

Shireland Collegiate Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135170
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	345421
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Alan Alder HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1094
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Murray
Headteacher	Sir Mark Grundy (Executive Principal) Mr Andrew Grace (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Waterloo Road Smethick Birmingham
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The large majority of time was spent looking at teaching and learning; 39 lessons were observed and 36 teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and teaching staff. Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including that relating to the safeguarding of students, the progress students are making in their learning, the academy's evaluation of its work, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body, the 122 questionnaires that were received from parents by the end of the inspection, as well as the questionnaires completed by a sample of students and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress being made by students in their learning
- the quality of teaching
- students' attendance and behaviour
- the effectiveness of leadership and management and the academy's capacity for sustained improvement.

Information about the school

The academy opened in September 2007 along with the partner George Salter Collegiate Academy, which is situated about five miles away and is managed by the same trust board. The executive principal carries the role for both academies, with a particular focus on human resources, finance, admissions and exclusions and the online learning provision. A new principal was appointed in September 2009; he is responsible for all the other aspects, as well as the day-to-day running, of the academy. The executive principal is the statutory headteacher of both academies. The principal is accountable to the core collegiate academy trust which is led by the executive principal. Governance for the two academies is the responsibility of the collegiate academy trust board. The academy also has its own local governing body.

The academy serves an area of significant social and economic disadvantage. A much higher proportion of students than found nationally are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average. The academy's specialism is the arts. The academy has achieved the national Healthy School platinum award.

The Early Years provision on the site is managed by the collegiate academy trust.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of 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.

The quality of the different aspects of the academy's work varies from the outstanding to the inadequate. The work being done at the time of the inspection to ensure students are safeguarded is outstanding, as is the work done to promote community cohesion. The academy's students have won a prestigious world-wide award in this area. The quality of teaching, though, is inadequate and as a result, students are making inadequate progress in their learning. Their progress is also hindered by the lack of sufficient accredited vocational and work-related courses in Years 10 and 11. Although students' behaviour around the academy is usually calm and they treat visitors politely, in lessons instances of inadequate behaviour occur on more than isolated occasions. Such lessons are those where the quality of teaching is weaker. Nevertheless, students' comments about behaviour, while critical of it in their questionnaire, contain very few references to bullying and inspectors found little evidence to suggest that there is a problem with bullying. The rate of students' absence is high and there is a relatively high proportion of students who are persistently absent.

In general, the work done to ensure students' well-being is more effective than that being done to improve their learning. The security of the building and the presence of adults around the site, together with education about such matters as internet safety and the risks associated with substance abuse, mean that students' safety is good. The academy also works hard to ensure that students are healthy.

The new principal has a clear and accurate view of where improvements are needed. He has both demonstrated a determination to bring about improvement and made a good start in bringing about the conditions necessary for this. However, other leaders in the school, for example those with responsibility for subject departments, do not know in sufficient detail the strengths and weaknesses of their areas. Some leaders' inexperience and weaknesses in their practice mean that the capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate. Plans for improvement do not have sufficient measurable indications of the amount of progress to be made by a given time. This makes the monitoring of progress very difficult. The governing body is stretched. Its membership is relatively small, some members have considerable other commitments and it has one vacancy. It does not have the capacity currently to undertake its monitoring role effectively.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by students in lessons, and their behaviour, by eradicating inadequate teaching and developing more good and outstanding teaching by:
 - accurately and quickly establishing programmes for development where teaching is inadequate or satisfactory
 - instituting a bespoke programme of professional development for those teachers who are underperforming
 - regularly monitoring their progress and providing more support where necessary.
 - Improve students' attendance rates and reduce the proportion who are persistently absent so that it is no greater than the national average, by robustly implementing nationally recognised strategies.
 - Ensure that leaders at all levels, including in the sixth form, carry out improvements based on detailed and accurate evaluations of the areas for which they are responsible. Establish effective systems to check progress regularly against measurable milestones so that leaders and governors are aware of areas where improvement is insufficiently rapid.
 - Develop the curriculum by providing more accredited vocational and work-related courses for students at Key Stage 4.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Students' attainment when they enter the academy is low and declining. By the end of Year 11, it remains low overall as well as in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, the proportion of students achieving five or more higher grade GCSE passes including English and mathematics shows improvement, though it remains significantly below the national average. However, standards vary too much across subjects and between groups of learners. In 2009, girls performed less well than boys overall because of weaknesses in mathematics. Taking into account the standards reached in all subjects, boys' standards were close to average, those of Indian students and White and Black Caribbean students were marginally above average. Students in Year 11 benefit from high levels of support, including lessons after school and at weekends to increase their learning. As a result, they made above-average progress and all groups, including students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English an additional language made at least satisfactory progress. Nevertheless, the evidence from students' work and learning seen in lessons throughout the academy during the inspection shows a high proportion of classes where progress is inadequate or barely satisfactory.

Students participate well in a range of health-related fitness activities such as dance and sports. They understand, and many have adopted, healthy lifestyles and eat healthily.

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Students take on responsibilities satisfactorily, for example through a prefect system. Students' spiritual development is good and cultural development is well catered for, partly through the emphasis in the curriculum on the arts. This is exemplified by an annual, major arts presentation to a large audience, which reflects a rich cultural diversity. Students' workplace skills are helped by the work experience many in Year 11 undertake, though this is not yet universal. They are, however, hindered by low standards in literacy and numeracy, and by their high absence rates.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	4
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching ranges from outstanding to inadequate. Teachers' subject knowledge is always at least satisfactory. In the better lessons, planning is good and takes into account the different abilities of students. In these lessons, questions are well formulated and require thought and analysis on the part of students. In the weaker lessons, questions are mostly asked of volunteers and so are not used to assess students' understanding in order to modify teaching approaches if necessary. Weakness is also revealed in lessons where the emphasis is on getting through the work and using

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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all the resources that have been prepared, rather than on ensuring that students are developing their knowledge and understanding. In a minority of lessons literacy is developed satisfactorily, for example with an emphasis on ensuring that students understand words which may be new to them. Although there are some good opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills, in general insufficient attention is given to literacy across the curriculum. Year 7 is an exception to this.

The curriculum in Year 7 has been recently developed to better meet the needs of the students whose literacy and numeracy levels are low. The academy recognises it does not cater sufficiently for students in Years 10 and 11 whose abilities or aspirations are more geared to work-based or vocational learning. Some of these students are currently following courses for which they will receive no formal accreditation. The arts specialism makes a good contribution to students' personal development, and it promotes enthusiastic involvement. There is considerable extra tuition available after school and at weekends, particularly for those who are entered for external examinations. In addition, there is also significant extra-curricular provision for community language learning, and the uptake of this is large.

Good care is typified by the very good emotional support available to potentially vulnerable students and their families. The learning mentors are committed and sensitive to the individual needs of these students and parents. Parents are well informed about the work of the academy, especially through the internet. They respond with high attendance at meetings about students' progress. They particularly appreciate the opportunities available to their children when they join the academy, and the steps taken to ensure students settle quickly to work in Year 7. Parents are becoming increasingly involved in academy life; an example is the welcome meeting organised to evaluate how well Year 7 students have settled into the academy's work and routines, and to raise awareness of the academy's expectations of parents. Links with a wide range of outside agencies are strong and make a positive contribution to students' well-being and the support that the academy offers them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The executive principal has been aware of some shortcomings in leadership and management and has taken steps to strengthen it. The new principal is beginning to develop the management practices necessary to bring about improvement. The regular

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monitoring of the quality of teaching is now well underway. In addition, a more robust means of tracking students' progress through a regular regime of assessment and the evaluation of each student's progress against their targets has been introduced recently. The leadership skills of those with responsibilities for subjects are being fostered. For example, developments in leaders' evaluations of their areas are in hand and there is some close scrutiny of these by senior leaders with evident beneficial impact on their quality, though the quality and level of detail is still somewhat uneven. These are necessary precursors for improvement, but it is too soon to judge how effectively they will be consistently implemented.

The links with outside agencies are very effective. The trained counsellor, school nurse, social workers and the community police are all involved in ensuring that students are safe and not at risk. The links extend to ensuring that those who are persistently absent are nevertheless safe.

The academy's leaders have a good understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of its community in a local, national and global context. A robust determination for it to be an integral part of a wider world community has ensured that a large number of students, parents and community members are involved. Many local people, as well as the students at the academy are involved in learning community languages at the academy. The very small number of recorded incidents of racist behaviour, the low incidence of bullying and the way in which students from a wide variety of backgrounds work together harmoniously is testament to the success of this work. A particular strength is the specialist mentors involved in this work. The academy's leaders monitor carefully the effectiveness of its provision for different groups and its response to this ensures satisfactory equality of opportunity.

At the time of the inspection, the quality of safeguarding was outstanding. The environment is physically safe and highly secure. Students are taught well to take care of their own personal safety and that of others. Exemplary procedures are in place to vet staff for suitability and to train them in child protection matters. The safeguarding policy was set up by the Board of Trustees and is reviewed and evaluated by the governing body.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the childcare provision is good. Children are happy and very confident. The provision meets the needs of the children well, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language: all groups achieve well. Partnership with parents is outstanding. The manager provides clear leadership, there is rigorous self-evaluation, which with the staff's enthusiasm, means the Nursery is well placed to continue to improve.

The Early Years provision meets the needs of children well. They make good progress in their learning because the staff create a stimulating and caring environment and carefully monitor their progress. The information gleaned from regular detailed observations is used well to plan children's next steps in learning. There is a good balance between activities children choose for themselves and those led by adults, which make a good contribution to the development of children's learning skills and their positive attitudes. However, the resources and furnishings in the room for the two and three year olds do not provide many regular opportunities for them to experience handling, crawling and climbing on different textures and surfaces. Children's healthy lifestyles are promoted well. There are well established routines to encourage high standards of hygiene and cleanliness. The secure outdoor space is used to promote all areas of learning. This is an area which is planned for further development as it does not currently provide a colourful and stimulating environment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Sixth form

The curriculum provides well for the range of students' abilities and interests, with a good range of courses. Students benefit from access to the partner academy and

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another school to extend the range of courses they can follow. Standards are rising, but vary too much. Systems to track students' progress have not been sufficiently robust to provide regular assessment information and analysis to support improvement. Effective practice from the partner academy has been used to strengthen this to good effect. Weaknesses in the provision of information, advice and guidance have led to students commencing courses not suitable for them and this has led to high drop-out rates. Guidance has now improved with early indications of success. The variation in teaching quality is reflected in course results, and confirmed by students. Strong features from lessons observed during the inspection include good relationships and attitudes to work, high levels of participation, interactive tasks and activities that challenge students well. Staff absence has interrupted continuity in the leadership and management of the sixth form. Leaders have identified weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and learning and within specific subjects. Steps have now been taken to implement a systematic approach to lesson observation. This is a recent development and it is too soon to evaluate the impact on teaching quality and consistency. Attendance is acknowledged to be low. Strategies are now in place to support improvement but are not yet showing impact.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	4
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	4

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say that their child enjoys the academy and is safe there. Inspectors agree with these views. The academy is very successful in ensuring that students are safe, and get on together well and respect each other. Parents have concerns about the development of healthy lifestyles. Inspectors judged that the academy's health education is of good quality, as is the provision of healthy lunches. About one quarter of parents who responded to the questionnaire say that they have concerns about behaviour. Inspectors share this concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shireland Collegiate Academy to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1283 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	18	88	72	11	9	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	28	23	83	67	10	8	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	28	60	49	21	17	6	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	26	71	58	16	13	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	24	77	63	13	11	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	15	73	59	26	21	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	15	71	58	26	21	3	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	27	62	51	17	14	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	20	76	62	17	14	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	24	65	53	18	15	9	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	18	69	56	18	15	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	28	23	70	57	13	11	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	31	67	54	14	11	3	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



29 January 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Shireland Collegiate Academy, Birmingham, B66 4ND

Thank you for the help you gave us when we inspected the academy, including those of you who completed the questionnaire. We spoke to quite number of you and were impressed by your friendliness and politeness. We found some very strong features in your academy, but also some areas that need to be improved.

We were impressed by how well different groups of students get on. We noticed from the academy's records and your own comments that bullying and incidents of racist behaviour, while they do occur, are quite rare. We think this reflects well on the academy's work to bring everyone together and to care for you. The work done by those of you in 'Young Voices' is an important and impressive part of this. We were also impressed by how much is done, often using people from outside your academy, to ensure that you are safe and well cared for.

We would like there to be more good and outstanding lessons, because you should be learning more. There are lessons in which the behaviour of some students needs to improve. Some students' attendance is too low, and this also needs to get better. In order for these improvements to be made, the leaders of the academy should check carefully on exactly what the problems are, so that they can put them right. You can all help too, by trying to attend as regularly as possible and by helping to persuade those who do not behave that they are harming other students' learning and enjoyment of lessons.

To help the academy to improve as quickly as possible, we judge that it needs 'special measures'. This means it will be given additional help to improve and inspectors will visit about once a term to check how well it is improving.

With best wishes for your future

Yours sincerely

Alan Alder

Her Majesty's Inspector

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