

# Lipson Co-operative Academy

Bernice Terrace, Lipson, Plymouth, Devon PL4 7PG

## Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders and governors have not successfully sustained a good standard of education in the school since the previous inspection.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those in the sixth form, do not make good progress. This is particularly true of the most able disadvantaged pupils. Teaching is not consistently meeting the needs of these pupils.
- Teaching is not securing typically good progress for pupils across a range of subjects. It does not provide a sufficiently high level of challenge for pupils, whatever their starting points.
- Teaching is not effectively promoting high standards across the school. Attitudes to learning among boys, in particular, are not consistently positive. Too many are not engaging well with their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is not consistently good. While the majority of pupils behave well, too many lack the maturity and self-discipline to make the most of their education.
- Progress on academic courses in the sixth form is too slow, especially for disadvantaged students.
- School leaders are not ensuring that students in the sixth form who need to re-take their GCSEs in English or mathematics regularly attend the classes put on for them.

### The school has the following strengths

- The principal has only been in post since September 2016 but has a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve the quality of education that pupils receive.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics have quickened pupils' progress, especially those with lower starting points.
- The progress made on vocational courses in the sixth form is in line with national averages, including for disadvantaged students.
- Students taking sports studies diplomas in the sixth form make very strong progress as a result of highly proficient teaching.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - school leaders make better use of the pupil premium in order to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged pupils rapidly
  - students in the sixth form who need to re-take their GCSEs in English and mathematics attend these classes regularly.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teaching:
  - meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils more successfully so that they make much faster progress
  - provides a higher degree of challenge for pupils of all abilities, including the most able disadvantaged pupils
  - develops consistently positive attitudes to learning and behaviour in classrooms, especially for boys.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that they develop consistently positive attitudes to their learning, especially boys.
- Improve the 16 to 19 study programmes by ensuring that disadvantaged students make faster progress on academic courses, especially A levels.

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

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The school's leadership, including the governing body, have not been successful in sustaining the good quality of education seen at the previous inspection in January 2012. The progress that pupils make in certain key subjects, notably English, is not good. Moreover, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, especially boys, is also not good enough. Progress in academic subjects in the sixth form is well below the national average.
- The new headteacher, who has been in post since September 2016, recognises that there are key areas that the school needs to improve and has quickly taken a range of appropriate actions to tackle them. Unfortunately, many of these initiatives have not yet had a significant impact on the overall quality of education, partly because they have not had sufficient time to do so. Similarly, recent changes to the structure of the senior leadership team show a clear understanding of what needs to be done but have not been in place long enough to secure the desired impact.
- The pupil premium is not being used effectively to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils rapidly enough. School leaders realise this is a key area for them, given the high proportion of pupils in the school who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Leaders accept that they do not currently have a full and clear picture of how the provision for disadvantaged pupils fits together into a coherent programme. They are taking steps to remedy this but have not completed this process. Additionally, the school collects a wealth of information about pupils' performance but it is not clear how this is being used to improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils as a group, across all the subjects they study.
- The school's curriculum for pupils from 11 to 16 involves a two-year key stage 3, after which pupils study their GCSE subjects for three years, starting in Year 9. Important changes have been made to the way the curriculum is organised across these three years, especially with regard to modern foreign languages. As leaders recognise, however, there is a legacy of some pupils, especially in Year 11, who are not taking the most appropriate courses for their abilities and interests.
- The school's extra-curricular activities programme has been radically overhauled recently. As a result there is a much greater level of participation. For example, the number of trips the school organises has risen tenfold this year, including its first foreign visit for a decade. A particular focus has been placed on ensuring that disadvantaged pupils take part in these activities. For example, half the pupils doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award are from disadvantaged backgrounds, as are a similar proportion of those participating in public speaking events.
- The additional funding for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used effectively. The achievement-raising centre, ARC, provides effective tailored support to pupils in a calm and productive environment. The attendance of those pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is improving.

- The Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium is used reasonably well to help pupils improve. The school's information on, for example, the reading ages of these pupils shows that some make improvement rapidly in Year 7. Nonetheless, the level of monitoring of the use and impact of this extra funding is not consistently sharp.
- A programme of training for teachers is in place. For example, over the last few years there has been a specific focus on challenging the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. Nonetheless, as the outcomes for these pupils indicate, this has not had a sustained impact on improving the progress these pupils make across all the subjects they study. This is another example of school leaders knowing what they need to do but not being able to demonstrate a sustained impact of their actions.
- Leaders successfully ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. As a cooperative academy the school makes explicit links between its cooperative values and fundamental British values, which often overlap. In group discussions with inspectors, pupils said that the school's values played an important part in their education. They were very clear, for example, on how people from a wide variety of backgrounds, whatever their religion, race or sexual orientation, are respected and welcomed at the school.
- The school's guild system is used effectively to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This system builds well on pupils' talents and aspirations to help them grow as individuals. For example, many pupils are involved in charitable fund-raising that develops their understanding of the lives of others.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have recently begun to increase the level of challenge and support provided to school leaders. This has been helped by changes to the membership of the governing body that have enhanced its ability to exercise its role of critical oversight effectively. The principal has also been working well with governors to develop their understanding of this role. Nonetheless, governors still do not give sufficient emphasis in their evaluation of leaders' actions to the impact they are having on the progress pupils make, particularly key groups such as disadvantaged pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a well-established culture of safeguarding in the school. The designated safeguarding lead and the team that work with her have good levels of expertise in the key areas of safeguarding. They use this expertise well to make appropriate referrals to outside agencies when the need arises. They are clearly aware of their duty to be vigilant about issues such as forced marriage and the need to refer any suspected case to the appropriate authorities.
- All staff have undergone safeguarding training, including in the 'Prevent' duty, the government programme that aims to protect young people from the dangers of radicalisation and political extremism.
- The curriculum is used well to promote understanding among pupils of how to stay safe.

- The single central record of pre-employment checks on teachers and other staff meets the requirements.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- Teaching is not ensuring that pupils across a range of subjects and year groups are making good progress. It does not provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge, whatever their starting points. The work set is often too easy and this means that pupils are not making progress quickly enough. This situation is often the result of teachers not paying enough attention to what pupils already know, understand and can do. In addition, teaching is not using questioning effectively to assess, probe and develop pupils' thinking.
- Teaching is not meeting the needs of disadvantaged pupils, including those in the sixth form on academic courses. This is especially true of the most able disadvantaged pupils. The pupil premium is not being used successfully to ensure that teaching promotes fast progress by this group of pupils.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved recently and in the 2016 GCSE results pupils made better progress than pupils did nationally. However, the work in current pupils' books does not demonstrate that teaching, especially in Years 10 and 11, is preparing pupils effectively for the increased rigour of the new national curriculum in mathematics. In particular, it is not clear that pupils are being effectively prepared in the key areas of mathematical reasoning and problem solving.
- Teaching is not successfully promoting high standards across the school, either in terms of pupils' attitudes to learning or behaviour in class. Where teaching is challenging and stimulating, pupils rise to the occasion. Where it is less effective, too many pupils, especially boys, become disengaged or their behaviour deteriorates. Pupils' books show that teachers are too willing to accept incomplete or poorly presented work. This is limiting pupils' progress.
- Where teaching is consistently effective, as it is in GCSE physical education or on the BTEC sports diploma in the sixth form, pupils make very good progress as a result. Such teaching is characterised by thorough preparation, precise understanding of each pupil's needs and strong use of questioning.
- Teachers use the annual reports to parents to provide them with useful information on how well their children are progressing and targets for further improvement.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Requires improvement

#### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Too many pupils have not developed the habits of consistently successful learners. This is especially true of a minority of boys who do not demonstrate in lessons that they are

committed to making the most of their education. The incomplete or scappily presented books of a minority of pupils show that they take little pride in their work.

- The school works well to promote the physical and emotional well-being of pupils, including educating them how to stay safe, including when they are online. Nonetheless, a minority of parents and pupils have concerns about the way the school handles cases of bullying when they arise.
- The school's guild system is making a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. It uses the school's cooperative values to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Regular assemblies presented by pupils are an important part of this.
- Pupils, including students in the sixth form, speak positively of the careers guidance they receive and how it helps them to make informed choices about their next steps.
- Recent enhancements to the extra-curricular activities the school organises have increased participation and this is making a positive contribution to pupils' personal development, including that of disadvantaged pupils.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Although most pupils are well behaved, a minority of pupils, chiefly boys, have not developed the self-discipline to conduct themselves well at all times, both in and out of lessons. In addition, some instances of unkind behaviour towards other pupils and disrespect for teachers were seen by inspectors.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced as a result of a more consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policy. Nonetheless, the school's own records show that there is work to be done to eradicate low-level disruption in some lessons.
- Overall levels of attendance are in line with the national average. The attendance of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan has improved recently. The rate of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils, however, remains too high.
- Students in the sixth form who need to re-take their English or mathematics GCSEs do not attend lessons in these subjects regularly enough.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- The work of pupils currently in the school, including students in the sixth form, shows that they are not making consistently strong progress across the range of subjects that they study. Many have gaps in their knowledge or are not acquiring new skills and better understanding at a quick enough rate. The school is not making effective use of its pupil premium funding to improve the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils make slow progress as a consequence of the fact that teaching does not consistently meet their needs. The work of those pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds currently in the school shows that there has been no sustained or

substantial improvement on the poor progress revealed by recent results. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made significantly slower progress than other pupils nationally. Progress was especially poor in English and languages.

- The most able disadvantaged pupils made particularly poor progress in 2016. Overall, and in the key subjects of English and mathematics, these pupils made progress at a rate significantly below that of other pupils nationally.
- Similarly, the most able boys made progress at a much slower rate than the most able boys nationally. By contrast, the most able girls in the school made progress in line with the most able girls nationally.
- Pupils with lower starting points, however, including those who are disadvantaged, made progress that was in the top 10% of schools nationally in 2016.
- Outcomes for pupils in mathematics have improved noticeably in recent years. The results in 2016 showed that pupils made quick progress, especially those with low starting points. The work of current pupils, however, shows there are some inconsistencies in the success with which teaching is preparing pupils for the rigours of the new GCSE curriculum and its emphasis on reasoning and problem solving.
- The progress made by students on academic courses in the sixth form is not quick enough. By contrast, on vocational courses, especially sports studies, progress is much better.
- Virtually all pupils go on to sustained education, employment, training or apprenticeships at the end of Year 11. Similarly, current data on destinations shows a positive picture for those who complete their sixth form studies.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## Requires improvement

- The 16 to 19 study programmes require improvement because they do not ensure that students make consistently good progress.
- The low attendance at classes for students who need to re-take their English or mathematics GCSEs means that these study programmes, while they meet requirements in terms of their content and structure, are not helping students to achieve success in these crucial qualifications.
- In 2016, students on academic courses made progress that was significantly slower than that of other students nationally. Of the six A-level courses with 10 or more students, four had results which showed that students were making significantly slower progress. By contrast, progress on vocational course was in line with the national figure. However, on only one course, the diploma in BTEC sports studies, was progress significantly above average. These differences are largely a result of variations in the quality of teaching in the sixth form.
- Disadvantaged pupils made particularly poor progress on A levels in 2016, attaining on average nearly a whole grade below other students nationally with similar starting points.
- Leadership of the sixth form has improved recently. For example, attendance has improved as a result of raised expectations. Students are now expected to be in school for the entire day, whether or not they have lessons. This is a policy that the students

themselves welcome, arguing that it helps them to make the best of their study time.

- The retention of students on their academic courses is high, with virtually all completing their course. In the past, retention on vocational courses was poor, with a quarter of students leaving before the end of the course. Sixth form leaders have worked well this year with vocational students and their work placement providers to ensure that retention is now much higher.
- Students receive effective careers education to help them make the best choices regarding their next steps. All students in Year 12 undertake work experience at the end of the year. In addition, many undertake more regular work-related learning, such as those who want to enter one of the health professions.
- The vast majority of students go on to sustained education, employment, training or apprenticeships at the end of their study programmes. Approximately two thirds of those studying academic courses in Year 13 go on to higher education.
- As part of their study programmes, students in the sixth form undertake meaningful non-qualification activities. For example, some act as reading buddies or classroom assistants, helping out younger pupils. This makes a positive contribution to their personal development and also assists those contemplating a career in teaching to acquire useful experience. Enrichment sessions, charitable fund-raising and school productions also allow students to continue their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.



## School details

Unique reference number	136668
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10000509

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,084
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	262
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Debbie Macleod
Principal	Lynda Budd
Telephone number	01752 671318
Website	<a href="http://www.lipsonco-operativeacademy.coop/">http://www.lipsonco-operativeacademy.coop/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:lca@lipson.plymouth.sch.uk">lca@lipson.plymouth.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	18–19 January 2012

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the memorandum of association on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about contact details, examination and assessment results, annual reports and accounts, and governors' information and duties.
- Lipson Co-operative Academy is a large secondary school. It converted to academy status in 2011 under the Lipson Co-operative Academy Trust.

- A much larger proportion of pupils than the national average are eligible for free school meals. Similarly a larger proportion of pupils than average receive support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities or have either a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils are organised into five guilds during their time at the school. These are based on pupils' aptitudes or interests. There are a number of tutor groups in each guild, each of which has pupils from every year group in it.
- The school's sixth form is a member of the Partnership for Learning Excellence, a local consortium of other schools with sixth forms. This allows pupils at Lipson to study a wider range of courses than could be offered by the school on its own.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons across all year groups and a wide range of subjects. Most of these observations took place jointly with the principal or other senior leaders. During these visits to lessons, inspectors took the opportunity to speak to pupils about their learning and to look at the work in their books. Inspectors also looked at large samples of pupils' work from a variety of subjects and all year groups.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal and senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met members of the governing body and the academy trust. Discussions with groups of pupils from a range of year groups, including the sixth form, were also held. The lead inspector spoke to the school's improvement partner on the telephone.
- A wide range of documentary evidence was examined by inspectors. This included the school's improvement plan, key policies, information about pupils' progress and the records of the pre-employment checks the school makes on teachers and other staff.
- In reaching their judgements, inspectors took into account 142 responses to the online survey of parental opinion, Parent View. There were also 214 responses to the survey of pupils' opinion and 81 to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Stephen Lee, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Justine Hocking	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Nash	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Wring	Ofsted Inspector
David Herbert	Ofsted Inspector
Deirdre Fitzpatrick	Ofsted Inspector

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