

Richard Rose Central Academy

Victoria Place, Carlisle, CA1 1LY

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- The achievement of students is inadequate and standards are too low, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Far fewer students than nationally make the expected progress in these subjects.
- Too much teaching is inadequate or requires improvement. There is not enough good or outstanding teaching to overcome students' past underachievement.
- Teachers do not demand enough of students and marking does not always tell students how they can improve their work.
- Middle leaders do not all have high enough expectations of students or the necessary expertise and skills to ensure good progress in all subjects.
- A significant minority of students do not behave well enough and disrupt learning in lessons. Teachers are not always successful at tackling this.
- Attendance is well below the national average and showing only limited improvement.
- Governance is inadequate. Since the previous inspection, the governing body has not ensured that the academy has improved its performance. Governors have not had enough information and guidance to help them rigorously question leaders about the quality of teaching, behaviour and students' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Students feel safe and relationships are generally good. Students behave sensibly as they move around the academy.
- The range of subjects and curriculum pathways offered to students generally meets their needs and has a positive impact on their academic and social development.
- While the effectiveness of the sixth form requires improvement, sixth form students' achievement, particularly in vocational courses, is better than that of students in Years 7 to 11. This is because a higher proportion of teaching in the sixth form is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors spent the majority of their time observing 32 lessons taught by 31 different teachers, seven of which were observed jointly with senior and middle leaders. Lessons were observed in a range of subjects and were taught by teachers across the age range of the academy.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, members of the leadership team, middle leaders, teachers with no leadership or management responsibilities, organisers of alternative learning provision and four members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including the academy’s view of its own performance, monitoring records, information about students’ progress, improvement planning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of behaviour and attendance, and records relating to safeguarding.
- Discussions were held with four groups of students about the quality of their educational experience and the standard of behaviour. Inspectors spoke with other students at social times.
- The inspection team took account of the views of 23 staff who returned inspection questionnaires and the views of the 19 parents who had responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection.

Inspection team

David Brown, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Brian Blake	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Kath Harris	Additional Inspector
Peter Harrison	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with 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.

Information about this school

- Richard Rose Central Academy is an average-sized secondary school. The number of students on roll has declined in recent years.
- The percentage of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average.
- Most students are of White British heritage and few students speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Alternative provision used by the academy includes Carlisle College, Stone Eden Nursery and the Gilford Central Pupil Referral Unit.
- The academy is sponsored by the Richard Rose Trust which also includes the Richard Rose Morton Academy. In January 2011, the academy moved into new and attractive purpose-built premises.
- Sixth-form students are taught on both campuses with students moving between sites for specialist subject lessons.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standard, which sets out the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- There have been considerable changes in leadership and staffing since the last inspection, including a significant reduction in teaching and non-teaching staff. The academy has recently appointed new 'zone leaders' in English, mathematics and science. The number of zone leaders has been reduced from 13 to seven and the senior leadership team has been reduced from 10 to six.
- The acting headteacher has been in post since September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is always good or better by ensuring that:
 - inadequate teaching is rapidly eradicated
 - all teachers have high expectations of students and use the information they have about their attainment to set work that is challenging for all abilities
 - students are given clear, regular and helpful feedback on their work and the level at which they are working so they understand how to improve
 - teachers apply the academy's behaviour policy consistently in lessons and ensure that all students know what is expected of them.
- Raise standards, especially in English, mathematics and science, by consistently using and meeting targets based on students making at least three levels of progress between Years 7 and 11.
- Improve attendance in all year groups, including in the sixth form, so that it is at least in line

with the national average.

- Improve the impact of the academy's leaders by:
 - ensuring that governors, senior and middle leaders are more actively involved in evaluating the academy's work and respond rapidly to the priorities for improvement
 - ensuring that action plans are sharply focused on the most urgent priorities, and that the academy's progress in tackling them is checked frequently and rigorously.
- Governors must improve the quality of their work by:
 - ensuring that they have a thorough understanding of whether the work done to improve the academy's performance is making any difference
 - supporting leaders in ensuring that all teachers are held responsible for the progress of the students they teach and are provided with appropriate training to help them improve their teaching
 - ensuring that pupil premium funding has a positive impact on the achievement of students for whom it is intended
 - taking part and responding to an external review of governance to identify what support and training governors need.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Students enter the academy with standards that are, on the whole, significantly lower than the national average. Learning and progress in all year groups is inadequate and so students' attainment remains low at age 16. There was some improvement in the proportion of Year 11 students making the expected amount of progress in mathematics in 2012, although progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science remains well below the latest national figures. Very few Year 11 students exceed expected progress in these and other subjects.
- The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE qualifications at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, improved in 2012 but remains significantly below the national figure and below the academy's own target.
- Students' progress in science is particularly poor because of inadequate teaching and the low expectations of teachers.
- Too many students are not fully engaged in learning. Many do not achieve their potential because the academy has not enabled, motivated or challenged them to succeed. Some students have not taken responsibility for their learning because they lack the personal skills and confidence to take advantage of what is on offer.
- The academy has received significant additional funding provided through the pupil premium. However, the money has not been targeted precisely enough to meet the needs of those students for whom it is intended. As a result, there has been little impact on the progress made by this group of students. The progress made by students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is no different from any other group of students, and their attainment is equally low. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs also underachieve.
- The academy enters students for GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and science before Year 11. However, this policy lacks any clear rationale and has not improved students' achievement.
- Students achieve better in the sixth form than in the main school because of better teaching, particularly in vocational courses. However, the sixth form requires improvement because progress in some subjects and courses is still not good enough.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- There have been only limited improvements in teaching since the last inspection and many of the shortcomings highlighted at that time are still evident.
- As a result of weak teaching over time, students make inadequate progress. During the inspection, one fifth of the lessons observed was inadequate. Too many teachers do not plan lessons that move students' learning on at a fast enough pace and students are not given enough challenge in their work.
- In weaker lessons, teachers do not use their knowledge of students' previous learning to make sure work is set at the right level. Teachers have access to extensive data about students' attainment but this is not always used to plan work that engages and stretches students of all abilities. As a result, too many lessons are based on completing tasks rather than in making sure students make progress in their learning. Some teachers have low expectations of what students can achieve. The work set for them is often too easy and does not build successfully on what they already know and can do. In many lessons, there are too few opportunities for students to plan and take responsibility for their own learning.
- The quality of marking seen in students' books is often superficial. Where teachers fail to give supportive feedback, students lack direction and are unclear about the teachers' expectations. Where marking is better students are clear about what they need to improve and are encouraged and supported by teachers' comments to do so.
- Some lessons are disrupted by a minority of students. Weaknesses in teaching contribute to this,

however, too many students deliberately interrupt their own and others' learning despite the best efforts of teachers. Dealing with poor behaviour takes teachers' time away from teaching those who want to learn and reduces the quality of what they are able to do.

- In good lessons, students are actively engaged and challenged in their learning through discussion and shared tasks. This accelerates their progress as they learn from each other and respond to the high expectations of the teacher. In a Year 9 history lesson, the teacher used a range of high quality resources to challenge the students to consider the complex issues which led to the outbreak of the First World War. The students were fully engaged with the lesson and made the good progress expected of them. Their books were marked with supportive comments which made very clear what they should do next to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of the vast majority of students meets an acceptable standard in lessons and when they move around the academy. Behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is orderly and in general students move promptly to their lessons and punctuality is good.
- There is, however, a significant minority of students who present more challenging behaviour. Some teachers deal with this very effectively but, in too many lessons, teachers do not make clear to students what is expected of them. The poor behaviour of a small minority of students, who deliberately disrupt learning in lessons, means that class teachers spend too much time trying to maintain order.
- The academy has recently introduced a new system to promote positive behaviour. Although staff are fully aware of how the system is to be used, some teachers do not do so effectively. As a result, while some students believe that behaviour has improved and are appreciative of the efforts of staff to achieve this, some believe that they are not treated fairly.
- Although students say that they feel safe in the academy, there is recognition that the behaviour of some students in lessons affects their own and others' enjoyment of learning. However, students understand different forms of bullying well and feel confident that the academy will deal effectively with any concerns.
- A number of students say they do not enjoy coming to the academy. This means that they develop poor attitudes to learning, and their attendance and behaviour in lessons suffers.
- The overall attendance of students has remained too low since the previous inspection and is not improving fast enough. Too many students are frequently absent from the academy, sometimes for long periods. Senior leaders recognise this and have worked in a focused way to improve attendance but it remains stubbornly low when compared with other secondary schools.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Systemic weaknesses in leadership following the previous inspection have slowed the pace and momentum for improvement. As a result, systems and procedures for leading and managing the academy and for evaluating its progress are underdeveloped. Leaders have failed to improve teaching, raise achievement and increase attendance sufficiently since the previous inspection.
- Checks on the quality of teaching have not been challenging or rigorous enough to bring about the necessary improvements. Reviews of the quality of teaching are too generous and do not focus on the link between the quality of teaching and students' achievement. Consequently, weaknesses in teaching and students' progress have persisted. The skills of individual teachers have been improved but there is still not enough good teaching to accelerate students' progress so that they catch up with their peers nationally.
- Not all zone leaders, many of whom have been appointed recently, hold their staff fully to account. They do not yet have the skills to evaluate systematically the quality of teaching and learning and to relate this to the outcomes for students. However, middle leaders want to improve and are open to the support and guidance offered to them by senior leaders. Historically, the management of teachers' performance has been weak, and this has led to some

underperforming teachers being inappropriately rewarded.

- The academy's curriculum, including that in the sixth form, meets the needs of students. Recent modifications, including the introduction of additional curriculum pathways, have enhanced this aspect of the academy's work further and students are generally happy with the choices available to them. However, short-term decisions about the curriculum, such as the introduction of BTEC science in Year 9, and entering students for GCSE English and mathematics while they are still in Year 10, have not yielded good results.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted across the academy through assemblies and through planned opportunities within the academy curriculum.
- There has been no review to check whether or not pupil premium funding has helped to raise standards for the students for whom it is intended.
- The academy meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding students and training for staff is both appropriate and regular. Records are thorough and comply with requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors oversee the work of both academies in the Richard Rose Trust and do not have the capacity to know this academy well enough. Minutes of governing body meetings show that some issues, such as financial matters, are discussed thoroughly, but at times governors have accepted senior leaders' evaluations of the academy without questioning them in detail or understanding fully what they are being told. There is little evidence of governors holding the academy's leaders to account, particularly in terms of the quality of teaching and students' achievement. Too often, members fail to provide enough challenge to leaders. However, the governing body has played a significant role in the academy's recent development by tackling the issue of over-staffing so that the academy has become more cost-effective. The governing body does not have a clear enough view of how pupil premium funding is being spent and what difference it is making. They have not published a summary of this and other statutory information on the academy's website.

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	135621
Local authority	Not applicable
Inspection number	400164

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

Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
School category	Non-maintained
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	993
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Scowcroft
Acting Headteacher	Jacky Kennedy
Date of previous school inspection	10-11 November 2010
Telephone number	01228 822060
Fax number	01228 822061
Email address	info@rrca.org.uk

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