

Batley Girls' High School - Visual Arts College

Windmill Lane, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17 0LD

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Students achieve exceptionally well in this outstanding academy. They make rapid and sustained progress.
- Different groups of students including those in receipt of the pupil premium funding achieve equally well.
- The sixth form is outstanding. A wide range of courses and excellent teaching promotes outstanding progress in most subjects.
- Students are exceedingly well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.
- The academy promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. Students have a great deal of respect for each other.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding across most subjects. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of their students and provide tasks and activities which enable them all to achieve highly.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. Their attitudes demonstrate a love of learning. Students are proud of their academy.
- The 'well-being' centre ensures that those students who are most vulnerable feel safe and can talk their issues through.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving the quality of teaching. Only the best is good enough for all students.
- Staff believe passionately that all students should reach their potential.
- The governing body works very effectively in partnership with school leaders to plan for the future development of the academy. This has allowed the academy to improve swiftly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 43 part lessons taught by 41 teachers, a cover supervisor and a teaching assistant. Members of the senior leadership team accompanied the inspectors on six visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with students, members of the governing body, senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey (Parent View) and the 42 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documents including the school's own records of students' progress and attainment, monitoring documents, records relating to the performance management of staff and those relating to behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and the pupil premium.

Inspection team

Glynis Bradley-Peat, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Judith Gooding	Additional Inspector
Steven Beverley	Additional Inspector
Tudor Griffiths	Additional Inspector
Janet Peckett	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized secondary school.
- A larger proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs are supported through school action than found nationally. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students receiving pupil premium , which is additional funding given for looked after children, students known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is higher than the national average.
- The large majority of students are from Pakistani and Indian backgrounds with the remainder coming from a variety of other heritages.
- The school converted to an academy in September 2011.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Currently, the academy does not offer any alternative off-site provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon the good work already started to engage all parents more fully in the life of the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Provisional results in 2013 demonstrate a substantial increase compared to the previous year in the proportion of students gaining five GCSEs at A* to C including English and mathematics. Considering their significantly below average starting points, this represents outstanding progress.
- Rates of progress in both English and mathematics have continued to accelerate because teaching is highly effective and meets the needs of all students particularly well. Progress in other areas of the curriculum such as science, modern foreign languages and the visual arts is also outstanding and leads to high levels of pupil attainment. The quality of art and photography work in the academy is superb. Teaching in Year 10 ensured that students developed their composition skills rapidly. They were challenged to consider the use of particular dynamics in painting so as to improve the standard of their work.
- The most-able students make consistently good and often outstanding progress which enables them to reach high standards. The proportion of students reaching the highest grades across a range of subjects has increased this year.
- The academy's approach to entering students early for mathematics is considered and sensitive. Careful thought is given to students' progression onto sixth-form courses to ensure that pupils achieve the best grade of which they are capable. Each student is considered on an individual basis.
- Students achieve extremely well in the sixth form and progress made by the large majority of them is outstanding. Rates of progress in the visual arts, English, mathematics and the social sciences are especially strong. The proportion of students gaining AS and A2 qualifications across a wide range of subjects is well above the national average.
- The academy continues to ensure that those students in receipt of the pupil premium funding achieve well. Their overall achievement across their best eight subjects has improved and the gap between this group and their peers has become much smaller. In English and mathematics, the academy has closed the gap to within a third of a GCSE grade. A range of additional support, for example Year 11 coaching in a variety of subjects, reading and writing workshops provided for these students has had a good impact on boosting their progress.
- The achievement of disabled students and those with special educational needs has improved because of highly effective mentoring in place to support them on a one-to-one and small group basis. They make similar rates of progress to their peers and catch up well because the academy focuses predominantly on developing basic skills in readiness for the next stage of education.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding across the academy but particularly so in Key Stage 3. The large majority of teaching observed by inspectors was judged to be good or better with a significant amount being outstanding. An excellent working relationship between teachers and students in lessons creates a firm foundation for a very positive work ethic. This is why students make rapid and sustained progress.
- Teachers at this academy know their individual students' strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they plan and prepare lessons which match all their needs and challenge them to achieve exceptionally well. Activities and tasks are interesting and motivating and students respond to this by taking a full and active part in lessons. Very well-organised group work is a common feature of lessons and is used to develop students' independent learning skills. For example, Year 13 students were able to demonstrate their clear understanding of crime and deviance when feeding back the main points of their discussion in groups.
- Teaching is adjusted expertly and highly effective verbal feedback ensures the most-able students make maximum progress. During a Year 12 photography lesson excellent hints and tips

about how students could improve their individualised tasks promoted high standards. One student's work was enhanced when the teacher suggested the use of a light box to present an arrangement more effectively.

- Outstanding teaching in a science lesson about food webs in Year 9 witnessed skilful questioning by the teacher which promoted swift progress for all students. It was purposeful and made students think hard about their responses. In turn, they became inquisitive and asked questions of their own.
- Teachers lead by example and never accept second best. They display high levels of subject knowledge which enhances the learning of their students. Their high expectations of what their students can achieve are a constant feature of their teaching. Good support from teaching assistants for the least able and high levels of challenge for the most able ensure all make maximum progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students across all year groups and abilities demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to learning. They develop the skills of independence and are ready to seek information for themselves and have a genuine thirst for knowledge. They are keen and eager to participate to the full in lessons and as a result make consistently good and often outstanding progress.
- Behaviour and safety are judged to be excellent by parents in a recently conducted external survey and all staff who completed an inspection questionnaire agreed. Students say there is very little poor behaviour because it is managed skilfully by teachers. The 'intervention' and 'internal exclusion centres' are highly effective in modifying and improving behaviour. Students happily meet the high expectations of behaviour demanded by staff.
- Bullying incidents are extremely rare and students state that the academy deals with them swiftly and efficiently. Their understanding of the different types of bullying is comprehensive and students clearly understand how to keep themselves and others safe. Racist incidents are low in number because the students get on with each other exceptionally well and are tolerant of each other's views and opinions. This is a real strength of the academy.
- Team working is encouraged by teachers and enjoyed by students. Some participate in the 'Junior Rotary Club' and the 'Young Leaders Programme' which provides opportunities for them to debate and to involve themselves in charity work. The academy council is active across all year groups. Students appreciate and are proud of these experiences which contribute very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them well for life beyond the academy.
- The 'well-being centre' provides outstanding care and support for those students with complex needs and for those whose safety may be compromised.
- The academy works hard to ensure good attendance and works closely with parents to make the clear link between attendance and achievement. The large majority of students attend well and are punctual to school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders at all levels demonstrate a vision which pursues excellence in all of the academy's work. Leadership responsibilities are shared equally among the headteacher and her deputy headteachers and this has proved to be extremely effective. Together they are highly ambitious for the future of the school and are determined that students should achieve the highest possible outcomes. The information gathered about students' achievement is used exceptionally well to identify any lapse in progress, however small and to set challenging targets for all students.
- All members of the senior leadership team lead by example. They all teach outstandingly well and model for staff highly effectively. There is a determined focus to improve teaching through tailor-made training for individual teachers and detailed support plans. Leaders have a clear

understanding of the features of good and outstanding teaching and inspectors agreed with the judgements made by them during the inspection. Teachers' performance is well managed and only those teachers who meet their targets are rewarded with salary increases.

- The school's accurate view of its performance underpins its plans for improvement. The school continually seeks to build upon identified strengths and to eradicate any weaknesses promptly.
- Middle leaders are developed and coached well to lead faculties, departments and to deal highly effectively with pastoral care. They take the initiative and work together successfully to share good leadership practice.
- The curriculum is very well adapted to the needs and ambitions of the students. They benefit from a broad programme of very well-attended extra-curricular activities, including sports, cultural and subject-related clubs. Trips and visits to places of interest enrich students' experiences.
- The sixth-form students benefit from an evolving range of both academic and work-related courses, as well as special programmes which prepare them very well for employment. Some Year 14 students have the opportunity to study university courses and are being trained to be higher level teaching assistants. These courses have ensured that the number of students not in education, employment or training remain extremely low. The farm apprentice is an ex-student; this demonstrates the school's innovative approach to providing opportunities for some students beyond the academy.
- Equality of opportunity has been a focus of the academy. There is no discrimination and all groups of students achieve exceedingly well as a result.
- The academy has worked tirelessly to engage parents in the daily life of the school. Some have been trained as careers mentors and this is a good example of how the academy uses parental skills for student benefit. However, there are a very small number of parents who find working with the school difficult and leaders realise there is more to be done to engage them all more successfully.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a thorough understanding of the academy's information about how well students are doing. They know which areas are strong and what the academy needs to do to improve still further.
 - Governors have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching in the academy and are aware of how leaders link this with pay increases and promotion.
 - Finances are managed effectively and the governing body is clear about the use of the pupil premium funding. Governors know the impact that this has had on student achievement and the methods used by the academy to close the gap.
 - Arrangements for safeguarding and child protection are thorough and currently meet all requirements.

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	137424
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	429394

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	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,196
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeremy Townend
Headteacher	Jackie Eames
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01924 350080
Fax number	01924 326357
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