

Broadlands Academy

St Francis Road, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 2DY

Inspection dates	19–20 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The Principal provides strong, committed leadership and, as a result, the academy is improving rapidly.
- The academy trust has high expectations of the Principal and effectively holds him to account. This high degree of challenge has contributed to the academy's rapid improvement.
- Pupils' achievement is particularly strong in English and is improving in mathematics and science.
- The funding for disadvantaged pupils is being spent effectively, especially in Key Stage 3, to improve outcomes for these pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special needs make good progress as a result of the coordinator's effective leadership.
- In most subjects, particularly at Key Stage 3, teaching activities are well planned and encourage pupils to work hard.
- Pupils are well behaved at the academy, both during their lessons and around the academy site. They are polite and respectful to each other and to adults.
- Staff provide effective pastoral care, so that pupils feel safe.
- The academy curriculum is well suited to the different learning needs of the pupils, particularly at Key Stage 4, where the curriculum is personalised and adapted for individual pupils.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment because they are provided with impartial and comprehensive careers advice.
- Teaching is well supported outside of the classroom by a range of activities that boost pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in some subjects, such as languages and humanities, is not matching that being made in English, mathematics and science.
- Not all teaching, particularly at Key Stage 4, is challenging pupils to think deeply enough to allow them to make rapid and sustained progress.
- The academy's policy that pupils should respond to teachers' feedback is not consistently followed.
- The cycle of monitoring and improvement planning is not yet fully effective to ensure that policies and procedures are implemented consistently.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce inconsistency in the quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 4, by ensuring that:
 - there is sufficient challenge in all lessons to promote deeper thinking
 - the best practice from within the academy, and also from outside, is directed towards those subjects where it is needed most, including humanities and modern foreign languages
 - pupils comply with the academy policy by responding meaningfully to the feedback of teachers in all subjects, so that they have a clear understanding of how to improve further.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by sharpening leaders' evaluation of the impact of actions taken to improve teaching and taking action accordingly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The Principal is a strong, uncompromising leader who has made significant changes at the academy to promote improvement. He has fostered a culture of high expectations and ambition that is shared by staff. Everyone wants the best for pupils. The Principal is also well supported by parents, who share his vision.
- The culture established by the Principal is not only characterised by a determination to achieve high academic standards but also one which values each individual pupil. As a result, pupils know that they are expected to work hard and that they are cared for.
- Leaders have a clear awareness of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. They are open and honest about where improvements need to be made, so that strategic planning and resources are directed where there will be most impact.
- The Principal, supported by the trust, is developing and empowering leaders at different levels in the academy. As a result, staff feel trusted to use their initiative and are keen to take ownership of their work. Middle leaders reported that they are now more accountable and feel challenged by senior leaders, but relish the responsibility they are given to drive forward changes.
- The quality of teaching is improving because of leaders' focus upon high standards; teachers are more firmly held to account because there is closer scrutiny of their performance. Additionally, the leader of teaching knows where improvements are required and is tackling these through a well-planned programme of training for staff.
- A broad and balanced curriculum is offered to pupils which promotes well their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At Key Stage 3 there is a dedicated focus upon reading, which has led to an improvement in pupils' literacy. At Key Stage 4, pupils have the opportunity to review the suitability of the curriculum they are following. If required, changes are made to ensure that the curriculum is appropriate, engaging and encouraging pupils to succeed.
- The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that support pupils' learning and wider development. Attendance at these activities is increasing because the academy is tailoring activities for particular pupils. An example of this is the PE (physical education) club that is specially designed for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Leaders' monitoring is not sharp enough to identify the impact of strategies to improve teaching and learning and whether these are applied consistently to secure rapid improvement in all subjects. For instance, pupils respond frequently to feedback from teachers in some subjects but not all, so work remains to be done to establish consistency in this area.
- The funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent where it is needed most; increasingly, this is in Key Stage 3. An external review of pupil premium spending carried out by the trust has assisted leaders in using the money to best effect. As a result, pupils benefit from activities and resources that support their learning and improve their outcomes.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The ethos of the academy promotes the values of tolerance and mutual respect, illustrated by the calm, ordered way in which pupils work and socialise with each other. Pupils also have an understanding and appreciation of different faiths and cultures. In a Year 8 class, for example, pupils were reflective and thoughtful in response to a question raised by a member of the class: 'Do religions cause war?' Additionally, pupils in Key Stage 3 were able to talk about the dangers of radicalisation in the context of the recent Paris attacks.
- The Principal has improved the standing of the academy in the local community. Parents are highly supportive; those surveyed for the purposes of this inspection overwhelmingly agreed that they would recommend the academy.
- **The governance of the academy**
 - Both the local board of governors and the trust board have robustly challenged the Principal to improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They share the Principal's determination to establish a culture of high expectation.
 - All members of the local governing body and the trust have extensive educational expertise, which has been brought to bear on the work of the academy. This has taken the form of strategic thinking, providing challenge and offering professional development opportunities to staff. As such, they have a sound understanding of the priorities for improvement and have been an important factor in the improvement of the academy to date.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff receive comprehensive training so that they know what to do should they have any concerns over child protection. The academy has appropriate procedures in place for the vetting of staff and keeps up-to-date records. Effective links with outside agencies are maintained to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Overall, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, particularly in Key Stage 3. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, so that most lessons are well planned and teachers devise activities that interest pupils.
- The strongest teaching is characterised by a high degree of challenge, most apparent in Key Stage 3 and in the targets pupils are set. In well-planned lessons, time is used to best effect, sharpening pupils' focus on the learning in hand. In a Year 9 catering lesson, for example, pupils' management of time was important because they were required to cook for part of the lesson; pupils understood this and worked diligently and purposefully.
- Behaviour is managed well in most lessons because teachers establish helpful routines and expectations. As a result, pupils work conscientiously, stay on task and produce their best work. There is a good rapport between teachers and students in the academy, which positively influences their attitudes to learning.
- The effectiveness of teachers' questioning to extend learning varies between teachers and subjects. Where it is used most effectively, pupils are encouraged to think more deeply in an investigative and exploratory way. For instance, in a design and technology lesson, the teacher posed questions about the use and application of the vacuum forming process, and asked pupils to predict what would happen when the process is applied in various ways; the pupils were motivated by this open, enquiring line of questioning. In some lessons, however, questioning does not engage or challenge pupils because it does not promote thinking at a deeper level.
- Teachers generally provide instructive written feedback, which reflects the work the academy has done to improve this aspect of teaching. However, the response from pupils to this feedback is inconsistent across subjects, particularly at Key Stage 4. It is a strength in English, so that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to work on in order to improve. Such good practice needs to be more widespread across other subjects, in line with academy policy.
- Although teachers use assessment information to plan effectively for certain groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, they do not for others, such as the more able.
- Teaching in classrooms is well supported by activities that occur outside of the classroom. Homework is regularly set, monitored and assessed; pupils report that they find it useful. In support of this view, the homework club at the academy is well attended. Other interventions include the 'Learning Recovery' unit, which is effective in supporting the learning of disadvantaged pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are able to thrive and become confident young people at the academy. This is because the small size of the academy and the caring attitude of the staff create a sense of 'family'. Pupils are known as individuals and feel valued by others. Displays of pupils' work around the academy, which are bright, informative and attractive, contribute to the welcoming, friendly feel of the place and encourage pupils' sense of belonging.
- Pupils' personal development is supported through an effective programme delivered in tutorial sessions, lessons and days when the normal timetable is collapsed. As a result, pupils across the academy have a clear understanding of their own physical, emotional and social development. Pupils talk positively about the growing number of opportunities to take part in clubs and activities, both at lunchtime and after school. For example, a teaching assistant runs a sports club that is supporting a small group of vulnerable pupils to develop friendships and confidence through a range of sporting activities.
- The academy does not stint in its efforts to support pupils' well-being, particularly those whose

circumstances make them vulnerable and have a greater need of support than most. The student welfare manager provides bespoke support so that all pupils feel safe in school. Pupils are also well informed about how to keep themselves safe. For instance, pupils talked positively about how their study of internet safety in computer science had raised their awareness of staying safe online.

- Rates of absence and exclusion are rising even though the academy is using every tool and resource at its disposal to address these issues. Efforts to reduce absence are hampered because the number of pupils with erratic attendance joining the academy, many within the academic year, is rising rapidly.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education or employment. Careers advice is clear and impartial and the curriculum provides pupils with appropriate skills and knowledge. Pupils feel well informed and supported to make the right choice. All pupils are provided with good work experience programmes in Key Stage 4.
- A small number of pupils benefit from alternative provision as part of their full timetable. Evidence from regular monitoring from the academy indicates that these pupils are doing well. They are provided with a choice of next steps, such as college courses, youth work and part-time work experience. Where pupils are on short-term placements, the academy has been successful in reintegrating pupils back into the main school.
- Bullying incidents are rare at the academy. Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying and report that, when bullying does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly aware, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9, about how to be successful learners. Pupils talk positively about how the 'How to be a Learner' programme is helping them to develop effective learning habits.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the academy site at social times and when moving between lessons. They are calm and orderly, treating each other with respect. The majority of pupils take pride in their appearance and speak to each other and adults in a civil, well-mannered fashion. No bad language was overheard by inspectors.
- Pupils arrive punctually to lessons, ready to learn. They are attentive to the instructions of teachers and settle to tasks quickly, working without distracting or being distracted.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are decreasing as there has been a greater focus at the academy on developing positive learning behaviours. Parental feedback from a recent parents' evening supported the view that behaviour in the academy is getting better. The academy is highly inclusive and views the use of exclusion as a last resort.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' achievement is continuing to rise at the academy. Pupils' attainment is above the national average: in 2015, 62% of pupils achieved 5 GCSEs including English and mathematics at grade C and above. This is higher than the published figure, taking into account that pupils are encouraged to resit certain examinations when it is appropriate and in their best interest to do so.
- Pupils make consistently strong progress over time in English and are catching up in mathematics and science. Improvements to teaching, alongside the various clubs and activities that support teaching outside of the classroom, have helped pupils to make better progress in mathematics and science.
- In other subjects, such as languages and humanities, there is evidence that improvements to classroom teaching are bearing fruit in Key Stage 3. Greater challenge, carefully directed questioning and effective pupil response to teacher feedback are all helping to raise standards. These improvements are not so evident at Key Stage 4, where pupils make insufficiently rapid progress.
- The academy effectively promotes pupils' reading by providing frequent opportunities to read privately in the school day, supported by a reading programme that matches books to individual pupils' interests and abilities. Pupils' improved literacy enables them to engage better with the wider curriculum and to enjoy reading for pleasure.
- In many subjects, and across year groups, disadvantaged pupils are making progress comparable with others. Where this is not the case, the academy uses assessment information to monitor progress and provide the appropriate interventions to address inequalities.

- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress at the academy, in part because of the strong leadership exercised by the coordinator. She ensures that staff who work closely with these pupils, such as teaching assistants, receive appropriate training and are held to account for the progress that pupils make. She also works effectively with outside agencies, such as the speech and language specialist, to ensure that pupils' needs are met. An example of effective provision from outside of the academy is a service provided by Sirona, at St. Martin's Hospital, to develop the social skills of a small group of pupils. As a result, these pupils are more able to participate in lessons and make the best of their learning experience.
- The achievement of girls and boys is variable across subjects. Teachers are not always sufficiently aware of these differences and, in this respect, do not plan accordingly. For instance, questioning activities and class discussion sometimes fail to secure equal participation of boys and girls.

School details

Unique reference number	138985
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10011288

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan DeSausmarez
Principal	Dean Anderson
Telephone number	0117 986 4791
Website	www.broadlandsacademy.org/
Email address	contactus@broadlandsacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- Broadlands Academy is a smaller than average-sized secondary school. The school converted to become an academy in December 2012 and is sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- The Principal was appointed in January 2013.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs is lower than average overall, although the number of pupils who are statemented or have an education, health and care plan is higher than average.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than average, particularly in the lower years. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- The academy meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site alternative provision at City of Bristol College, City of Bath College, Aspire Academy and the Riverside Youth Project.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 34 lessons, many of which were jointly conducted with leaders.
- Meetings were held with the Principal and other senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, groups of pupils, a member of the local management board and representatives of the sponsoring trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including information on pupils' outcomes, the academy's self-evaluation, records relating to the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, behaviour and the safeguarding of students.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in lessons and observed their conduct at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of 26 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and 28 staff questionnaire returns.

Inspection team

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