

St Peter and St Paul, Catholic Voluntary Academy

Western Avenue, Lincoln, LN6 7SX

Inspection dates

24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' standards of attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11 are typically well below average.
- Until recently, many students have not made the progress expected of them in mathematics.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged students and others are closing, but too slowly.
- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not yet consistently good. Teachers do not always set tasks that take full account of different ability levels, especially to challenge the most able students.
- Teachers' marking does not always help students to improve their work.
- Students sometimes make slower progress when they are not encouraged to start work on tasks quickly, or to think hard about what they have learned.
- Leaders' recent actions to improve the academy have not yet led to good teaching or achievement.
- Although governors know the academy's strengths and areas for improvement well, they have not challenged leaders enough to ensure that students achieve well.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has accurately identified areas for development and has begun to address them.
- Standards in most subjects are on track to improve in 2015. Students achieve well in Spanish.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are polite, friendly and work together very well. The relationships between students and teachers are very positive.
- Students feel safe in the academy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance has improved recently and is now average.
- The sixth form is good. Students make better progress than those in the main school because they are consistently well taught in a range of courses which are well matched to their abilities and interests. Many go on to gain places at top universities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students' learning in 37 lessons from Year 7 to Year 13. Three of these observations were made jointly with academy leaders.
- The work in a sample of students' books was evaluated. Inspectors attended two assemblies and a number of tutor periods.
- The inspection team observed the behaviour of students in lessons, during lesson changeovers and at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered 48 staff questionnaires. They also considered a number of parental communications they received.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher; other leaders including the head of sixth form, subject leaders and the special needs coordinator; governors; and three groups of students of different ages. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone to the chair of the academy trust's executive board. Inspectors also had a number of informal discussions with students at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at important documents, including examination results and the academy's own records of students' progress. They scrutinised the academy's policies and procedures for keeping students safe, records of students' behaviour and attendance, and plans for improvement.

Inspection team

Michael Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patrick Cook

Additional Inspector

Judith Wakeling

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy on 1 May 2013, as part of the St Gilbert of Sempringham Catholic Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013.
- The academy is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for students who are in the care of the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The large majority of students are of White British heritage. The largest minority ethnic group comprises students from any other White background, many of whom are of Polish heritage. The very large majority of students speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- Three students currently attend off-site provision at the Acorn Free School, and four students at the Pilgrim Hospital School. A total of 28 students study one of a range of work-related courses at Riseholme College as one of their Key Stage 4 option subjects.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve students' achievement overall and particularly in mathematics, by making sure that:
 - teachers always set tasks that closely match the ability of different groups
 - marking consistently tells students how to improve their work, and teachers check that students have acted on this advice
 - students begin tasks as soon as they are ready to tackle them
 - students have more chances to reflect on what they have learned in order to consolidate their understanding
 - leaders at all levels make full use of assessment information on all groups of students to identify and correct any gaps in learning.
- Ensure governors challenge school leaders effectively enough to ensure that students achieve well.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Recent actions taken by the headteacher and other leaders of the academy have not yet made sure that the quality of teaching or levels of students' achievement are good. However, there is a positive ethos in the academy in which teaching and good behaviour can flourish.
- The headteacher has introduced more robust procedures to manage teachers' performance. Information is gathered from observations of learning and checks on students' work and data on their progress. This means leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development in teaching. Teachers' performance targets are based appropriately on students' progress, and procedures to address any underperformance in teaching are effective. As a result the quality of teaching is beginning to improve, although it is not yet consistently good.
- New systems have been introduced to track students' progress more accurately than before. Teachers are held to account for students' progress, and students receive help if they fall behind. However, these systems have not yet led to all students making good progress.
- The academy trust provides support for leaders, but does not challenge them sufficiently to improve students' achievement.
- Middle leadership is growing in effectiveness. Subject leaders are playing an increasing role in improving teaching and promoting students' faster progress.
- Leaders spend funds from the pupil premium on extra teachers to support students' literacy and numeracy skills, and on a range of alternative courses for disadvantaged students. As a result gaps in attainment between disadvantaged students and others are beginning to close. Improved systems to check the progress of different groups of students mean that leaders are now evaluating the impact of this spending more effectively than before. They are now ensuring that the additional funding is targeted precisely where it is needed.
- The academy does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Leaders make sure all students have an equal chance to succeed, and that students from all backgrounds get on well together.
- Leaders make regular checks on the progress and achievement of students who learn away from the academy site. They have a good working relationship with these providers.
- The large majority of parents support the academy and say they would recommend it to others. They say their children are happy and feel safe in the academy. Policies and procedures to keep students safe meet statutory requirements and are effective.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and well matched to students' interests and abilities. There is a good balance of academic and work-related courses in Key Stage 4. Students receive independent careers advice so they are well informed about the options for the next stage in their lives.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are promoted particularly well. Students' strong values are developed effectively in lessons, assemblies, tutor time, extra-curricular activities, special events and themed days, and in the caring ethos of the academy. Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Recent whole-school 'Aspire' days have included themes on human rights and communities working together, and a number of students have visited the Houses of Parliament to learn about democracy. Students learn to be tolerant and respectful of others. They are concerned about those less fortunate than themselves, and raise funds for charitable causes.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance of the academy requires improvement. Governors make regular visits and are well informed about the life of the academy. They have a clear view of its strengths and areas for improvement. They understand what data on students' achievement tell them about how well the academy is doing. However, they have not challenged leaders sufficiently well to ensure that achievement is good.
- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They know how good teaching is rewarded, that teachers' pay rises and promotion is based on their students' progress and how any underperformance is tackled.
- Governors make sure that the academy's finances are well managed. They know about how additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is spent, and its impact on students' achievement in broad terms.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. They are polite and friendly towards staff, visitors and each other. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the academy, without the need for close adult supervision. Students' standards of school uniform are high. There is no graffiti or litter around the site.
- Students have very positive attitudes to learning. They work hard and want to do well. They cooperate very well in lessons, and help each other to learn without being prompted.
- Students arrive punctually to lessons with the correct equipment. They respond quickly to teachers' requests and instructions. Disruption to learning caused by poor behaviour is very rare.
- Students' attendance has improved and is now at national average levels. The proportion of students who are persistently absent has fallen, and is now lower than average. Exclusions remain above average, mainly because some students who join the academy with previous behavioural difficulties are sometimes excluded. However, inspectors saw evidence of good support for these students, and exclusion is only used as a last resort.
- Neither parents nor staff raised any concerns in their questionnaires about the behaviour of students. However, when lesson activities do not fully engage students, some lose focus and make less progress than they could.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe in the academy. They are taught to stay safe and understand, for example, the potential dangers of using the internet, and of misusing alcohol and drugs.
- The academy's site and buildings are safe and secure. There are effective procedures to check visitors to the academy. All required checks are made before staff are appointed.
- Students learn about different types of bullying, for example cyber-bullying, and are clear about what to do if it happens. They told inspectors that bullying in any form is rare, including incidents of racism or homophobic behaviour, but they are confident that leaders would deal effectively with any that did arise.
- The academy's leaders liaise well with providers of work-related courses to check on the attendance, behaviour and safety of students who learn on other sites.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving, but it remains inconsistent. It has not been good enough over a sustained period of time to lead to good achievement in literacy, reading and mathematics. As a result, although students' work in lessons and their books shows that they are making more rapid progress than in the past, they are not yet reaching the standards they are capable of.

- Teachers do not always set tasks for their students that closely match the range of different abilities in each class. The most able students are not always set work which is difficult enough to make them think hard or to deepen their understanding, so they can achieve the highest grades in public examinations.
- Teachers' marking is frequent and detailed, but does not always include helpful feedback to show students how to improve their work. There are wide variations in practice, both within and across subjects. Teachers do not routinely check that students have acted on the advice given in marking, in order to help them make more rapid progress.
- Time is sometimes wasted, especially for the most able students, because students do not start working on tasks quickly enough, or move to the next task without lengthy explanations from their teachers. This limits the time they have to work and means they make slower progress than they could.
- Students have too few chances to think about and reflect on what they have learned, and to consolidate their understanding. This means their recall of what they learned in previous lessons is sometimes weak.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are supported both in lessons and in extra sessions by teaching assistants. This allows these students to make similar progress to most others in the academy.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are very committed to doing the best for their students. Teachers know their students very well as individuals. Relationships between adults and students are warm, positive and respectful. The teaching of some subjects such as Spanish is of high quality, and leads to rapid progress.
- Recent changes made by senior leaders and the teachers in charge of English and mathematics have improved the quality of teaching. More effective teaching and feedback ensures that students are now making faster progress in literacy and reading. The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved because teachers now make more accurate assessments of students' achievements, so students have a clearer idea of how to improve their work, and teachers give more effective individual help when students find a topic difficult.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the academy in Year 7 with standards in English and mathematics which are often well below average. Few make good progress. As a result, students' attainment by the end of Year 11 in 2014 was still well below average.
- Achievement in mathematics in the past has been low. The proportions of students making and exceeding the progress expected of them were well below average in 2013 and 2014, and results in GCSE examinations in mathematics in 2014 were below average. Academy data show that attainment in 2015 is on track to be higher than in 2014, but students have not yet caught up to where they should be.
- The achievement of the academy's most able students requires improvement because teachers do not always set work that is difficult enough to help them reach the highest standards.
- The academy does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.
- The progress made by disadvantaged students also requires improvement. They have made slower progress than others in some subjects. In 2014 they were half a GCSE grade behind others in the academy in English, and one grade behind in mathematics. They were three quarters of a grade behind other students nationally in English, and one and a half grades behind in mathematics. These gaps are beginning to close because of improving teaching and more effective support.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to most other students. Their progress is checked regularly and they are supported appropriately in lessons by teaching

assistants.

- Leaders make appropriate use of the extra funding for students who join the academy in Year 7 with limited literacy and numeracy skills. Extra support for these students in English and mathematics means they begin to catch up.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to most other students. Students who speak English as an additional language receive effective help to learn English.
- Students who attend alternative provision achieve well in the academic and work-related courses they study. All progressed successfully in 2014 into education, employment or training.
- Achievement in mathematics is improving because the new head of department's actions to improve standards are making a difference and the quality of teaching and marking has risen. Teachers' assessments of students' achievements in mathematics are now more accurate. Students know their target grades and what they have to do to make sure they meet them. They receive good individual support from their teachers, and they are now well prepared for public examinations.
- GCSE results in 2014 in both English language and English literature were well below average. However, rates of progress in English are improving this year. Students make particularly good progress in Spanish, and achieve results which are above national levels. The academy's data show that students' results in most subjects are set to improve in 2015.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Students make better progress in the sixth form than in the main school. This is because teaching is consistently good and staff ensure that work is matched closely to their ability levels and interests.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good and improving. Students' attainment when they start the sixth form is slightly below average. Attainment rose sharply in 2014: in A2 examinations over half of students gained the highest A* to B grades. Results in work-related BTEC qualifications also improved, as did results at AS level. All groups of students achieve similarly well. Students who speak English as an additional language are particularly well supported. Academy data indicate that current students are achieving well.
- Most students study academic courses, with a small minority following work-related courses. Students receive good advice about which courses to take, so completion rates are high. Students who did not achieve at least a grade C in English or mathematics in Year 11 continue studying these subjects and resit them in Year 12. Most of them successfully achieve at least a grade C. As a result of their good achievement, all students who left the sixth form in 2014 were able to follow the route of their choice: either entering higher education or gaining an apprenticeship. Many gained places at the most prestigious universities.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is consistently good. Leaders check teaching closely to make sure it is of high quality. Students appreciate the detailed feedback they get on the assessed pieces of work they complete, so they know how to improve. As a result students feel well prepared for their examinations.
- Students have very positive attitudes to the subjects they are studying. They say they enjoy very good relationships with their teachers, who know them well as individuals and willingly offer them extra help when they ask for it. Sixth formers are well integrated into the wider life of the academy. Mixed-age tutor groups give sixth formers many chances to carry out leadership roles. Inspectors saw them leading a quiz for younger students in tutor time, and leading assemblies in front of almost 200 students. Attendance rates are high. Sixth form students work hard, behave well and feel safe.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good. A good range of additional special days and events supplement students' examination courses. These include visits to universities, topics on road safety, health and

relationships, and sessions on how to budget and cook at university. Leaders check students' progress towards their target grades regularly, and they make sure that extra support is available when it is needed in order to keep them on course for success.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139623
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	453407

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	551
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father John Kyne
Headteacher	Damien Keogh
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01522 871400
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	sspp@sspp.lincs.sch.uk

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