

Landau Forte Academy Tamworth Sixth Form

16-19 academy

Inspection dates		21–24 April 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- in several key subjects, including English, mathematics and AS science, too many students do not achieve their qualifications or make the progress that should be expected, given their starting points
- tutors do not always provide feedback that helps students develop academic skills, such as how to structure an essay, that they can apply to future work across subjects
- staff do not assess students' starting points in English and mathematics and consequently, do not plan programmes to develop students' skills further
- managers have not developed strong links with local employers and as a result, the planning of the vocational curriculum does not consider their needs sufficiently
- too few students participate in work experience or work-related learning, a key study programme component that helps them consider future career options and prepare for work
- governors are not involved early enough in reviews of quality and this limits their ability to contribute to improvement planning and monitoring
- students do not have enough opportunities to express their views of the academy or influence the quality of their own learning.

This provider has the following strengths:

- all students who complete their programme successfully progress to appropriate further learning or employment
- tutors provide good support for students with additional needs
- staff provide highly effective advice and guidance that helps students plan their next steps in education or employment
- students are exceptionally well behaved; they are polite and have a professional appearance.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress students make in key subjects by identifying the reasons for underperformance and intervening appropriately to raise standards.
- Ensure that, following assessment of students' work, tutors provide students with clear guidance on how to improve their academic skills and monitor whether students apply these skills in subsequent pieces of work.
- Assess students' starting points in English and mathematics and ensure all tutors use the information this provides to plan learning in these subjects.
- Increase partnerships with local employers and ensure that managers use these links to develop a curriculum that meets local needs and provides work experience and work-related learning relevant to the local economy.
- Involve governors earlier in the self-assessment process and ensure that they have a full and accurate understanding of the performance of individual subjects so that they can monitor the effectiveness of actions to improve provision and hold senior managers to account.
- Improve the methods for students to express their views to managers about the academy, including the extent of students' involvement in meetings at all levels, so that they can have more influence over the quality of their experience.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
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- Landau Forte Academy Tamworth Sixth Form provides a broad range of A-level programmes and a small number of vocational courses. Around two-thirds of students take courses at AS level and just under a third at A level, with the remainder undertaking BTEC Diploma programmes.
- The proportion of students who successfully complete their study programmes is in line with similar colleges nationally. Overall, students make at least the progress expected of them given their starting points and in AS-level programmes, their progress is slightly better than in similar colleges. In a few subjects, such as religious studies and sociology, students make progress that is much greater than might be expected.
- In a number of key subjects, including English, mathematics and AS-level science, students are less successful and make less progress than is the case nationally. In these subjects, too many students leave their courses early or fail to achieve the grades of which they are capable and too few of them progress from courses at AS to those at A level. Managers have recognised this as an area for improvement, have implemented a range of actions to improve students' progress and success, and these are beginning to have an effect. However, it is too early to judge the full impact of these measures.
- Students do not make enough progress in developing their English and mathematics skills throughout their study programmes. Too few of those taking GCSE courses in these subjects successfully gain a grade C or better. Managers have not made available suitable qualifications for those students with particularly low starting points in these subjects. Tutors of other subjects do not pay enough attention to developing students' English and mathematics skills within their lessons.

- All students who successfully complete their programme progress to appropriate further learning or employment, including apprenticeships. A large majority progress into higher education, with many gaining places in universities with high entry requirements.
- Staff provide highly effective support for those students who do not wish to progress to university. A specialist advisor gives impartial careers advice and helps with job applications. As a result, those students who do not progress to university successfully secure employment.
- Too few students participate in work experience or work-related learning, a key component of study programmes. This stops them having enough opportunities to develop their understanding of skills and attitudes required in the workplace.
- Most students develop good attitudes to learning. They participate enthusiastically in learning, attend regularly and arrive on time to most lessons. However, too many students are late for the first session of the day and managers' actions to resolve this have been insufficiently rigorous.
- No achievement gaps exist between different groups of students, such as those receiving free school meals or those with a learning difficulty and/or disability.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Staff do not assess students' starting points in English and mathematics and they do not plan support that helps individual students make progress in these subjects. This results in students not developing skills they lack, or becoming disengaged in lessons where they are learning English or mathematics skills with which they are already confident.
- Most students develop appropriate technical and academic vocabulary, such as 'proxemics' in literature and 'isotonic' in physical education. Enrichment activities also extend English skills, but only for a very small minority of students. For example, 20 students create a news magazine, seven students are in a debating society and the extended project develops good academic writing skills for 35 students. In a minority of subjects, tutors do not mark work sufficiently for the accuracy and style that are required to attain higher grades. Tutors do not have a planned programme to help all students develop the skills they need to communicate complex ideas fluently.
- Tutors do not do enough to help students develop their mathematical skills on courses where they are not part of the syllabus.
- Tutors have high expectations of students and provide very clear guidance and exercises to help students understand the criteria for high grades. Tutors create good wall displays in a majority of classrooms that emphasise the skills needed to raise grades. However, not all subjects reflect this good practice, and as a result, not all students make good progress.
- Tutors in humanities use probing questions well so that students deepen their understanding of topics and are able to justify their own views. For example, history students identified different factors influencing the success of a Prime Minister, and then enjoyed challenging each other to justify or modify their views. However, the value of this in planning essays and revision is limited because too many students are not encouraged to take notes of each other's contributions, and tutors do not capture students' views to reinforce the main points.
- Staff give good support to students with additional needs and to those who are high achievers. They put support in place promptly for those students whose school records show they need it. Tutors make effective use of a questionnaire at the beginning of the year through which students self-assess their barriers to learning, including financial or medical obstacles. The inclusion team arranges appropriate support for these students to keep them on their courses, including time in a sensory room to manage anxiety. As a result, these students achieve as well as their peers. Tutors monitor the performance of high-achieving students carefully and intervene appropriately to help them achieve their potential.

- Tutors do not help students to explore and understand personal, social and learning issues in sufficient depth. Although many activities take place in tutorials, tutors do not provide enough space and time for students to explore in detail these important topics.
- Most tutors give clear feedback on how students can improve specific pieces of work but in too many cases they do not emphasise the transferable skills for students to develop in future work. For example, they may tell students to include more detail in response to a specific question but give little guidance about how to structure answers to make them clearer.
- Tutors do not consistently set individual and specific targets for improvement after each assignment or monitor these to check if students improve their skills in subsequent work. However, psychology students benefit from personal audio feedback from which they make detailed notes about how to develop further their work, so that they understand how to improve.
- Staff provide students with good information during recruitment. Students and their parents and carers have plentiful opportunities to find out about the academy through open evenings, taster sessions and a well-planned induction period. Once on their programme, students have ready access to good careers advice, both for academic and vocational routes. For example, students wanting to progress to an apprenticeship receive regular emails from the careers advisor telling them when employers are recruiting apprentices.
- Where the subject syllabus includes specific topics related to equality and diversity, students develop a good understanding of these themes. For example, in dance, students learn about the impact of apartheid on a choreographer they study. However, in subjects where these aspects are not part of the syllabus, students do not gain sufficient awareness. Students know enough to protect themselves and others from bullying and harassment, but tutors do not promote strongly wider aspects of living and working in diverse communities.

Mathematics and statistics

16-19 study programmes

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics and statistics require improvement because:

- too few students on courses for A-level and GCSE mathematics achieve their qualifications or make the expected progress given their attainment at the start of their course; the proportion of AS-level students who progress to A-level courses is too low
- in a minority of lessons the pace is too slow for more able students and these students are left with little to do while other students catch up; as a result, these students do not make the progress within lessons of which they are capable
- on too many occasions, tutors do not provide feedback to students that helps them improve; they do not always effectively guide students to re-attempt marked work, so preventing them from developing their understanding
- tutors have not developed enough resources for the academy's virtual learning environment; students are unable to use this resource to undertake independent study, a key skill in preparing them for employment or further study
- tutors do not provide sufficient guidance to students about working in their own time and students do not make best use of their free periods; as a result, they do not consolidate their learning as much as they might
- students who resit GCSE do not make adequate notes in lessons; this limits their ability to revise effectively and the extent to which they can improve their writing skills.

Mathematics and statistics have the following strengths:

- staff have sound knowledge of their subject which they use well so that students understand challenging topics such as in the application of Newton's laws of motion to the working of pulleys, and in teaching integration and its application in society; they use their expertise well to help students with questions from past-exam papers
- students are well motivated because tutors encourage and support them; tutors offer regular additional workshops in mathematics that are beginning to improve students' progress
- a newly appointed head of mathematics shares good practice with staff; he has developed a comprehensive intervention plan to raise standards, but it is too early to judge its impact.

Visual arts**16-19 study programmes**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are good because:

- a high proportion of students successfully achieve their qualifications with high grades, and make good progress in their learning; the large majority progress from AS- to A-level courses
- tutors constantly challenge students to improve and do their best, to experiment, review and evaluate their work effectively, to be bold and take creative risks, resulting in work that is of a high standard, interesting, exciting and original
- good accommodation, specialist equipment and resources support learning well, and most students use these frequently in their free periods and after lessons to develop their ideas, experiment with techniques and make good progress
- students work very well independently to research the work of artists that interest them, analyse their work and explore the themes, techniques and materials that they use to communicate ideas; they use the results of their investigations well to inform their own creative work
- the vast majority of students make good progress in developing the skills, attitudes and approaches they need to be successful, including confidence, self-reliance, organisational and time-management skills
- tutors mark students' work thoroughly and provide detailed guidance that helps students make improvements including in their spelling, grammar, punctuation and expression; as a result students make good progress in developing their skills
- in partnership with their tutors, all students set meaningful, specific, individual short- and medium-term targets that enable them to make good and sustained progress in lessons
- students develop good literacy skills by conducting research, annotating their sketchbooks, writing proposals and essays, taking notes, discussing ideas and critiquing the work of others
- through their creative work and in tutorials students explore effectively equality and diversity issues; for example in a tutorial students debated issues around tolerance, respecting difference and the challenges and responsibilities of living in a multicultural society.

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are not yet outstanding because:

- tutors do not use questioning consistently well enough to help students explore ideas and make decisions about their work
- in a very small minority of cases, students do not develop their basic technical skills, particularly drawing, quickly enough to produce work of high standard
- in tutorials, tutors do not adapt the academy's standard lesson plans sufficiently well to meet the needs of students, and consequently students spend too much time on too many activities and in so doing, their understanding of the subject matter lacks sophistication and depth.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The recently appointed Principal and a new team of senior managers have introduced several initiatives and processes to improve teaching, learning and assessment. Early indications suggest that these are beginning to have a positive impact on students' progress. However, the performance of too many subjects including English, mathematics and AS-level science suffers from obstinate issues which managers have not successfully resolved.
- Self-assessment reporting is not sufficiently timely or precise to support improvement. Although the process accurately identifies key strengths and shortcomings, it does not provide a detailed view of the quality of learning in each subject. Interventions arising from self-assessment are beginning to improve students' progress in lessons but it is too early to tell if these actions will lead to improved outcomes this year.
- Governors' involvement in self-assessment begins too late for their contributions to influence improvements for students. Although the newly formed governing body has members with a wide range of skills, they lack the timely information they need to support improvement planning and to hold senior leaders to account.
- Managers are beginning to improve teaching, learning and assessment through appropriate management of staff performance. However, the quality of written records of lesson observations is too variable and in a few cases, grades are too generous. Observers often focus too much on teaching and not enough on the learning that is taking place.
- Managers target professional development effectively and it is appropriate for all staff. In particular, senior managers support well those new to management with the aim of improving the academy's capacity to secure improvements.
- Managers monitor well the performance of the small amount of subcontracted provision through frequent meetings and communication with the subcontractor's staff. They frequently check students' progress and these students are doing well.
- Managers have not considered sufficiently the needs of local employers when developing the vocational curriculum and have not achieved the academy's mission to 'provide high-quality education in partnership with the wider community, business and industry'. Senior managers recognise this and they are starting to engage with local and national businesses to further develop and consolidate vocational provision.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the large majority of students, of whom most progress to higher education. An increasing proportion of students want to progress to apprenticeships and these students receive useful help to secure interviews with local employers, especially in engineering and computing. However, study programmes that contain a vocational element do not have work experience for students to complete; this is a key priority for improvement.
- Managers have not developed sufficiently effective methods for gathering the views of students. Subject surveys vary in style and questions and it is not possible for managers to compare or benchmark student views across subjects. The academy has a student executive council that meets frequently with senior managers. It has been successful in helping to resolve some minor concerns and to improve the environment. Other opportunities for students to voice their opinions are limited.
- Managers do not promote diversity sufficiently. Although they have ensured that they promote diversity in publications, promotion is sparse around the academy buildings and classrooms. The pastoral tutorial programme includes a range of equality and diversity topics that include developing students' understanding of life in modern Britain. However, tutorials contain too many brief activities that do not provide students with the time and space to develop their depth of understanding.

- Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Policies are detailed and fit for purpose and managers review them annually. The academy has enough designated safeguarding officers and a named governor in place to oversee and manage statutory requirements. Senior managers have undertaken radicalisation and 'Prevent' training and they plan to provide this for all governors and staff this summer. The central register is detailed and it records Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and any training that has taken place; it is up to date for all staff and governors. However, managers have not systematically reviewed and reported subcontracted provision records. Appropriate and detailed records, including risk assessments and accidents, are completed and regularly reviewed. Students and staff learn and work safely.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Landau Forte Academy Tamworth Sixth Form

<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	3			3					
Outcomes for learners	3			3					
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3			3					
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3			3					

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Mathematics and statistics	3
Visual arts	2

Provider details

Type of provider	16-19 academy							
Age range of learners	16-18							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	552							
Principal/CEO	Dr Sarah Clark							
Date of previous inspection	N/A							
Website address	http://www.lfatsf.org.uk							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	0	0	0	0	556	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tamworth Enterprise College 							

Contextual information

Tamworth Sixth Form opened in 2011 and it is part of the Landau Forte group of academies. It serves Tamworth and the surrounding area. The local area has six secondary schools, only one of which has a sixth form. Other local post-16 provision includes a general further education campus that offers a range of vocational programmes. The proportion of Tamworth pupils gaining at least five GCSEs at grade A* to C, including English and mathematics, is lower than the national rate and overall, fewer individuals are qualified beyond level 2 than regionally or nationally. This area has lower than average unemployment, but wages are lower, a higher proportion of work is part-time and fewer people have professional and managerial roles. The population has a very low proportion of ethnic minority residents.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Russell Henry HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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