

Spalding Academy

Neville Avenue, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 2EJ

Inspection dates

18–19 October 2016

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Little of the school has improved since the previous inspection in March 2015.
- Governors have not held senior staff to account.
- The school's use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has not helped these pupils to make sufficient progress.
- All groups of pupils made poor progress from their starting points in 2015 and 2016, across a wide range of subjects and year groups. The teaching does not take sufficient account of what the pupils know, understand and can do already.
- Too much teaching has been ineffective, especially in science and mathematics. Inaccurate information about the progress pupils made has led to school leaders believing that progress has been better than it actually was.
- Assessments of pupils' work have been overoptimistic and led to inaccurate priorities for improvement.
- The systems used to improve the behaviour of some pupils, especially boys, have not been effective. Behaviour has improved this term.
- Attendance has been well below average but has improved this term.
- The school has experienced a significant number of leadership changes within a short space of time. Staff and pupils feel that too many of the school's policies have been ineffective and expectations for different groups of pupils have been too low.
- Only a small number of subjects are on offer for sixth-form students to study. Too few students have been able to move on to higher education.

The school has the following strengths

- Newly appointed leaders have a strong record of accomplishment in a school with a similar pupil intake. They have drawn up plans for improvement quickly and precisely, and have improved site security and the school's learning environment.
- Pupils and staff are very positive about the many changes introduced since September 2016. They confirm that behaviour is improving and expectations for achievement are higher. They believe that the school is improving rapidly.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all groups of pupils, especially the disadvantaged, the most able and those who speak English as an additional language, make the progress they should, especially in mathematics and science, by:
 - ensuring that assessments made of pupils' progress are accurate and this information is used to identify the skills and understanding that pupils need to improve
 - planning learning that takes sufficient account of what pupils understand and that uses more effectively and carefully the support that teaching assistants provide pupils
 - ensuring that expectations for different groups of pupils, across all year groups and subjects, are high enough so that they do not fall behind.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving the attendance of pupils who have levels of absence above the national average
 - ensuring that the systems to manage behaviour are used more consistently and effectively by teachers and teaching assistants
 - improving the effectiveness of the use of funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up in Year 7
 - securing a viable sixth-form provision that is effective in achieving outcomes for students that are at least good
 - ensuring that more effective staff training, support and management result in pupils making significantly better progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and managers have not improved any aspect of the school since the most recent inspection, in March 2015.
- The information collected by leaders about the progress and attainment of pupils has been inaccurate. This has led to leaders gaining an overoptimistic view as to how well pupils have been doing. They have not focused development priorities and plans for improvement on the right areas.
- Teaching has not improved because the systems used to check quality and agree targets for performance have not been as rigorous, or as accurate, as they needed to be. The planning of additional training, and the support provided for staff, have not been strong enough.
- Teachers with responsibility for subjects have not carried out their roles with sufficient diligence. The checks that have taken place to evaluate the progress of pupils have not taken sufficient account of how well different groups are doing. Assessments have been inaccurate and not checked.
- Leaders have focused too much of their attention on trying to ensure that Year 11 pupils catch up. This has not been successful because it has been too late and too many pupils have not had high enough aspirations. Pupils across other year groups have regularly fallen behind because of a culture of low expectations and weak planning.
- Almost all aspects of leadership have changed within the last six weeks. Current leaders, from Bourne Academy, have made widespread changes. They are able to demonstrate how these approaches have been successful in another school with a similar intake of pupils. They have not had sufficient time to demonstrate the positive effect of these changes within Spalding Academy.
- Pupils say that they feel positive about the changes that have taken place in the last few weeks. They say that systems used to manage behaviour are now much clearer and there is much more consistency in how their work is marked. They say that this is having a positive effect on their learning.
- Staff agree that the school is improving rapidly. Several expressed views which indicated that they understand the level of challenge the school faces.
- Leaders and managers have changed the curriculum significantly. Subject choices, especially in key stage 4, now ensure that pupils are better able to succeed in their studies and progress to the next stage of their education. The school provides a reasonable range of additional activities outside the school day, as well as trips, to support learning. It is too early to know how successful these changes will be.
- A revised programme of personal, social and health education is in place since the start of this term. Pupils have reasonable opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- The South Lincolnshire Academies Trust has deployed a substantial amount of appropriate support and capacity for teaching from Bourne Academy. This includes additional leadership, support for staff with subject responsibilities, the creation of a

similar house system, guidance on marking expectations, additional staffing and the introduction of a wide range of assessment strategies. Though at an early stage, the changes are now being made rapidly and offer the potential for improvements.

- New leaders have introduced revised expectations for progress, across all year groups. These expectations are more ambitious, are matched against national averages, and are compared to achievement at Bourne Academy.
- Leaders have revised and improved the systems used to set targets for the performance of staff. Teachers are receiving additional training and support to ensure that their performance improves.
- The executive headteacher of South Lincolnshire Academies Trust has taken up the post of headteacher of Spalding Academy within the last three weeks, following the departure of the previous headteacher.
- New leaders have rightly improved safeguarding arrangements, made the site secure and taken rapid actions to improve the quality of the learning environment.
- Staff and pupils are optimistic about the support provided by staff from Bourne Academy. It is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes that have taken place.
- Leaders have taken rapid actions to identify and begin to remedy a likely deficit between income and expenditure. They have carried out a review of sixth-form provision quickly. Students have been given effective guidance about options for starting courses that are relevant and suitable.
- The school's on-site exclusion unit, the Hayden Centre, was closed this term due to the concerns of the new leaders about the quality of the provision.
- A very small number of pupils attend off-site provision. School leaders undertake appropriate checks to ensure their well-being and progress.
- It is recommended that the school should be allowed to appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has not held school leaders to account effectively.
- The use of finances has been weak. The trust board are taking action to return the school to financial health, as well as providing additional support from the South Lincolnshire Academies Trust.
- Governors have not ensured that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for those who need to catch up in Year 7 has been effective.
- The school's governance changed completely in September 2016. The new governing body has a strong record of accomplishment at Bourne Academy, where disadvantaged pupils do well and progress is good overall. They are able to demonstrate the ways that they have held school leaders to account successfully. The new governing body has experienced members, including a national leader of governance. Governors have concentrated on ensuring that the site is secure, the learning environment is improved and the use of finance is better. They have not had sufficient time to focus their attention on the progress and attainment of pupils at this school because they have not been in their role for long enough.

- The existing record of accomplishment of the governing body at Bourne Academy means that inspectors are not recommending a review of governance, or a review of the use of pupil premium funding, even though over time these aspects of governance have not been effective enough. The governing body understands the need to demonstrate the effectiveness of their role as quickly as possible, but needs more time to do this.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- New leaders have taken rapid actions to introduce a strong culture of safeguarding since September 2016. A security fence has made the site secure. This has stopped the previous high level of truancy during the school day.
- Checks to ensure that staff are suitably qualified and experienced have been carried out.
- Procedures to promote a culture of effective safeguarding have been reviewed thoroughly and improved quickly.
- Staff and governors have had recent training in order to develop their understanding of safeguarding. A programme of regular updates has been planned.
- Staff and governors have had training to develop their understanding of how to promote strong British values.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teaching has not been effective across a wide range of subjects and year groups. The planning of lessons has been particularly weak because assessments of pupils' work have not been accurate. Teachers have not had sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The teaching pupils receive prior to Year 11 has been ineffective. The school has put too much emphasis on helping Year 11 pupils to make up for learning lost in earlier years. That strategy has not been successful.
- Homework has not supported learning well. Teachers have either failed to set homework or have set tasks which do not help pupils with their learning. This reflects a culture where teachers' expectations have not been high enough across most subject areas.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics across different subjects has been poor. Staff have not understood well enough how each subject can make a strong contribution to developing these skills. Their expectations for the presentation of work have been inconsistent.
- Teachers' planning of work has been weak because they have not given enough attention to the prior skills and knowledge of pupils. There has been insufficient reference to the needs of most-able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Most teachers do not plan the work of their teaching assistants well.
- Parents have not received accurate information about the progress pupils make.

- Teaching has been particularly weak in science and mathematics and progress has been especially poor in these subjects. Too many boys in particular have not had sufficiently positive attitudes to learning.
- Staff have not had consistent expectations of pupils' behaviour, and systems to manage poor behaviour have not been effective.
- Feedback given by teachers has been inconsistent or unhelpful. Staff and pupils say that expectations are more consistent since the start of this term. This was confirmed when inspectors looked at the pupils' work.
- Since September, the South Lincolnshire Academies Trust has introduced a wide range of new systems and provided an extensive range of additional support for teaching. This support is too recent to have had sufficient effect on improving teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The school site has not been secure and this has contributed to high levels of truancy. A security fence has recently addressed this.
- A significantly revised programme of personal and social development sessions introduced since September covers a wide range of topics. It is too soon to evaluate the effectiveness of this programme.
- Some pupils, especially boys, have not been positive about learning and have not understood how they can learn effectively.
- Pupils report that there is little bullying. They feel that the school has effective systems to address any concerns they may have. They recognise that the school is more effective at dealing with any problems this term.
- Since September, pupils have been allocated specific spaces to use at break and lunchtime. They are positive about this development and the contribution it makes to helping them feel safe.
- A house system, introduced this term, is helping pupils to focus on positive behaviour, rewards and the importance of good attendance. Pupils also welcome the opportunities they have to take responsibility as house leaders and prefects.
- Pupils feel that the school helps them to understand how to stay safe when using the internet, and the importance of healthy eating. It makes them aware of the need for safe behaviour when using roads.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils say that in a few lessons their learning is held back. This is because some boys in particular have not concentrated well enough and have sometimes been disruptive or defiant. This has been especially the case where teachers are temporary, unqualified or lack experience.

- Some pupils, especially boys, find it difficult to concentrate and this slows their progress. Pupils and staff say that the clearer and more systematic approach to managing pupils' behaviour introduced recently has resulted in a marked improvement in behaviour this term. New senior staff provide a high level of support for managing behaviour.
- Attendance has been well below average. New leaders have introduced a wide range of approaches that challenge the absence of some pupils, as well as ensuring that all pupils understand the importance of regular attendance. So far this term, attendance has improved when compared to a similar period last year, especially for those pupils who have low attendance.
- The number of exclusions has been high for several years. This has been due to the relatively high incidents of poor behaviour and the ineffectiveness of leaders' approaches to developing a culture of good behaviour. Fewer pupils have been excluded this term because poor behaviour is managed more effectively.
- New leaders have substantially revised the school's systems for managing poor behaviour and rewarding positive attitudes to learning this term. Although these systems are new, staff and pupils say that they have already led to a more positive culture within the school.
- The small number of pupils educated in off-site provision attend well.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The progress of Year 11 pupils, from their different starting points, was exceptionally weak in 2015. All groups of pupils made poor progress, especially in mathematics and science.
- Provisional 2016 results show that all groups of pupils made poor progress. There were no improvements compared to the previous year.
- Pupils have made poor progress across all year groups. Progress in science, mathematics, languages and humanities is especially weak. Boys have achieved significantly less well than girls.
- The most able pupils have not made enough progress. No pupils have attained higher grades at GCSE. These pupils are underachieving across all year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, have made poor progress. They have consistently made less progress than their peers.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have made poor progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language have made poor progress.
- Pupils' achievement in art, food technology and physical education has been closer to average, given their starting points.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- Leadership of the sixth form has not been effective. The provision for students in the sixth form has not enabled them to make sufficient progress.

- Too many students have taken a small number of courses. In many cases they have studied one subject. As a result, very few are able to go on to higher education. Students have not received sufficiently helpful careers advice and guidance.
- Students who started in the sixth form without a higher grade at GCSE in English and mathematics have not made sufficient progress in these subjects.
- Too many students have not completed courses successfully in Year 12 and, as a result, have not been able to remain in the sixth form in Year 13. In some cases, their prior skills and experience have not been suitable for the courses they have studied.
- Too much of the teaching has been weak because teachers' expectations have not been high enough. The teaching of English and mathematics skills across subjects has been too inconsistent.
- The cost of the sixth-form provision has had to be subsidised from the main school funding and is currently not financially sustainable. The range of subjects available is very small.
- Students like being in such a small sixth form. They feel that staff know them well and offer them a high level of support. They attend well.
- Since September, the curriculum has been substantially revised. There are currently no Year 12 students in the sixth form and a reduced number of Year 13 students because students have received more effective guidance about suitable provision.
- A very small number of Year 13 students are completing courses in a narrow range of subjects. They are receiving a very high level of support and are making reasonable progress from their starting points. However, as it stands, this provision may not be financially sustainable.

School details

Unique reference number	139168
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10019580

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

Type of school	Secondary modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	908
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Will Hawkins
Executive Headteacher	Laurence Reilly
Telephone number	01775 722484
Website	www.spaldingacademy.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@spaldingacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about on its website.
- The school does not comply with DfE guidance on what academies should publish about policies. The school changed its name this term, the website is very new and the policies for this school have not been created yet.
- The school changed its name to Spalding Academy on 1 September 2016, when it became part of the South Lincolnshire Academies Trust. It has received extensive support this term from the lead school in the trust, Bourne Academy. Many of the

systems and structures that have worked successfully at Bourne Academy have been rapidly introduced into Spalding Academy in the last six weeks.

- The school was previously known as Sir John Gleed School, and was part of the CfBT Schools Trust.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Around a quarter are of Eastern European heritage and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- A very small number of pupils attend the Pilgrim Hospital School.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 55 lessons or part-lessons.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in a wide range of subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. They also visited form rooms and assemblies.
- Meetings took place with the executive headteacher, deputy executive headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and the head of the sixth form.
- Inspectors met two representatives of the South Lincolnshire Academies Trust. One is a member of the trust and another is a trust member and a representative of the newly formed local advisory body.
- Inspectors spoke with four groups of pupils, as well as other pupils during visits to lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered a variety of documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary, the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, anonymised performance management documents, records and referrals made to external agencies, and records of attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

David Bray, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Staley	Ofsted Inspector
Vondra Mays	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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