

Shenley Academy

Shenley Lane, Northfield, Birmingham, West Midlands B29 4HE

Inspection dates

23–24 October 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), underachieve considerably across a range of subjects, including mathematics.
- Leaders do not record and analyse information about pupils' achievements, attendance and behaviour. Consequently, leaders are not able to share vital information with staff or the trust.
- Leaders do not have an accurate view of how well current pupils are performing. They do not tackle underperformance quickly enough.
- Teaching over time has been ineffective, especially in mathematics. The current quality of teaching is not strong enough to address gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, many pupils underachieve.
- The support provided for pupils with SEND is ineffective. These pupils do not benefit from targeted support to help them to make progress.
- Too few sixth-form students complete their courses. Many leave the school during Year 12.
- Leaders removed eight Year 11 pupils on the same day in autumn term 2017. They were not able to give a valid explanation as to why this happened. This practice suggests 'off-rolling'.
- Attendance overall, and for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, is low and not improving. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is rising. Fixed-term exclusions are high.
- Pupils' attendance is not always recorded accurately or in line with statutory guidance. As a result, pupils who are absent from school, including those who attend only part of the time, are not safeguarded effectively.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum in mathematics, especially in key stage 3, is challenging enough. Therefore, pupils complete work that is too easy.
- Leaders do not ensure that the use of pupil premium funding, catch-up funding and funding for pupils with SEND is having a positive impact on improving outcomes of those pupils the funding is intended to help.

The school has the following strengths

- Careers education and guidance is a strength. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to inform them of possible career options. This prepares them well for their future choices.

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 the effectiveness of leadership and management so that there is rapid improvement in pupils' achievement, especially pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, by ensuring that:
 - pupils with SEND receive individualised and targeted support to allow them to successfully access learning and make the progress they are capable of
 - all leaders systematically evaluate the performance of groups of pupils so that they can spot trends and patterns more quickly
 - leaders monitor and scrutinise teachers' assessment of pupils' progress more carefully, so they understand what it is telling them and can intervene quickly to close any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - the curriculum in mathematics, especially in key stage 3, is sufficiently challenging to enable pupils to make progress
 - the additional funding the school receives has a positive impact on the outcomes of those groups of pupils it is intended to help.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make good progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - have consistently high expectations of pupils and what they can achieve
 - plan tasks that meet pupils' needs and abilities so that work is not too easy or too challenging
 - make effective checks on pupils' understanding in lessons
 - use learning resources that engage pupils.
- Urgently reduce the amount of time some pupils miss from their education because of being absent from school or excluded for a fixed period of time.
- Leaders and the trust ensure that proper procedures are followed before a pupil is taken off the school roll.
- Improve the accuracy of the recording of pupils' attendance so that leaders can safeguard all pupils at the school.

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

It is recommended that the school may not appoint newly qualified teachers to teach mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- At the time of the inspection, the school did not have a headteacher. Two senior assistant headteachers have, since the very recent resignation of the headteacher, taken on the operational, day-to-day running of the school. Leaders commented that 'there has not been a headteacher on site since the second week of this academic year'. Senior leaders have recently changed their areas of responsibilities within the school following a restructuring of the senior leadership team in the summer term of the 2017/18 academic year. During the time of the inspection, leaders' knowledge of specific areas of the school's performance was sparse.
- Leaders do not have an accurate view of how well current pupils at the school are achieving. This is because assessment information is not scrutinised and analysed in sufficient detail. Leaders are not clear about the validity of the information they see. Consequently, they are not able to address swiftly any weaknesses.
- During the inspection, inspectors found evidence to suggest that leaders had 'off-rolled' some pupils in Year 11. Leaders could not give any valid explanation as to why eight pupils, all of whom were disadvantaged and half had SEND, were removed from the school's roll on the same day in the autumn term 2017.
- Senior leaders' analysis and evaluation of information about pupils, such as their achievement, attendance and behaviour, are not effective enough. As a result, leaders are not able to intervene in a timely manner to address any underperformance. Consequently, pupils are not achieving as well as they should.
- Leaders do not ensure that accurate attendance records are kept. Records scrutinised during the inspection showed examples of codes that are not in line with the Department for Education's (DfE) guidelines on how to record attendance figures. For example, leaders incorrectly record the attendance of pupils attending part time at the school. Inspectors saw evidence of pupils being wrongly coded or having their attendance records pre-populated.
- Leaders' monitoring of the effectiveness of additional funding they receive, including pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up, is ineffective. Disadvantaged pupils have continued to perform poorly across a range of subjects in 2018. In some cases, their performance in 2017 was in the bottom 10% nationally. Current pupils continue to achieve less well than others. Leaders' action plans to address this lack detail and appropriate success criteria. Therefore, leaders are not able to identify if the spending is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils with SEND are supported effectively at school. Currently, there is no formal provision or support for these pupils beyond key stage 3. They do not receive the support they need in order to be able to successfully access learning. The additional funding for these pupils is not spent effectively so as to make a difference to their learning and achievement. The leadership of this aspect of the school is weak. As a result, the majority of pupils with SEND are underperforming.
- The school's current curriculum is broad and offers a variety of appropriate courses.

More pupils now take a range of academic and vocational courses that meet their needs and career aspirations. However, the curriculum in mathematics lacks challenge, especially in key stage 3. Pupils complete work that they have completed in primary school. Consequently, they find the work too easy and make poor progress.

- Senior leaders' view of the quality of teaching is overgenerous. With the support of the trust, leaders who are now responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching have begun to monitor and track its effectiveness. Information collected since September 2018 about teaching is more informed and accurate. This is because it is moderated and validated with partner schools in the trust. As a result, leaders can now pinpoint areas that need urgent attention, such as the teaching of mathematics and languages, and provision for pupils with SEND. It is too early to see the impact of such actions on pupils' outcomes.
- The trust has recently appointed a school improvement partner from within the trust to take on the strategic oversight of the school in partnership with the school's leaders. He is a headteacher from another school within the trust and his improvement work started less than one week prior to this inspection. So far, he has focused mainly on the analysis of weaknesses and the drawing up of action plans to bring about improvement. These plans are robust and focus on rapid school improvement. It is too soon to see the impact of these plans.
- The 'Shenley Horizons' programme offers pupils opportunities to deepen their understanding and knowledge of topical issues through additional activities. The programme includes activities such as visits from speakers, bespoke assemblies and focus days. Pupils value these sessions and speak highly of them.

Governance of the school

- The E-ACT multi-academy trust (MAT) provides governance for their schools through the board of trustees and then further through regional teams. Over time, the trust has acted too slowly to stem the decline in the quality of education at this school.
- The board of trustees has not ensured that accurate records are kept, or that actions taken on attendance and the use of part-time timetables have been in line with statutory guidance.
- Recent support provided by the trust has been more effective. For example, the newly commissioned improvement partner, visits by the regional education director and work by 'system leaders' are beginning to identify and, in some cases, address key weaknesses across the school. Furthermore, collaborative work with other schools within the trust is beginning to contribute to the improvement work that is needed urgently. For example, middle leaders now meet to share best practice and moderate pupils' assessments.
- Members of the MAT regional team hold leaders to account through 'raising achievement board' meetings. Evidence seen in board meeting minutes from September 2018 show that the trust has accurately identified weaknesses at the school. Action plans are now in place to tackle these weaknesses in the school, and the regional MAT team monitors progress against these actions carefully. However, the actions to address the weaknesses have very recently been introduced and the impact of them is yet to be seen.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- School leaders do not have an accurate view of the whereabouts of the pupils, particularly those on part-time timetables and managed moves. This means that leaders cannot effectively safeguard all pupils and be assured that they are not at risk of harm. This is because leaders do not ensure that attendance records are accurate or completed in line with statutory guidance. Pupils, particularly those who attend the school for part of the time, have inaccurate attendance information recorded and/or records that are completed in advance.
- Staff are clear about what to do if they have any concerns about a child. The safeguarding team works constructively with relevant external agencies. Staff are persistent when they are concerned about a pupil's welfare and follow up concerns with these agencies as necessary.
- Pupils feel safe at school. Those who spoke to inspectors expressed an understanding of ways to keep themselves safe, including from online dangers. Parents who completed Ofsted's survey, Parent View, agreed that their children are safe at school.
- Leaders carry out appropriate checks on staff during the recruitment process and keep accurate records.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching over time is weak. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND, do not make the progress they should. Consequently, they underachieve in a range of subjects including mathematics and languages.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This leads to many pupils completing work that is too easy for them.
- When planning lessons, teachers do not take full account of pupils' abilities and individual needs. Consequently, pupils with SEND are not able to successfully access learning. There is no formal provision for these pupils beyond key stage 3 and teachers do not provide adequate support in lessons. Consequently, their progress remains weak. Conversely, the most able pupils do not consistently benefit from tasks that stretch and challenge them.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics is poor. Teachers have low expectations of pupils, especially in key stage 3, where pupils complete work they have done in primary school, find it easy and make little progress. In key stage 4, teachers do not ensure that pupils are able to close the many gaps they have in their mathematical knowledge and understanding, which stem from weak teaching earlier in the school. As a result, pupils continue to make weak progress.
- Teachers do not select the most appropriate learning resources to engage pupils. This, together with work that is either too hard or too easy for them, results in pupils becoming disengaged from their learning. When this happens, pupils engage in low-level disruption, which wastes classroom time and hinders the learning of all pupils.

- Leaders and teachers use a range of assessments to gauge pupils' achievements. However, leaders do not scrutinise it sufficiently to check its validity. Assessments shared with inspectors during the inspection contained some conflicting information and did not give an accurate view of how well current pupils at the school are doing.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching has lacked precision and accuracy, which has led to leaders having an overgenerous view of its quality. Leaders have recently begun, with the support of the MAT, to evaluate the quality of teaching more accurately. As a result, leaders now know where improvements are needed. Plans are now in place to support teachers who need to improve their practice. This work has very recently been introduced and it is too soon to see the impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching in English is more effective than teaching in other subjects. In English, teachers routinely match the learning to pupils' needs and abilities and use a range of strategies to check how well pupils are achieving. As a result, outcomes in English are better than those seen in other subjects. However, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are weaker than their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Although the school provides a range of activities to promote pupils' personal development and welfare, some pupils are at risk of harm because of weaknesses in procedures, such as the inaccurate recording of attendance figures.
- Pupils say that bullying can occur at the school. They have a view that it is dealt with by staff when it does occur, albeit not always consistently. Half of the parents who completed Parent View agree with this view. However, most parents and carers feel that their children are safe when at school.
- Pupils learn about a range of relevant topics through the 'Shenley Horizons' programme in a variety of settings, both in and outside of the classroom. For example, during this inspection, pupils spoke about recent assemblies and work completed on healthy living and lifestyles during 'immersion days'. Pupils were complimentary about the programme. This work is less well developed in the sixth form.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves and others safe, including from dangers typically found online and on social media platforms. Pupils have a clear understanding of British values, such as the rule of law. The school's environment, with its displays and value statements, contributes well to their understanding. Pupils' understanding of the dangers from extremism and radicalisation is less well developed.
- The pastoral support provided when pupils have emotional or mental well-being concerns is effective. Pupils, parents and staff agree that pupils receive appropriate help and support when they need it.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.

- Fixed-term and permanent exclusions are rising. The majority of pupils excluded for a fixed period of time are disadvantaged pupils. These pupils' outcomes are low, indicating the impact that missing school has on their education.
- Leaders use part-time timetables for pupils whose behaviour falls short of the school's expectations. This practice goes against the DfE's guidelines about the use of part-time timetables in schools. Leaders use these timetables for a period of up to twelve weeks with reviews at mid-time points. Inspectors saw no evidence of pupils being reintegrated into school after being on part-time timetables.
- Attendance at the school is low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from school continues to rise. As a result, too many pupils miss too much of their education.
- Pupils' behaviour was raised as a concern by almost 40% of parents who completed Parent View and by almost half of the staff in their survey. Pupils also commented that behaviour in lessons is variable. Pupils' behaviour observed during breaktimes and lunchtimes is more orderly. Pupils have a regard for each other during lesson changeover times.
- Low-level disruption occurs in lessons where the learning is not matched to pupils' needs or abilities. Leaders have recently introduced a new behaviour policy that focuses on positive reinforcement and celebrating successes rather than highlighting misdemeanours. It is too soon to see impact of this policy on exclusion and attendance figures.
- Leaders' monitoring of pupils on alternative provision is effective. Leaders visit the provider and keep in regular contact with parents of pupils at alternative provision. Leaders track effectively how well pupils are behaving and ensure that their progress is reviewed regularly. In some cases, pupils at alternative provision are excluded for fixed periods of time. Exclusion rates for these pupils, even while on their placements, are high.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Current pupils at the school, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND, are underachieving. This is evident in the quality of pupils' work in a range of subjects, including mathematics and languages, and is the result of weak teaching and low expectations.
- Pupils' progress in 2017 was below national averages in a range of subjects, including mathematics, English and humanities. Unvalidated achievement information for 2018 suggests a decline in standards, including in mathematics and especially for disadvantaged pupils. These unvalidated figures also suggest that pupils made better progress in English in 2018.
- Disadvantaged pupils, historically and those currently in school, do not achieve well. The progress they make is significantly below that of other pupils with similar starting points. This is because of the ineffective use of the pupil premium funding, low expectations and not attending school regularly.
- Pupils with SEND underachieve considerably. Achievement information for current pupils highlights that they make weak progress across the curriculum. Currently, there

is no provision for pupils with SEND beyond Years 7 and 8. As a result, there is a lack of structured support and pupils are not able to access their learning.

- Leaders' information about how well current pupils are achieving is contradictory and unclear. As a result, leaders are not able to intervene quickly enough to address any underperformance. Support is now provided by the MAT through 'system leaders'. For example, mock exams are now moderated with other schools in the trust to ensure that information is accurate. However, it is too early to see the impact of this on pupils' outcomes.
- The provision for independent careers advice and guidance is successful. Pupils receive clear and detailed information about career options available to them, especially in key stage 4 and in the sixth form. They learn how courses lead to possible career pathways. This ensures that pupils are prepared well for their choices about next steps.
- In 2017, almost all Year 11 pupils completed the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). Much of the achievement in the 'open' element in pupils' progress came from this qualification. The course was not an appropriate qualification for some pupils because they had already covered most of the content in their IT GCSE qualification or because the ECDL was not challenging enough for them. In 2018, the ECDL was no longer offered and pupils completed a BTECH I-Media course in its place. Outcomes for this qualification were not good and the open element in 2018 shows a significant decline.
- Leaders use a commercially available programme that assesses pupils' skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy in Years 7 to 9. The information from these tests shows some improvements in pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- Too few sixth-form students complete the courses they start in Year 12. Many leave before their examinations or even earlier in Year 12. For example, less than half of the students who started their courses in 2016 completed them in 2018.
- The number of pupils opting to continue their education in the school's sixth form after key stage 4 has declined sharply. The current number of students is very small. Leaders have begun to forge some strong partnerships with organisations to increase student numbers. For example, the school currently works closely with Birmingham City Football Club and provides an academic education for students on courses at the football club.
- Newly appointed leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the sixth form. They know which areas need most urgent attention and have plans in place to revitalise and relaunch the post-16 provision at the school. The impact of these plans on increased application numbers to the sixth form is yet to be seen.
- Very few activities in the sixth form serve to build students' character. The number of character-building activities or life-skills sessions is very small. Students commented that they would welcome more input into this specific aspect of their sixth-form experience.
- Students take more vocational courses than academic subjects in the sixth form. Those who remain on their courses make progress similar to that of other students nationally,

both on academic and vocational courses. Students benefit from effective teaching, strong relationships and teachers who know them well.

- The behaviour of students is excellent. They are generally positive about their sixth form and the support they receive. Consequently, they attend regularly.
- All students complete a work-related placement, providing useful insight into their chosen career paths. This, paired with effective careers advice and guidance, ensures that students are prepared for their next steps. Consequently, almost all students who complete their courses move on to appropriate employment, higher education, training or apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	135911
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10047533

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
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	1,032
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	53
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Michael Wemms
Headteacher	Position vacant at the time of the inspection
Telephone number	0121 464 5191
Website	www.shenleyacademy.org.uk/
Email address	enquiry@shenleyacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 February 2014

Information about this school

- Shenley Academy is a member of the E-ACT multi-academy trust.
- The school is governed by the E-ACT board of trustees. The Midlands' regional team holds the school to account through raising achievement board meetings.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school with a larger-than-average proportion of boys on the school roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well-above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are on SEND support is above the national average. The

number of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.

- At the time of the inspection, the school did not have a headteacher.
- The school currently receives support from the school's Birmingham secondary collaborative cluster leader who, in the absence of a substantive headteacher, is providing school improvement work and strategic oversight of the school. His work started less than one week prior to the inspection.
- There are currently nine pupils from key stages 3 and 4 on alternative provision placements at The Edge school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents. These included: the school’s self-evaluation and action plans, minutes of meetings of the trust’s raising achievement board, school policies, information about pupils’ attainment and progress, behaviour, attendance, exclusions and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons and parts of lessons across a range of subjects and key stages. They observed pupils’ behaviour between lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors evaluated the work in pupils’ books and folders in lessons in different year groups and subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers, including those who are newly qualified. Inspectors also met with the chief executive officer, deputy chief executive officer and the regional education director of the E-ACT multi-academy trust.
- The views of parents were considered through the 49 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, as well as the 25 free-text comments parents provided.
- Inspectors considered the 44 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors held numerous informal discussions with pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the Birmingham secondary collaborative cluster leader from the E-ACT multi-academy trust, who is working as the school’s improvement partner and providing strategic oversight of the school.

Inspection team

Bianka Zemke, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Tim Hill	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Deb Jenkins	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Alun Williams	Her Majesty’s 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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