

Yewlands Academy

Creswick Lane, Grenoside, Sheffield S35 8NN

Inspection dates

6–7 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate academy

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. The proportion attaining five good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, is significantly below the national average. Too many pupils do not make the good progress from their starting points that they should.
- The gaps in both the standards reached and the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are too wide and show little sign of improving. Academy data show that this is set to continue for current pupils.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate. Too many teachers do not plan lessons that take into account pupils' needs or skills. Marking does not support pupils' understanding of the progress they are making or tell them exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Most-able pupils are not stretched or challenged appropriately and this is preventing them from reaching the standards of which they are capable in their GCSE examinations.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Since the last inspection, there has been no progress in the academic outcomes for pupils. Leaders are hindered in their abilities to make progress due to weak governance and lack of clear direction from the most senior leaders.
- The academy's own self-evaluation is not thorough nor clear in its detail, nor fully accurate. As a consequence, any subsequent planning is unable to give purpose or direction to academy leaders so that outcomes can improve for pupils.
- Leaders fail to ensure that agreed policies, such as behaviour management and marking, are consistently applied by all staff, resulting in varied standards of teaching, learning and assessment and in pupils' behaviour.
- Morale across the academy is low among a significant number of staff and this is affecting some people's ability to do their best. A small, but significant, number of pupils say they are not happy in school nor listened to by leaders.

The academy has the following strengths

- Senior and middle leaders are committed, passionate and have absolute determination to succeed and improve outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils feel safe and parents agree that they are safe. Behaviour has improved overall since the last inspection.
- There are many examples of good practice around the academy. Some teachers deliver lessons that get the very best from their pupils. In these instances, pupils are excited and engaged throughout and their learning is rapid.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this academy 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 academy are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the academy.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the outcomes for pupils by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all areas of the academy in order to accelerate pupils' progress and increase standards by:
 - ensuring that teachers improve the behaviour of a few pupils in lessons through consistent and appropriate use of the academy's behaviour management systems so that pupils are allowed to learn at all times and are clear about expectations and routines
 - sharing the good practice that already exists within the academy to effect improvements in all teachers' abilities to raise standards and outcomes
 - ensure that teachers take full account of the current knowledge, skills and understanding of pupils when planning lessons so that all groups are challenged and stretched to do their very best at all times
 - insisting that teachers always provide work that inspires and engages all groups of pupils so that they are always interested and behave well
 - insisting that pupils always present their work to the highest standards
 - raising the expectations of teachers to ensure that they always believe that pupils are capable of more challenging work, particularly for the most able
 - ensuring that the gaps in both standards and the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs are urgently reduced so that they make the same progress as their peers nationally
 - accelerating the progress all groups of pupils make so that they achieve as well as their peers in other schools.
- Improve leadership and management so that they are able to effectively drive standards higher and accelerate the progress pupils make by:
 - creating a fully accurate appraisal of all areas of the academy through evaluation that can be used to develop an effective plan for school improvement with clear targets, timelines, responsibilities and accountability and ensure rapid progress for all pupils.
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels are able to be fully integrated into any plans for school improvement, know their roles well, are confident to be able to suggest ideas and know that they are contributing to the improvements for pupils
 - using the pupil premium funding effectively to reduce the gaps in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that the interim executive committee fully challenges leaders at all levels and rigorously holds them to account to quickly reverse any declines in pupil outcomes or standards of teaching, learning and assessment
 - quickly developing governance so that it is robust and secure
 - auditing and monitoring any support given to staff to ensure that it has an impact and improves standards quickly
 - further increasing attendance and taking positive action to reduce persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the academy's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

It is recommended that newly qualified teachers are not appointed to the academy.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Since the last inspection, the governors and principal have not effectively ensured that leaders and teachers have secured all of the improvements necessary. Standards remain much lower than they should be and the progress pupils make over time remains too low.
- The newly formed interim executive committee and the acting principal have only been in post two weeks and this has not been long enough to gain credibility or give confidence that they have the capacity to make the rapid changes necessary.
- Many of the academy's leaders have felt that they have not been able to fulfil their roles effectively under the previous leadership and the lack of challenge and direction given by the previous governing body. The acting principal and the senior director of education within the Wakefield City Academy Trust stated that the trust had only recently become aware of the concerns about leadership and, as a result, they are now taking action: for example, by the creation of the new interim executive committee that has already replaced the local governing body.
- A significant minority of parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire feel that the academy is not well led and managed. Some pupils feel they are not listened to and the morale of some staff is very low.
- The academy's own assessment of its performance is not always robust or up front in its views and this sometimes masks the true nature of progress. The academy's self-evaluation, for example, claims an upward trend over three years of 5% in five good GCSE passes including English and mathematics. It states the reasons for low standards and progress are pupils' starting points. It does not acknowledge that pupils in Yewlands Academy are not doing as well as their equivalent peers who started with the same standards in similar schools. Consequently, any school improvement planning lacks purpose, clarity, detail and accountability.
- Despite identification in the last inspection report that most-able pupils were not doing as well as they should, leaders have failed to sufficiently correct this. Such pupils are still not achieving as well as they might be expected to across many subjects, particularly mathematics, English and science.
- Gaps in outcomes for pupils, particularly the progress and standards of disadvantaged pupils compared with their peers, and especially in mathematics and English, remain far too wide showing little sign of secure improvement. The pupil premium funding review carried out since the last inspection has been ineffective and the newly formed interim executive committee has already ordered another review. However, in some subjects, such as design and technology, information technology and science, the gaps for disadvantaged pupils are now very small.
- The academy's predictions for examination results are not always reliable. For example, in 2015 the predictions for GCSE results were overgenerous in some subjects, such as English and core science, but were extremely accurate in subjects such as mathematics and computer programming. As a result, leaders are not accurately aware of future outcomes in all subjects in order to sufficiently target support and challenge.
- The support given to the academy by the trust, although valued by staff, has been ineffective in securing better academic outcomes overall. Standards remain too low and currently show little sign of the rapid improvement necessary across all year groups. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has not improved significantly since the last inspection, resulting in outcomes for pupils that are not as high as they might otherwise be.
- The literacy and mathematics skills of a significant minority of pupils are still too low. As a result, pupils are insufficiently prepared to access other subjects or develop securely through the year groups. This does not support good equality of opportunity for all. However, an analysis of readers in Year 8 shows that literacy is beginning to improve over time, and there are some impressive leaps in the reading ages of these particular pupils due to the good support they receive.
- The academy's own data, supported by inspection evidence through work scrutiny and observations, suggest that the gaps in attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with their peers will remain wide for current pupils, although it is slowly improving in Years 8 and 9.
- Recent changes to the school curriculum have been welcomed by staff and pupils alike. The curriculum is broad, balanced and fit for purpose. Pupils feel the new one-hour lessons are better at helping them to focus and do more, and they feel the choices available to them are suitable. Pupils are able to extend their learning through many opportunities outside normal school hours. For example, the recently opened

lunchtime chess club has been a great success at supporting pupils' logic and thinking skills, although it is too early to say how this will have an impact on their standard lessons.

- Many leaders are relatively new to post and receiving support to develop into the role but outcomes for groups of pupils, for example the most-able or disadvantaged, are not improving quickly enough.
- Internal school data over time has become more sharp and accurate, and clearly identifies the progress individuals and groups are making. However, this information is not being used effectively by teachers to plan lessons, and some leaders are not skilled in using this to challenge teachers or effectively target any support.
- Leadership of the few pupils who receive some education offsite ensures that they are safe and the progress they make is checked regularly. They make similar progress to their peers in school.
- Leaders have created a culture of safety throughout. Pupils clearly know who to turn to for help and are confident to do so. Support for pupils' understanding of e-safety is thorough and the developing programme of assemblies and personal development activities is building pupils' awareness of how to tackle extremism. Leaders speak to parents with increased regularity to ensure that relationships are established to support pupils' safety and well-being.
- Support for pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain, such as how the democratic process works, is not fully robust. Use of personal development time and assemblies is more sporadic than planned. There are, however, some good examples of support to enhance pupils' understanding of British justice, such as trips to the Leeds law courts where they interact with barristers and judges.
- Guidance to help pupils make the right choices for future careers is not fully embedded, with some older pupils saying they have not received any information from the academy as to how to achieve their future careers.
- The support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of the world is secure and helping them to understand other cultures effectively: for example, pupils' involvement in various charitable organisations that support children around the world and at home.
- **The governance of the academy**
 - The previous governing body was too slow to challenge leaders to drive the rapid improvements necessary and has very recently been replaced by an interim executive committee.
 - The previous local governing body, rightfully, did not automatically allow teachers to progress through the pay scales. However, their ability to check performance accurately and ensure that teachers were appropriately rewarded was undermined by a lack of clear understanding of the progress pupils were making.
 - Governors have not ensured effective use of the pupil premium funding because disadvantaged pupils are still not making the progress they should, and the gaps between them and their peers in school have remained stubbornly wide while showing little improvement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable across the academy. This is particularly the case in mathematics and English where progress rates are still below those that might be expected nationally. Teaching has not ensured that pupils make the progress they should and so secure good results for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers, in a range of subjects, do not always plan lessons effectively to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should, or are inspired to do their very best. Lessons do not always excite pupils so that they maintain interest.
- Some teachers are often too ready to accept work of a low standard and they have low expectations of pupils and their abilities. In particular, pupils who have higher ability are not always challenged enough or stretched to do their very best. As result, the progress they make is inadequate.
- Despite having a large amount of accurate data available to them, some teachers do not use this effectively in targeting particular groups of pupils, or use it to support them to narrow progress gaps between disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs against their peers in school.
- A significant number of pupils continue to have poor literacy skills. This is not always supported by teachers and, as a result, some pupils are unable to access the curriculum with success.

- Assessment routines introduced by the academy are not always adhered to by all teachers. Despite regular marking, pupils do not always respond to advice when it is given and teachers do not check for understanding.
- A number of teachers across the academy are being very successful at supporting high expectations, engaging pupils in the learning process and inspiring them to do well. This is particularly the case in design technology, information and communication technology, physics, chemistry and science where success rates are high overall. The academy has not effectively used the skills of these teachers to effect improvements elsewhere.
- Some teachers are able to skilfully select a range of strategies and activities in order to take learning forward and as a result, in those lessons, pupils enjoy their work.
- The use of support staff, such as teaching assistants, is helping some pupils in the classroom. They work decisively and diligently with children who require help and nurture them either academically or pastorally to ensure that they remain on track in lessons. As a result, disruption to lessons is rarer and is helping to create a calmer working climate for all.
- Teachers genuinely care for their pupils and the majority have built very strong relationships with them. This gives pupils the confidence to ask questions when they are confused and to seek support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Several pupils are not fully supported in their readiness for life after school. For example, some older pupils describe how they are unaware of what they need to do in order to achieve their career choices, and that the academy has not spoken to them about this.
- Pupils commented that they do not feel valued by the academy and that they do not feel listened to. They say that the academy's student council does not make any difference to their life in school.
- Pupils state that bullying is rare and academy records demonstrate a decline of major issues over time. Pupils say they know who to go to if they need help and are confident to do so.
- Pupils are well dressed, punctual to both school and lessons, and courteous to others.
- Pupils overwhelmingly say that they are safe in school. They receive regular training to be aware of how to be safe online in school and at home and know how to keep themselves safe in practical lessons.
- Pupils' understanding of extremism is supported through regular assemblies and training using the 'Prevent' system.
- The academy monitors the attendance, progress and safety of pupils who attend alternative provision. The attendance of these pupils compares well with their peers in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Behaviour is improving due to stronger leadership. Instances of pupils being sent to the academy's inclusion room have dramatically reduced over time and exclusions are reducing. However, some teachers are still not applying the academy's policy for behaviour appropriately or effectively to tackle low-level behaviour issues as some leaders are not checking how teachers apply this consistently.
- Pupils say that since the last inspection behaviour has improved. Around the academy, behaviour is generally well managed and pupils interact well with each other.
- During lesson changes, the stairwells become a slight concern due to the behaviour of some pupils running down them and the numbers of pupils who use them at one time. The behaviour of some pupils at this time poses risks to the safety of others.
- Low-level disruption to lessons is rarer, but still happens too regularly. This is affecting the learning for all pupils in lessons when it does happen. Teachers do not always skilfully use the academy's behaviour systems properly or they use it inappropriately, causing confrontation and defiance by some pupils.
- The leadership of attendance is ensuring a steady decline in absence. Rates of persistent absence are falling overall but disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs still attend less well than their peers.

Outcomes for pupils are inadequate

- Pupils enter the academy with attainment that is significantly below average. In 2014, the number of pupils who gained five good passes in their GCSE examinations including English and mathematics was 51% and below national averages. In 2015, the same figure was just 40.51%.
- The number of pupils who achieved the highest grades across many subjects, including English, mathematics and science, was very low in 2014 and remained low in 2015.
- Pupils with special educational needs make less progress than their peers both in school and nationally from their starting points in Year 7. However, the standards they reach at GCSE are similar to their peers nationally.
- Results in 2015 show that in English and mathematics the progress made by most-able pupils was far below expectations, as they were in 2014. The progress of other pupils, both in 2015 and 2014, remains well below those expected nationally. This reflects inadequate progress. In 2014 examinations, the gaps in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally showed that pupils at Yewlands Academy gained grades in English on average one and a half grades lower and in mathematics a full two grades lower. Differences were similar against their peers in school. The 2015 GCSE examination results show that the gaps remain similarly as wide as they were in 2014. This is inadequate.
- Previously, pupils were entered inappropriately early for GCSE examinations in mathematics and English. This practice has now stopped to support pupils to achieve higher grades.
- Current academy data shows that for those pupils in Year 11 the gaps will remain. For example, the academy is expecting only 40% of disadvantaged pupils to gain five or more good passes at GCSE with their peers achieving 75.8%. While the accuracy of predictions is currently not secure in all subjects, it does show that there is a marked difference in the standards being reached between groups.
- Very few of the most-able pupils are making the progress of which they are capable, especially in Years 10 and 11 and in the core subjects of mathematics, English and science. In the most recent examinations, very few of the highest grades were achieved. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- In 2015, the standards reached by pupils in Spanish more than doubled to almost 70% overall but in geography there was a decline in standards.
- Inspection evidence, through data given by the academy, lesson observations by inspectors and work scrutiny, shows that the rates of progress across subjects and year groups and for different groups vary widely for current pupils. The rates of progress and standards overall are low but are particularly low for most-able and disadvantaged pupils. However, there are early indications that for pupils in Years 8 and 9, there are some small improvements being made, particularly in mathematics and English.
- The few pupils who attend offsite alternative provision make similar progress to their peers in school.
- Support to accelerate reading is beginning to show good signs of improvement in younger year groups. The Year 8 pupils sampled in their reading had made impressive gains in their reading ages as a result of the good support they received.

School details

Unique reference number	137400
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10001632

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive (non-selective)
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	844
Appropriate authority	The interim executive committee
Chair	Mr Mike Ramsey
Principal	Susan Cousin
Telephone number	0114 2329010
Website	www.yewlandsacademy.org
Email address	enquiries@yewlands.learnsheffield.com
Date of previous inspection	11–12 March 2014

Information about this academy

- The academy is smaller than most secondary schools.
- The Wakefield City Academy Trust has sponsored the academy since 1 April 2014.
- An interim executive committee has been the appropriate authority of the academy since 28 September 2015.
- An acting principal has been in place since 28 September 2015, supported by the Senior Director for Education of the Wakefield City Academy Trust.
- The large majority of pupils come from White British heritage backgrounds.
- The number of pupils with an education, health and care plan or in receipt of special education needs support is double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The academy no longer enters pupils early for GCSE examinations.
- A small number of pupils attend courses away from the academy on a temporary basis at Sheffield Engineering Centre, Construction Design Centre, In Touch Care and Pathways.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons and parts of lessons, three of which were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Formal discussions were held with four groups of pupils, the interim executive committee, the academy sponsor, the acting principal, and senior and other leaders.
- The substantive principal was not present during the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work in pupils' books in English, mathematics and science as well as in all lessons observed during the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of supporting documents in regard to safeguarding and child protection, minutes of governors' and interim executive committee meetings, performance management, progress data and external reports.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and the 39 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Colin Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara O'Brien	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Bradford	Ofsted Inspector
Judith Gooding	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-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, further education and skills, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

