

Leeds City Academy

Bedford Field, Woodhouse Cliff, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS6 2LG

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good across a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high. Work set is not challenging enough, especially for the most able and middle-ability pupils. Questioning is not consistently effective in checking pupils' understanding.
- Assessment of pupils' work can be overgenerous and does not address pupils' misconceptions well enough. Pupils' reading and writing skills are not reinforced and developed in all subjects.
- Pupils do not take sufficient pride in their work and some is left incomplete. Exclusions are above average with a few pupils showing a lack of respect for others. Persistent absenteeism is above average.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are not sufficiently robust and targets set for pupils are not challenging enough.
- Leaders have not strengthened the quality of teaching well enough through effective professional development. Subject leaders are not highly skilled in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not show clearly how changes to be made will improve the quality of teaching, learning and personal development over time.
- Over time, governors and the multi-academy trust have not made sure the overall effectiveness of the school is good.

The school has the following strengths

- The new principal and the trust have taken decisive action to strengthen the school. Staff morale is high and there is strong capacity for further improvement.
- Leaders have made sure there are excellent procedures in place to protect pupils and take care of pupils' emotional well-being.
- There is high-quality careers advice and support to ensure pupils continue in education or training at the end of Year 11.
- Pupils joining the school with little or no spoken English have a strong programme of induction to support their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, to enable all groups of pupils to make at least good progress and achieve well, by ensuring:
 - teachers' expectations are consistently high and work set challenges pupils, particularly the most able and middle-ability pupils
 - questioning is used skilfully to check pupils' learning and to deepen their understanding
 - accurate assessment of pupils' work to overcome pupils' misconceptions
 - pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills across a wide range of subjects.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - making sure pupils' work is of a high standard and incomplete work is addressed
 - ensuring all pupils are tolerant and respectful
 - reducing the rates of exclusion from the school to average or below average
 - reducing the proportion of pupils regularly absent from school.
- Improve the impact of leadership, including governance and the multi-academy trust, by making sure that:
 - plans for improvement are crystal clear about how actions will develop and improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes over time
 - subject leaders are skilled and thorough in checking the quality of teaching and learning to identify best practice and iron out inconsistencies
 - professional development is used effectively to strengthen the quality of teaching to be at least good
 - systems for tracking pupils' progress are rigorous and targets set for pupils are challenging
 - senior and middle leaders ensure the school's behaviour policy is followed consistently by all staff
 - crystal-clear success criteria are used to check that the work with developing partnerships is improving the overall effectiveness of the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders and managers have not ensured that all groups of pupils achieve well, that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, and that personal development, behaviour and welfare are good.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders have not been thorough in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' work. Over time, they have not checked that teachers' professional development has resulted in consistently good teaching.
- Since the opening of the school, the established system for checking pupils' progress has not been robust enough, particularly for those pupils who enter the school without key stage 2 results. Consequently, the progress pupils are making has not been checked well enough to make sure it is good.
- The new principal has taken decisive action to reorganise the school's leadership team, tackle poor teaching and appoint new middle leaders. There is evidence that new leaders are improving behaviour and that some aspects of teaching are strengthening. The principal has successfully recruited new teachers although she is finding it difficult to recruit an English teacher that meets her requirements.
- The school is exhibiting clear capacity for further improvement because of the efforts of the principal, the executive principal and staff's high level of support for actions being taken to improve the school.
- An accurate assessment of what needs to be done to strengthen the school has led to appropriate actions identified in the school's plans for improvement. Currently, measures for success are not showing clearly how much improvement is expected in teaching and learning because of the actions being taken.
- The curriculum is adapted suitably to meet the needs and abilities of pupils and to provide an appropriate choice of subjects for pupils taking GCSE and other courses. However, reading and writing skills require strengthening further across a wide range of subjects. Pupils enjoy the clubs available to them in sport, art, music, dance, and drama and additional study sessions. University visits occur for all pupils in Years 8 and 9, and this makes a positive contribution to strengthening their aspirations.
- There is good provision to support pupils' understanding of democracy, extremism, tolerance and respect. For most pupils, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developing effectively. However, for some, a lack of tolerance and respect indicates more work has to be done by leaders to secure these aspects for all pupils.
- Year 7 catch-up funding for those pupils entering secondary school with below-average standards in English and mathematics is used well. Additional support from university students, and other support, is helping to strengthen learning.
- Pupil premium funding is allocated appropriately and used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. It is used to make sure these pupils can take part in all aspects of school life, including external visits, and this is a good example of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all. The principal and governors are clear that these pupils need to make faster progress and have commissioned a review of the

pupil premium spending by a national leader of education.

- The additional funding for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent effectively. Support for these pupils is well planned and improving.
- Over time, the support of the multi-academy trust has not been effective in ensuring that the overall effectiveness of the school is good.
- The new executive principal from the trust is supporting the school's principal exceptionally well in her desire to improve the school. Since September 2016, the trust has been highly supportive of the principal's reorganisation of leadership, has increased its support for the school and has created a formal partnership with a national leader of education and his trust. Already, this work is supporting improvements in mathematics and science as well as beginning to develop subject leaders' skills.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the strengths and areas for development of the school well. They have a good range of skills, with some having worked in senior posts in education. They have used performance management to hold leaders and staff to account for their work. Governors know the school should be performing better and are holding leaders to account to strengthen its overall effectiveness.
- Governors have checked that pupil premium funding is allocated appropriately and are informed about its impact. They know that the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is having greater impact because of improving skills of the new special educational needs coordinator. Governors make sure they fulfil their statutory duties.
- Governors know their efforts have not ensured that the effectiveness of the school is currently good. To strengthen their work, they have commissioned a formal review of governance by a national leader of governance to take place in July 2017.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors are passionate about fulfilling their safeguarding duties and keeping children safe. Governors review the school's processes and check that systems are fit for purpose. The school fulfils all of the requirements for checking staff's suitability to work with children.
- Exemplary systems are used skilfully by leaders to ensure that pupils, including those in off-site provision, are safe and protected from harm. The school has set aside funding for extra support from a community police officer to strengthen the capacity of the safeguarding team.
- There is a clear ethos across the school that sets the safety of pupils as a high priority. Staff are well trained and vigilant. There are close links with external agencies, the local authority and parents to support the most vulnerable pupils and their emotional well-being. Pupils are clear about how to raise safeguarding concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Across departments, and within departments, teaching is variable and requires improvement.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are not high enough. Work set is not consistently well planned to challenge pupils effectively, particularly the most able and middle-ability pupils. As a result, pupils' progress is not good. Inspectors noted some examples of high expectations where challenging work leads to good progress, but this was not usually the case.
- Assessment is not precise and occasionally is too generous. Assessment of pupils' work does not clearly identify mistakes and misconceptions and pupils continue to repeat errors and this slows their progress. Teachers do not assess clearly when greater challenge is needed for pupils to make better progress and work can be too easy and not adjusted.
- The new praise and reward system, part of the behaviour system, is used inconsistently as some pupils are rewarded for work that is not done to the best of their ability. This leaves pupils unclear about what is expected of them to make good progress.
- There are good examples of assessment being used accurately to overcome misconceptions and provide extra challenge to ensure good progress. Some teachers use the new behaviour system with skill, but this is not consistent across the school.
- Questioning is not used well enough to measure how much pupils have learned and to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Pupils' short responses lack depth of understanding and some pupils are not encouraged to answer. Inspectors noted some good examples of questioning where pupils were challenged to think deeply and engage fully in their learning.
- An analysis of current pupils' work showed pupils' written responses are also usually short and do not show depth of understanding of what is being learned. There are few opportunities for pupils to write at length across a wide range of subjects. It also showed that pupils' presentation is variable.
- Teaching assistants offer effective guidance and some high-quality support, particularly to pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils settle in to mainstream education well.
- Good relationships exist between pupils and staff, and lessons flow smoothly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.

- Pupils do not consistently take enough pride in their work to ensure good progress. There are some good examples of neat presentation and detailed work that support good progress. However, there is too much variation across and within classes.
- Tolerance, respect, democracy and other values are taught through assemblies, citizenship and a range of other courses. Most pupils are pleasant, polite and courteous. However, a small minority of pupils do not apply their learning well enough, as they do not treat each other with respect and tolerance.
- Pupils say that bullying occurs, although infrequently, and it is dealt with appropriately by the school. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. The school promotes this well in its tutor time at the start of the day and associated subjects.
- The school has many pupils who arrive early for its breakfast club. Pupils socialise well and enjoy their time together. They are well cared for and secure systems are in place to make sure they are safe.
- Pupils say they are safe in school and there is an adult who they can confide in if they have any concerns. High-quality arrangements for safeguarding pupils and protecting the most vulnerable are well established. The school manages pupils' emotional well-being very well. The school's community police officer works with pupils in assemblies to make sure they know how to stay safe in the community.
- Careers advice and guidance is given to all year groups. There are well-organised arrangements for pupils to receive advice and support and to work with adults from business, commerce, engineering and law. Those pupils attending off-site provision also receive careers advice and support. All pupils have work experience organised for them in Year 10. Visits from local colleges, employers and a range of universities successfully promote pupils' continuity in education or employment with training.
- Parents and staff indicated that they are very confident their children are safe and well-cared for in school. The school is calm, orderly and harmonious.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- For some time, exclusions from the school have been high. This year, the new principal has appointed new leaders to strengthen behaviour and they have succeeded in reducing exclusions. However, some pupils are still not responding well and exclusions remain above average. There have been no permanent exclusions from the school this year.
- Persistent absenteeism remains above average although it is reducing. Pupils are attending better than in previous years and overall attendance is close to average.
- The school checks the attendance and behaviour of those pupils using off-site provision. Generally, these pupils do not attend well but school staff ensure the safety of these pupils; they know their whereabouts and frequently take them to the provision to ensure their attendance.
- Around school, inspectors noted that pupils were well behaved and classrooms were orderly. Pupils say behaviour has improved this year because the school is placing

greater emphasis on rewarding good behaviour than in the past. Also, they are clearer about what is expected of them.

- The school's environment is litter free and well cared for with many interesting displays of pupils' work, especially their art work.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not making good progress across the school because they are not challenged consistently well enough by the work set for them by their teachers. Currently, outcomes for pupils require improvement.
- Since the school opened, published information for those pupils leaving school at the end of Year 11 has not included the progress of very many pupils finishing examinations at the school. In 2016, fewer than half of the pupils had progress measures in the published information and many of those pupils had joined the school late in their education speaking little or no English. Therefore, inspectors concluded that published information was not reliable in ascertaining previous performance and focused only on the work of current pupils across the school.
- Inspectors analysed a considerable amount of pupils' work and found that the progress pupils make is not consistently good across the school and across subjects.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough by the work set to help them make good progress, and this is also the case for middle-ability pupils. Not enough pupils produce high-quality work across a range of subjects. Least-able pupils are usually challenged appropriately by the work set for them and make effective progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively in small groups outside the classroom. However, their work across school shows progress that is not good and is inconsistent. Differences in progress and attainment are not diminishing fast enough for these pupils in comparison to those of others. Consequently, their attainment remains behind that of others nationally.
- The identification of need for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much better than in this past. Teachers are made aware of pupils' needs. However, as with other groups of pupils, their progress is not good because of variations in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, many of whom are not fluent, receive appropriate support to engage with their learning. There is excellent support for those who arrive at the school not speaking English and this quickly prepares them to be included in mainstream education. This is a good example of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all. Pupils new to English generally catch up faster than other pupils because of effective classroom support. However, having caught up with their peers, pupils' progress requires strengthening as work set is not demanding enough.
- Pupils eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding are supported well and make faster progress in English and mathematics than others because of additional support.
- Those pupils attending alternative off-site provision make slower progress than others as poor attendance is hindering their progress.

- Inspectors noted that attainment in mathematics and science has strengthened over time faster than in English, although inconsistencies in progress still remain. Good work in art was seen by inspectors.
- The school promotes reading effectively. Pupils are keen to read and there are weekly library sessions and reading sessions during tutor time. There is also very effective additional support for pupils who have little or no understanding of English. Pupils like checking their understanding of what they are reading using computer quizzes and say they enjoy reading. However, teachers do not reinforce reading in a wide range of subjects to ensure that pupils gain good skills across the curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	139646
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10031014

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	506
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Ken Hall
Principal	Jackie Rose
Telephone number	0113 284 4260
Website	www.leedscityacademy.org.uk
Email address	info@leedscity.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Leeds City Academy opened on 1 September 2014, when it joined the White Rose Academies Trust. When its predecessor school, City of Leeds School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.
- The school is much smaller than an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average. Half the pupils are eligible for support through the pupil premium.
- Most pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A large majority of pupils speak English as an additional language and a significant proportion are new to English.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an

education, health and care plan is well below average.

- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is exceptionally high. As a result, the number of pupils in school has increased by over 25% since September 2016.
- The Department for Education progress measure, the school floor standard 2016, does not apply to the school as less than half the pupils had progress information from key stage 2 to key stage 4.
- The school uses five alternative providers for a very small number of pupils. They are Progress at City Central, Laser Centre, AIM, Leeds City College and Hunslet Girls.
- There have been significant changes to staffing and leadership since the opening of the school. The new principal was appointed from April 2016 and a vice-principal and other leaders have been appointed since September 2016.
- The school is receiving formal support from The Gorse Academies Trust and its national leaders of education.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons, some jointly observed with senior and middle leaders.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both individually and in groups, about learning and safety.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books. An inspector listened to a small group of pupils reading.
- An inspector held a meeting with the vice-chair of the governing body and one other governor. The lead inspector met with the executive principal from the trust.
- Inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 10 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and 50 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. Inspectors also analysed parent responses to a school questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jim McGrath, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Geoffrey Brookes	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Robert Pritchard	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017