

Golden Hillock School - A CORE Trust Academy

Golden Hillock Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, B11 2QG

Inspection dates 2–3 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Despite some improvements, the quality of teaching remains inadequate. There is too much variability in teaching within subjects, departments and year groups.
- Assessment of students' work and the setting of targets to challenge and motivate them remain weak, especially in Key Stage 3. The data available to staff is not used well enough to identify and target specific groups.
- Achievement is inadequate. The performance of students currently in Year 11 is predicted to improve this year. However, in other year groups, especially in Key Stage 3 and for different groups of students, academic standards and rates of progress remain inadequate.
- The academy does not monitor rigorously enough the difference that additional, specialist resource funding makes to the academic performance of disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Behaviour requires improvement. The vast majority of students like the new behaviour management system because it rewards those who 'do the right thing'. However, students report that the system is not always managed well by supply staff. Some students choose to make the wrong decision at times, leading to instances of low-level disruption.
- Too many Year 7 students say that they do not like this school as much as their primary school. The level of challenge expected of students in Year 7 is too low. Staff have not recognised the higher ability of students transferring to the school and raised their game accordingly.
- The large number of supply staff and the turnover of staff are hindering improvements in the quality of teaching.
- The leadership structure remains insecure. Some senior members of staff remain absent from work and others, including middle leaders, are still growing into their roles. The whole leadership structure is due to change again in September.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim principal has guided the academy carefully through a turbulent period. Students, in particular, recognise the very positive difference he has made to the school and to their futures. For many students, his leadership has been inspirational.
- The Trust and members of the local governing body have steered the school in recent months, dealt with very challenging staffing issues and overseen major improvements to safeguarding. As a result, the school's work to keep students safe is much improved and is now good.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place under section 5 of the Education Act at the request of the Department for Education, in line with the Secretary of State’s powers. The request was related to the planned re-brokering of Golden Hillock Academy to the Ark Foundation on 1 September 2015.
- In April 2014, Golden Hillock Academy was judged to require special measures. Since then, it has received regular monitoring inspections by Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI). The academy has been making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.
- During this inspection, Year 11 students were on study leave. On the first day of the inspection, the normal school timetable was put aside and students in Years 7 to 10 followed a ‘Flexible Learning Day’, which included, amongst other activities, a school trip, job interview practice and workshops on sex and relationships.
- Inspectors observed teaching in 31 lessons or part lessons, including a form tutor session and workshops. Most of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the academy’s senior team.
- Inspectors met with groups of students and academy staff, including senior and middle leaders. They also met with the chief executive officer of CORE Education Trust (formerly Park View Educational Trust), the Chair of that trust, members of the academy’s local governing body, and the interim principal and headteacher and executive principal designates from 1 September 2015.
- Questionnaire returns from 45 members of staff were analysed.
- There were insufficient responses to the online Parent View questionnaire to provide evidence for the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: the academy’s improvement plans, safeguarding policies, curriculum materials, minutes of meetings of the governing body and the senior team, students’ work and teachers’ records.

Inspection team

Angela Westington, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Brian Cartwright	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Stuart Bellworthy	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Terence Payne	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Golden Hillock is slightly smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are from ethnic minority backgrounds. More than half of the students are of Pakistani heritage. The next largest group is of Bangladeshi ethnicity.
- The vast majority of students speak English as an additional language. Sixteen students are new to speaking English.
- Approximately two thirds of students are eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for students known to be eligible for free school meals and children in public care).
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is much higher than the national average.
- The academy includes specially resourced provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This specialist provision is for seven students with a range of needs, including physical and sensory impairments.
- No student currently attends off-site provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement, especially in Key Stage 3, by
 - improving the quality of teaching, reducing the number of supply teachers and level of teacher turnover
 - improving teachers' assessment to focus on what students know, can do and understand already and set students appropriately challenging targets
 - use test and assessment data more effectively to identify specific groups that need further support or challenge.
- Improve the experience of students in Year 7 by ensuring that teachers understand and appreciate the improved skill levels and increased knowledge of students transferring in from the local primary schools, and that they expect more of these students.
- Monitor more rigorously the impact of the additional, specialist funding for disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Improve behaviour further by ensuring that all staff use the behaviour management system appropriately.
- Ensure that the academy has a secure and sustainable leadership team.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The interim principal took up post in September 2014. In a very short period of time, under his leadership, the culture and ethos of the academy has changed substantially. Individual students volunteered to inspectors that they did not want him to leave; that 'he listens' to them and that, as a result of his leadership, they had decided to continue their education and go on to college.
- Throughout the nine months of his leadership, with the support of the Trust and, more recently, the local governing body, the principal has pursued with rigour the issues identified at the section 5 inspection in April 2014, notably safeguarding and the risk to students of radicalisation. As a result, the academy is a much safer place than it was and its work to keep students safe is good. The academy's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements.
- Several members of the original senior leadership team are absent from the academy and other staff have stepped up to the roles. They have worked well under the direction of the interim principal and have achieved much in a short timescale. However, some will be moving on to other posts, leaving the leadership structure even more insecure. In September 2015, a new and untested senior leadership team will take over the running of the academy.
- Middle leaders have been galvanised by the improvement drive in their subjects and the strategic direction from senior leaders. However, their leadership is embryonic: leaders at this level are developing in their roles; they recognise that there is still much more to be done.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- Teachers are subject to an intensive programme of professional development for English and mathematics, but not for science. The programme includes visits to other schools, especially King Edward VI Five Ways School, and schools in other local authorities. Individual teachers in need of support are given a tailor-made support plan.
- Since January 2015, a 'buddy' system has been in place for supply staff; individuals are paired with a permanent member of the department. Each department has introduced a departmental handbook to support new and temporary staff. Supply teachers are observed teaching and if deemed to need help are supported for a week, after which point, if the teaching does not improve, they are not rehired. This action helps school leaders to identify the strongest supply staff but also contributes to the turnover of staff.
- Despite significant improvements, the curriculum remains inadequate. Provision to support the development of fundamental British values has been embedded through all subject areas. Sex and relationship education (SRE) has been improved and the religious education (RE) syllabus has been overhauled. The religious education GCSE course has been changed to include the study of Islam and Christianity in Year 10 and to focus on Christianity in Year 11. In Years 7 to 9, other faiths are studied.
- There is insufficient time in the timetable for science and creative arts subjects, especially music. Separate sciences are not available to students. The two-year Key Stage 3 continues to limit time available for students to deepen their knowledge and understanding in subjects, especially in mathematics and science. There is not enough attention paid to undertaking experiments in science. The curriculum for Year 7 students is not challenging enough and does not engage the interest of many of them.
- The school does not track well enough the academic performance of groups, including those eligible for the pupil premium. Consequently, staff are unable to identify the impact of the additional funding on the academic achievement of eligible students. The only direct impact that inspectors identified was in Year 11, where the extra after-school booster sessions and Saturday clubs, specifically for students eligible for the pupil premium, have added a substantial extra volume of teaching to these pupils, with good effect.
- The school has responded to the pupil premium review with an action plan but has not yet reported to the

local governing body on its implementation and impact. The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is dropping: it is around two thirds of the cohort in Year 11, but below two thirds in Year 7.

- The school fosters good relationships amongst students and staff and tackles discrimination. However, it does not yet promote equality of opportunity well enough as too many students, from a variety of backgrounds, underachieve.
- The academy's work to advise and support students in their career choices is improving and has a positive impact. For example, students participating in the mock job interviews found the experience extremely useful. Feedback from employers and interviewers was that the students were well prepared and presented themselves well.
- Historically, information, advice and guidance for careers (IAG) was restricted to Year 10 students. A new IAG policy has been written and the programme has been extended to cover all year groups.
- The local authority's support to the academy in respect of safeguarding and 'Prevent' issues has been good. Birmingham City Council has provided additional support through the training of school leaders to address the 'Prevent' agenda, tackling extremism, and to build additional safeguarding capacity in the academy's designated safeguarding leads. The academy works very closely with external agencies on these aspects of its work.
- The academy has benefited greatly from the on-going support and challenge provided by CORE Education Trust. The Trust has provided training for governors and has ensured that safeguarding procedures continue to be robust and effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is now a strength of the academy. The Trust and local governing body are highly effective and have been resolute in their determination to root out unsafe practice. They have worked closely with a range of agencies to improve safeguarding and tackle difficult staffing issues.
 - The Trust and governors are very knowledgeable about students' achievement and the quality of teaching in the academy. They have ensured that inadequate teaching has been identified and that staff in need of support have individual support plans or progress through the capability procedures. The focus on the quality of teaching has extended to supply staff: where teaching is inadequate, staff are given a week to improve. If improvement does not occur, they are not re-hired. Since the inspection in April 2014, there have been no instances of teaching staff receiving salary enhancements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. The whole-school approach to behaviour management introduced in January 2015 provides a clear system for all students; it rewards good behaviour as well as sanctioning behaviour that is poor.
- The impact of the new system is beginning to be seen; few repeat offenders are coming through in the monitoring data, although the number of incidents recorded is still too high. The system is updated weekly and allows staff to identify those students who are in the 'top ten' of offenders each week and provide them with support.
- Students whose behaviour is good can accumulate points and rewards. The focus on rewarding good behaviour is leading to a shift in culture and ethos as students support each other to do the right thing. Occasionally, though, a minority of students make the wrong choices and exhibit behaviour that is unhelpful or leads to low-level disruption.
- Students report that not all supply teachers use the behaviour management system in the way in which it is supposed to be used.

- The number of exclusions has risen since the implementation of the new system as students come to terms with the higher expectations of them.
- The overwhelming majority of students are charming, sensible, keen to learn and for the school to do well. They support the introduction of the new behaviour management policy and report that their parents do too. Those students spoken to reported that behaviour had improved.
- Attendance is above the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Since September 2014, the academy's leaders, the Trust and governors have focused relentlessly on this aspect of the school's work. This has required a root and branch overhaul of safeguarding in the academy and of staffing.
- Students spoken to report that the school is safe and that they feel safe. They recognise the improvements that have been made; for example, they mentioned that there are more staff on duty around the school, indoors and out.
- Students recognise and appreciate also the changes to the religious education syllabus, sex and relationship education, and personal, social, health education and citizenship (PSHEC) programmes. Inspectors observed a session, led by an external agency, on sex and the law, in which some Year 10 girls learned that they could not be coerced into having sex and that they had a choice. In PSHEC, amongst other things, students are taught the difference between forced and arranged marriage; that female genital mutilation is illegal and what constitutes abuse. Around the academy, posters remind students of these messages and where to find help should they need it.
- Fundamental British values are fostered well. Every curriculum subject has identified where in the programmes of study specific values are to be promoted. Around the school, posters alert students to the dangers of radicalisation. For example, one poster explains in detail why a young man, a Sunni Muslim, does not agree with the actions of Islamic State (IS). Students appreciate the opportunities to discuss these issues. Year 10 students explained what they had done to cover the recent General Election. They knew that their voting intention is private and that they do not have to tell anyone how they intend to vote in an election, nor be told how to vote.
- Staff are alert to any indications of possible extremism and refer all concerns to 'Prevent' officers. The school currently has six members of staff trained as designated safeguarding leads (DSL) and intends to train more. Staff report that they know who to report their concerns to and that the recent changes in the school, including the continued focus on safeguarding, has transformed the culture in the school. Staff are willing to report any concerns they have in the knowledge that these will be taken seriously and followed up.
- The academy has robust systems to support vulnerable students. Good procedures are in place to follow up any pupils who are missing. The number of students not in employment, education or training (NEETs) after leaving the academy is reducing. At regular points before, during and after GCSE examinations, the academy checks with Year 11 students what is their intended destination. Any 'missing' students – that is, students whom the academy is unable to trace after leaving – are reported to the City Council for the local authority to pursue. In 2014, there were four such students.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is too variable within subjects and departments and across year groups. There remains too much teaching that, over time, results in students making inadequate progress.
- Staff do not routinely plan lessons based on what students already know, can do and understand. This is particularly the case in Year 7, where teachers have not recognised the improving profile of the students transferring into the school at age 11. Most of the students come from primary schools which are now judged to be good or outstanding. They feel most keenly the reduction in expectation and challenge. Put

simply, academy staff do not know what these students are capable of and do not expect enough of them.

- Assessment and the use of assessment data are weak, especially in Key Stage 3. Some of the assessment data is inaccurate and unreliable. Consequently, teachers are not able to plan lessons that cater for the different abilities or specific learning needs of all students. Teachers do not set appropriate targets for students or identify correctly individuals and groups in need of support or challenge.
- The academy is heavily reliant upon supply teachers, leading to students making uneven progress over time. Students in Key Stage 3 are more likely to be taught by supply teachers than are those in Key Stage 4. Lower-ability groups of students are also more likely to be taught by supply teachers.
- The provision for teaching reading has improved since the previous section 5 inspection. Students in Years 8 and 9 have regular, timetabled reading sessions and their reading age is tested at intervals.
- Teaching in Key Stage 4, especially in Year 11 is stronger than in Years 7, 8 and 9. The academy's priority has been to support Year 11 students through their GCSE courses and examinations. Students report that the best teaching is in Year 11.

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate. The performance of students currently in Year 11 is predicted to improve this year. However, in other year groups, especially in Key Stage 3, academic standards and rates of progress remain inadequate.
- In Key Stage 4, and especially Year 11, progress accelerates as teachers and students focus on making up for lost time through additional support beyond the school day. Elsewhere, too few students make the progress expected of them compared to similar students. For example, examination of students' books revealed that, in some instances, the targets set were lower than those at the beginning of the academic year or Key Stage 3.
- Work in lessons is too often low-level, unchallenging and not matched to what students already know, can do and understand. As a result, students lose interest and their progress stalls.
- The academy has begun to tackle the weaknesses in reading, writing, speaking and listening which were identified at the previous section 5 inspection and which hindered the progress of many students, including those who speak English as an additional language. The sixteen students who are currently designated as being new to English receive intensive one-to-one or one-to-two tuition from an expert teacher. They make rapid progress in acquiring English. All other students for whom English is an additional language receive limited support.
- The school conflates the data for the majority of students with English as an additional language with those who have disabilities and special educational needs and other groups. Consequently, staff are not able to demonstrate the progress that individuals or groups make.
- The academy has a much higher than average proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium. This group's data dominates the academy's overall data, compared with national figures, tending to minimise the gap in performance between those eligible for the additional funding and those not. However, the academy does not track this group information in Key Stage 3 so it is not possible to identify the impact of the funding on students' achievements.
- In 2014, 48% of students eligible for the pupil premium gained a grade C or above in English GCSE compared to 61% of their peers in school and 73% nationally. In mathematics GCSE, 65% of eligible students gained a grade C or above, compared to 67% of their schoolmates and 74% nationally. Pupil premium students achieved significantly above similar students nationally in mathematics.
- In 2014, at GCSE level, the gap between those students eligible for the pupil premium and others was

much less than the national: 0.1 of a grade per GCSE. The national figure was approximately a grade per GCSE. That gap is likely to be even smaller this year (2015). Both groups of students are on track to achieve more highly in 2015; this is likely to be in line with national figures. One reason why the gap between these two groups is closing at GCSE is that students not eligible for the additional funding are not making as much progress as those who are eligible.

- In the 2014 GCSE examinations, lower and middle-ability students made good progress from their below average starting points in Year 7 but the most-able students made weak progress. Similarly, for the current 2015 Year 11 cohort, the school's own data shows lower than national proportions of students making better than expected progress. This picture is reflected in the work observed in students' books and lessons, reflecting the lack of challenge that most adversely affects the most-able students.
- In Key Stage 4, disabled students and those who have special educational needs made good progress from low starting points. In contrast, in Key Stage 3, it is not possible to demonstrate accurately the progress made by students from entry in Year 7.
- The academy receives additional, specialist resource provision funding for seven disabled students and some with special educational needs. The academy does not monitor rigorously enough the difference that this additional funding makes to the academic performance of these students.
- Early entry GCSE is not used.
- Some students in Years 7 and 8 have made significant gains in their reading since the introduction of the new reading programme, but others, notably the weakest readers, have made limited progress or regressed.

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	140014
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	455897

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	858
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amran Majid
Principal	Tony Wilson (Interim Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	2 April 2014
Telephone number	0121 773 8156
Fax number	0121 773 8159
Email address	enquiry@goldenhillock.bham.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, 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, 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
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

