the use of the pupil premium to support disadvantaged students.
- Inspectors analysed statistical information about students’ achievement, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Ann Short, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Karen Roche	Additional Inspector
Stuart Davies	Additional Inspector
Joanne Hamill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school converted to an academy in November 2013. When its predecessor school, which had the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The large majority of students are White British. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is slightly higher than average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is slightly lower than average but is increasing. A small number are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students who are supported by the pupil premium is broadly average. This funding is provided for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is below average but is increasing in lower year groups.
- A number of students in Years 10 and 11 (about 70 in total) attend a range of vocational courses at Barking College for one afternoon a week.
- A very small number of students are currently attending a full-time programme provided by the Business Enterprise Partnership.
- A number of teachers have left the academy since it converted, and there have been significant changes in middle leadership.
- The academy has a specialism in Business and Enterprise.
- 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching so that students' progress accelerates, especially in science, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have high expectations of what students are able to achieve
 - set work which is appropriately challenging including for the most able students
 - use questioning to deepen understanding and thinking
 - give students clear, specific and regular advice about how to improve their work and the opportunity to read and act upon marking
 - insist that students present their work carefully and neatly
 - contribute to the development of the literacy skills of the students
 - have opportunities to share and learn from examples of good and outstanding practice within or beyond the academy.
- Ensure that all leaders at all levels work together collaboratively to improve the quality of teaching across the academy and rigorously monitor the impact of the approaches they have taken.
- Ensure that all staff have a consistent approach to the management of behaviour so that low-level disruption in lessons is very rare.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The leadership of teaching, although improving, is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that all students make rapid progress. Expectations of what students can achieve are too often not high enough.
- Improvements in teaching have been slowed by difficulties in recruiting good teachers to replace those who have left. The academy is using a number of strategies to recruit strong teachers but it is not proving easy. As a result, leaders have had to employ a number of temporary teachers. This has sometimes slowed the progress students make. However, some well-qualified teachers have been appointed in the last year, for example in science.
- The headteacher has a clear vision and knows what needs to be done to improve the academy. He has brought about improvements in the organisation of leadership, and supported his senior leaders to develop their skills and work together to raise achievement. Leaders have established an ethos where expectations of behaviour are clear and students understand the importance of learning and wish to achieve well. The changes that have been made are beginning to improve the progress students make.
- There has been a strong focus on improving teaching. Senior leaders and subject leaders check the quality of teaching regularly, although sometimes it is not clear how the checks have led to further improvement. Many subject leaders are new in post. They are supported by senior leaders and are given training to help them to develop their leadership skills. Some are more effective than others in raising achievement. Some have not yet had time to drive up standards but they understand key priorities and how to address them.
- Teachers are now set challenging targets and are supported to meet them by a wide range of training and development activities. There are opportunities for teachers to learn from each other but some would benefit from more sharing of ideas across departments and other schools.
- There are systems in place to track the progress of individuals and groups of students. The academy is developing its approach to assessment in different subjects in response to new curriculum requirements. Although there is a wealth of information available, it is sometimes difficult to make comparisons between subjects and year groups in the lower years in the academy. However, the information promotes equality of opportunity because leaders and teachers use it to help them provide additional support for individuals or groups when they are falling behind.
- Leaders understand the strengths of the academy and the areas where improvements need to be made. They commission high quality external reviews to inform and check their judgments. The school development plan correctly identifies the priorities for improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is kept under review to ensure it meets the needs of the students. Students can choose from a range of courses, including vocational courses at a local college. There is a Saturday academy, a half-term academy and a number of other opportunities for additional learning beyond the school day. There are many sports clubs that students can choose but some report that they would like more clubs in other areas.
- The school keeps a focus on business and enterprise. The curriculum includes the development of a range of skills to help students to be successful in the world of work.
- Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain because the academy promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They understand the difference between right and wrong; they learn about different cultures and religions and they learn about democracy, for example through student elections. They show great tolerance and respect for each other. The academy is committed to equality of opportunity. Racist or bullying incidents are very rare and discrimination is not tolerated.
- The pupil premium funding is used well for a variety of activities which support disadvantaged students. This includes individual tuition, revision classes and the Saturday and half-term academy. The impact on the progress made by those students needing support is carefully tracked. Gaps between their progress and that of others vary across the year groups but they are closing rapidly in some years, for example in the current Year 10.
- The academy is working well with parents to involve them in the learning of their children. Most parents are happy with the academy and would recommend it to another parent. A minority feel that the academy does not always listen to their concerns.
- The academy's leaders carefully monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of students who attend alternative provision.

- Students receive good advice and guidance about the choices they can make so they are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment.
- The academy's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and are effective. All staff are well trained and they follow clear procedures.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body reorganised itself as a result of an external review of governance in January 2014. Governors are now highly skilled and very knowledgeable about the academy. They visit regularly and all undertake training to help them provide the best possible support and challenge to the leadership team. They make sure that they receive high quality external reports about different aspects of the academy's work. They are very clear about what improvements need to be made. They understand students' achievement data and rigorously check the progress students make.
- Governors think strategically about the future of the academy and have a clear understanding of the academy finances. They check the effectiveness of the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged students, although they have not been checking the use of the Year 7 catch-up funding. They know about the quality of teaching, how the academy makes judgments about this and how this links to pay increases for teachers. They manage staff performance well. Appropriate targets are set for the headteacher and staff, linked to identified areas for improvement.
- Governors fully meet their statutory requirements, such as keeping students safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Some teaching does not engage and motivate all of the students. In these lessons, a small minority of students do not concentrate and they disrupt the learning of others. Too often, their work is carelessly and untidily presented.
- Students enjoy coming to the academy. They are proud of the academy and wear their uniform smartly and with pride. The large majority of students are polite, friendly and show respect to each other and to adults. When teaching is good, students are keen to learn and enjoy their learning. Sometimes there is a real 'buzz' of excitement about learning, for example in a Year 8 mathematics lesson when students enthusiastically engaged in discussion about how to solve problems.
- There are some narrow corridors which are very crowded and students report that this makes movement in some parts of the academy difficult. They behave sensibly in these situations and elsewhere around the academy and in the academy grounds.
- Staff and students report that behaviour has improved. Exclusions have reduced. Students appreciate the new emphasis on praise and rewards. A minority of staff report continuing concerns about behaviour and feel that it is not consistently well managed. Students report that their learning is sometimes disrupted, especially when lessons are taught by temporary teachers.
- Students who attend courses off site behave well and enjoy their learning. The academy monitors their attendance and progress very carefully.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. All students report that they feel safe in the academy. Parents and staff agree that students are kept safe.
- Attendance has improved and meets national expectations. The proportion of students who miss too much school has reduced because of rigorous systems and procedures now in place. Punctuality to the academy is carefully checked. It has improved because action is swiftly taken when students arrive late.
- Students are taught to keep themselves safe in different situations, for example when using the internet.
- Students are very appreciative of the 'safe haven' where they can go at break and lunchtimes if they are feeling lonely or vulnerable.
- Students show good awareness of different types of bullying, such as cyber, racist or homophobic bullying. They report that there is little bullying in the academy and when it does happen, it is dealt with effectively.
- Staff check the safety of those who attend courses off site very carefully.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching varies across different subjects so that all students do not yet make as rapid progress as they could. In too many lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and expectations of what students can achieve are not high enough. Too often teachers accept work which is carelessly presented.
- The most able students do not make enough progress in some lessons because the work they are given does not stretch them. Teachers do not always move these students on quickly enough to more challenging tasks.
- While most teachers use questioning well to check learning, too many do not use it skilfully enough to deepen understanding and develop thinking.
- There is not yet a consistent approach to developing literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects. Recently, teachers have been given responsibility for ensuring that this happens. Students are encouraged to read widely and many books are now borrowed from the academy library each week. They develop their skills in speaking and listening through pair and group work. By the time they leave the academy, most students can speak with confidence, read well and write clearly. They have the numeracy skills they need to succeed.
- The quality of written feedback varies greatly. While some teachers give students clear advice about how to improve their work, this does not always happen on a regular basis. A few teachers ensure that students read and act upon the marking but teachers do not always ensure that students use the advice to help them to make good progress.
- Some teachers provide excellent and specific feedback in lessons so that students can apply this instantly to improve their work. This was seen, for example, in history, drama and art, where students made very rapid progress.
- Teachers have good relationships with their students and students work well together in pairs and groups. They feel safe to share their ideas with others.
- When students are asked to assess their own work or that of their classmates, they do this sensibly. They try hard to help each other to improve.
- Homework is not set regularly. Some tasks are not stretching enough and students report that there is not a consistent approach to ensuring work is completed to a good standard. As a result, students do not always make good progress.

The achievement of pupils**requires improvement**

- Students join the academy with broadly average attainment. In 2014, the proportion of students gaining 5+ A*-C including English and mathematics was also broadly average. Information held by the academy indicates that this proportion will improve slightly in 2015.
- Achievement varies across different subjects. Achievement in science, although beginning to improve, is not good. This is because some teaching in science in recent years has been weak and, although teaching in science is improving, it is still not consistently good.
- While many students make the progress which is expected in English and in mathematics, fewer students than average make rapid progress. Sometimes teachers do not have high enough expectations of what students can achieve.
- Too often the most able students do not make as much progress as they could. This is because they are not always challenged sufficiently in lessons. In most subjects, the proportion of students gaining the top grades at GCSE is below average.
- In GCSE examinations in 2014, disadvantaged students achieved about one third of a grade lower in English than others at the academy, and just under a third of a grade lower than other students nationally. In mathematics, the gap with other students in the academy and nationally was about two thirds of a grade. Gaps in achievement in English and in mathematics between disadvantaged students and others are now closing in most year groups across the academy. The achievement of students who are disabled or have special educational needs requires improvement. The support that they receive in lessons to help them make good progress is uneven.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used well to support those students who start at the academy with low levels of literacy. The funding is also now being used appropriately to help students who need extra support with numeracy. This is helping them to make progress and achieve across their

subjects.

- Students who speak English as an additional language make progress which is similar to that of their classmates and sometimes make better progress because of their enthusiastic attitudes to learning. Students are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment because they develop good skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. They are given good advice and guidance about the choices they are able to make.
- The students who follow vocational courses off site at a local college for part of the week enjoy their learning. They achieve well in their different courses
- The academy entered students early for English iGCSE for the last time this year.

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	140300
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	450352

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	943
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicola Reed
Headteacher	Gary Pratt
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01708 552811
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