

City of Peterborough Academy

Reeves Way, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 5LQ

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2019

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, including the trust, have not maintained the high standards previously seen at the school.
- Leaders do not assess the impact of their work to improve provision well enough.
- Leaders and the trust have not ensured a consistent approach to the curriculum. Its implementation varies across the school. Too often, teaching does not meet the needs of pupils in the class well.
- Too many pupils make too little progress over time because they are not taught well enough.
- Over time, a number of pupils have made less progress in mathematics than they should have. Teachers have not ensured that they learn the mathematical skills and concepts they need.
- Pupils' behaviour interrupts learning in a range of classes. Pupils' conduct is too often inappropriate around the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders ensure that pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance to help them prepare for their next steps after school.
- Pupils' physical and mental well-being is promoted well by leaders. Pupils spoke highly of this aspect of provision.
- Some teaching is strong. This is evident in, for example, much modern foreign languages teaching and, more recently, humanities.
- Leaders' work to develop pupils' leadership skills is impressive. There are plentiful opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and to contribute positively to the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress pupils make by:
 - ensuring a consistent approach to the implementation of the curriculum by making sure teaching is of a high standard across the school
 - developing the teaching of mathematics so that pupils' understanding of mathematical processes is secure before moving on, particularly in key stage 3.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by making sure that all teachers use the school's approaches to managing behaviour consistently and well.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure leaders check that their work has the positive impact they desire on the quality of provision.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' work to adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils has not been as effective as it should have been because it is not taught well enough. While some teaching is strong, too much is not. This means that changes brought in to provide courses appropriate to pupils have not led to good outcomes. The 2018 outcomes for 'open element' subjects – subjects which do not fall into the measures for English, mathematics or the English Baccalaureate – were significantly below the national averages and have not improved sufficiently since then.
- Leaders do not ensure that their work has as much impact as it should. Their assessment of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is insufficiently focused on how well it improves pupils' outcomes. Leaders have effective systems to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), but they do not know what impact the strategies they provide to support these pupils have.
- Leaders' recent changes to the teaching of mathematics have not had enough of an impact to ensure that pupils make good progress. In Year 11, the most significant development leaders described has only been in place for a short period of time. In other year groups, leaders have not ensured that teachers provide pupils with sufficient time or practice to develop a secure understanding of mathematical techniques or concepts.
- Some of leaders' recent initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact. For example, in humanities subjects teaching has improved. However, because of weaknesses in the past, pupils in Year 11 have not caught up on important information they should have learned in previous years.
- Some aspects of leaders' new professional development work are beginning to have an impact on, for example, the interest some pupils show in their work and on the motivation of staff. However, this work is still in its early stages. Leaders are only now beginning to evaluate its impact.
- Funding for disadvantaged pupils, and for pupils who join the school with low levels of literacy and numeracy, is used well. Pupils with low starting points are successfully helped to catch up in both mathematics and literacy because of the targeted support they receive. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is enhanced by leaders' actions, such as the provision of peer mentoring and help to build their resilience, as well as extra support aimed at their individual learning needs.
- Leaders have developed strong systems to support pupils as they prepare for their next steps beyond school. Leaders make sure pupils are offered a range of options that are aspirational and focused on individuals' strengths. As a result, almost all pupils who completed key stage 4 in 2018 went into education, employment or training.

Governance of the school

- The trust has adopted a systematic approach to monitor key aspects of provision.
- There are clear lines of reporting and accountability with mechanisms in place to support leaders and other staff. However, these systems have not been effective in maintaining the outstanding quality of education seen in the previous inspection.
- Significant aspects of provision now require improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that there is a safe culture at the school. They take the necessary steps to check and vet adults prior to employing them and ensure that staff are suitably trained. Adults pass on their concerns about pupils' well-being and leaders take appropriate steps to follow these up.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe. Leaders' flexible approach to the delivery of personal, social and health education (PSHE) means that they can link the work they do to local and national issues as they arise. For example, pupils in Year 8 recently learned about managing their feelings. They are taught about the dangers of drugs and about how to keep safe online. Pupils say there is an adult they can talk to if they are worried about something. They say that they feel safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- In too many classes, teachers are not effective in managing behaviour. This means that pupils disrupt learning and limit the progress they and other pupils make.
- In mathematics, not enough teachers ensure that pupils embed their understanding of basic mathematical concepts. As a result, pupils move on without having a solid knowledge base to support their understanding of more complex ideas. This is particularly prevalent at key stage 3.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school depends too much on which teacher pupils have. While some teachers set work which interests pupils, others do not. Some teachers use questioning well to draw out pupils' understanding, but this is not typical. The quality of education pupils receive is inconsistent. It does not support enough pupils to make good progress across the curriculum or across year groups.
- Much of the teaching of modern foreign languages works well, while the teaching of humanities has recently got better. This is reflected in strong outcomes in modern foreign languages and improving outcomes in humanities.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is good.
- Pupils spoke highly of the many opportunities they have to build and use their leadership skills, such as by being on the student council or being a prefect. The student leadership team has a positive impact. Members of the team are available to help other pupils with concerns they might have. These pupils receive training to ensure that they know when to pass concerns on to an adult.
- Throughout their time at the school, pupils learn well about the different education and employment choices they face when they leave Year 11. All pupils who spoke with inspectors about their Year 10 work experience found it to be valuable and of high quality. The advice and guidance pupils receive are enhanced by extra-curricular trips and activities, such as visits to universities and attendance at conferences. Pupils are well prepared to make appropriate choices about their futures after school.
- Pupils' well-being is promoted effectively. For instance, pupils thoroughly enjoy physical education, and many take up the opportunity to continue with a range of physical activities and sports at lunchtime.
- Pupils have been taught how to keep themselves safe and say that they feel safe in school. They also say that bullying is rare and that, when it does happen, they are confident that adults will deal with it well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Too many lessons are interrupted by pupils' disruptive behaviour. In too many classes, strategies for managing pupils' behaviour are not applied well enough. This slows the progress pupils make.
- Too many pupils behave in a disrespectful manner, for example making inappropriate remarks both in and out of lessons.
- Some pupils' punctuality to lessons is not as good as it should be. A number of pupils arrive to lessons late.
- Leaders are tenacious in following up on pupil absence. Levels of attendance are typically above the national averages.
- Leaders have effective systems for managing the most challenging behaviour. They ensure that pupils who demonstrate this level of behaviour continue to be educated in school with bespoke support. Consequently, the rate of fixed-term exclusions is low.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make as much progress as they should. In 2018, progress in key stage 4 was significantly below the national average in mathematics. In humanities and 'open element' subjects, pupils' progress was in the bottom 20% of all schools nationally.
- Pupils' progress in humanities is beginning to improve because they are now typically taught well. However, recent improvements have not had sufficient impact to secure good outcomes for current pupils because gaps remain in what they should have learned in the past.
- In mathematics, leaders' recent initiatives have begun to improve pupils' progress in key stage 4. However, pupils do not make good progress through the school because teaching is not good enough in different classes, particularly at key stage 3.
- Pupils' progress in 'open element' subjects continues to vary depending on which teacher they have.
- The 2018 outcomes in modern foreign languages were a strength of the school. Pupils continue to make good progress in these subjects because they are usually taught well.

School details

Unique reference number	139082
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10085485

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 free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	799
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mike Hamlin
Principal	Alexandra Emmerson
Telephone number	01733 821440
Website	www.cityofpeterboroughacademy.org
Email address	cpa-admin@cityofpeterboroughacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	21–22 April 2015

Information about this school

- City of Peterborough Academy is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust. The school is led by the principal, who reports to a senior education adviser. The senior education adviser is accountable to an education director, who in turn reports to the chief executive officer. The trust's standards committee oversees the work of these post holders and reports to the full trust board.
- The school does not make use of any alternative education providers.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school, with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average, while the proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- A larger than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classes across the school, sometimes accompanied by leaders, and reviewed the work of pupils in their books. They met with the principal and other school leaders, the chief executive officer and other leaders of the trust, and spoke with the chair of the trust's standards committee.
- Inspectors considered a range of information presented by the school, including leaders' evaluation of the school, safeguarding records, and minutes of meetings of the trust's standards committee, as well as evidence about pupils' outcomes, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils during the inspection. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, for inspectors to analyse.

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Jackie Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Georgina Atkinson	Ofsted Inspector
David Hutton	Ofsted Inspector

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