

# South Leeds Academy

Old Run Road, Leeds, LS10 2JU

**Inspection dates** 4–5 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Standards reached by the end of Year 11 are much lower than average. Between Years 7 and 11, not enough students make more than the expected rate of progress in English and mathematics from their starting points.
- The achievement of groups of students, including disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs and the most able, requires improvement.
- Teaching in Years 7 to 11 is not yet consistently good. Not all teachers use their knowledge of what students know and can do to provide work that enables students of varying abilities to do well. Students, particularly the most able, are not moved on to more challenging work quickly.
- Teachers' marking does not always make it clear what students have done well or what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers' questioning skills require improvement. Students are sometimes reluctant to answer questions and are not always encouraged to do so.
- Students' attitudes to learning are not always positive. Students' enthusiasm wanes because work sometimes lacks enough interest and challenge.
- Recent changes to the structure and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders have not yet had a full impact on improving teaching and achievement. New middle leaders do not yet make a fully effective contribution to driving improvement.
- Leaders are yet to ensure that the teaching of all groups of students is consistently good. Gaps in the attainment of disadvantaged students compared to non-disadvantaged students nationally are still too wide. Leaders are yet to ensure that all staff adopt the academy's policy for promoting literacy across all the curriculum subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- Since the last inspection, students' progress, their behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching have all improved. Improvement is gathering pace and staff morale is high.
- Standards reached overall by the end of Year 11 are on a rising trend, especially in English. More students are now making better progress. The additional funding provided to improve the literacy skills of Year 7 students is used to good effect.
- The sixth form is good. Students are well prepared for their next stage of learning, employment or training.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe and are confident about how to stay safe.
- Senior leaders are taking effective steps to improve teaching. New appointments, revised approaches to teaching and the improved rigour with which leaders check the quality of teaching are leading to better teaching.
- Governors provide effective support and challenge. They are strongly committed, are giving of their time, and offer a wide range of professional expertise.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 parts of lessons, six of which were jointly observed with different members of the senior leadership team. Additionally, inspectors briefly visited an additional nine lessons. An assembly and three tutor sessions were also observed. A walk around the academy with a senior member of staff was undertaken focussing on students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Meetings were held with four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and vice chair. A meeting was also held with an academy trust representative and educational adviser.
- Meetings were held with various leaders across the academy and groups of students from every year group. Students were observed and spoken to informally during break, lunchtimes and moving between lessons.
- There were no responses on the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Surveys of parental views carried out by the academy last academic year involving 275 parents, and from 30 parents of Year 11 students collated from a parents evening this academic year, were considered. Inspection questionnaires returned from staff were also taken into account.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included documents about the academy’s strategies to gain an accurate view of its own performance, the actions plan for the academy’s improvement, departmental plans, data on students’ past and current progress, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, visit reports of the education advisor and records relating to student behaviour and attendance. A sample of students’ work was scrutinised

## Inspection team

Pankaj Gulab, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Michele Costello	Additional Inspector
Catherine Davies	Additional Inspector
Graeme Clarke	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Haddock	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported through the pupil premium is more than double the national average. Pupil premium is additional funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of students are White British. The proportion from minority ethnic heritages is almost double the national average and the large majority are from Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Black African backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is three times the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is about twice the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special education needs is three times the national average.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- No students are entered early for GCSE examinations.
- The academy works in partnership with Garforth Academy to deliver its sixth-form provision.
- The academy is a member of the School Partnership Trust Academies group. It provides leadership support to the academy through their regional director of education who is a National Leader of Education.
- A very small minority of students attend the Elland Academy, to provide opportunities for alternative, mainly vocational, education for students.
- At the time of the last inspection, the Principal was in post as an Associate Principal. Following a period as acting Principal, he was appointed to the substantive post of Principal. Since the last inspection, there has been a large turnover in staff. Several new teachers and middle leaders have been appointed.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching between Years 7 and 11 so that it is consistently good, in order to ensure that all groups of students make good progress by:
  - making sure that students, particularly the most able, are moved on to more challenging work quickly
  - regularly showing students examples of high-quality work in order to encourage students to aspire to reach the higher levels of attainment
  - making sure that all teachers use their knowledge of what students know and can do to plan and organise activities that enables students of varying abilities to do well
  - developing the questioning skills of staff, particularly so that they encourage students to answer questions in more depth and ensure greater participation of students who are reluctant to answer questions
  - making sure that teachers' marking always makes it clear to students what they have done well, what they need to do to improve and that students are given the opportunity to respond to teachers' advice
  - providing work that is interesting and challenging so that students are fully involved and their attitudes to learning are always good.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on improving teaching and achievement by:
  - further developing the roles of new middle leaders so that they can make a more effective contribution to driving improvement forward
  - making sure that all staff adopt the academy's policy for promoting literacy in all subjects

- reviewing the quality of support for disabled students and those with special educational needs and providing support and training to staff, where necessary, to ensure that it is consistently good
- further reducing the gap in attainment between disadvantaged students in the academy and non-disadvantaged students nationally.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the new Principal and the governors have been successful in appointing several new teaching staff across the academy, including a number with additional responsibilities at middle leadership level. The pace of improvement is now gathering momentum. Staff morale is high as the positive effect of their efforts to improve teaching, students' achievement, behaviour and attendance all become increasingly evident.
- Senior leaders are taking effective steps to improve teaching. Performance management and professional development are used to provide targeted support for teachers. New approaches to teaching and improved rigour in the way leaders check and monitor the quality of teaching across the academy is leading to better teaching. Senior leaders who joined inspectors on observations of lessons accurately identified the strengths and areas for development and provided effective feedback to staff.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers' expectations of what students are capable of achieving are now higher than previously reported, especially in English and in mathematics. Arrangements to assess students' skills and abilities have also strengthened and, as a result, more students are now given work that better meets their varying needs. The quality of marking has also improved although it is still variable. However, leaders are yet to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good between Years 7 and 11.
- Middle leaders, as well as classroom teachers, have welcomed the many changes introduced by senior leaders, including clearer arrangements for target-setting and the greater rigour in checks on the quality of the academy's work. Middle leaders, many who are relatively new to post, are starting to develop their roles in driving improvement forward.
- Leaders are now checking more carefully on the attainment and progress of all groups of students. This helps them to direct additional resources, such as the pupil premium funding, so that it has a positive impact on improving the achievement of disadvantaged students. This demonstrates the academy's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. Even so, leaders are yet to ensure that students in Years 7 to 11 make the same good progress as students in the sixth form. Similarly, the previously wide gaps in the attainment of disadvantaged students compared to other non-disadvantaged students in the academy in 2013 have narrowed considerably in 2014, but leaders are yet to ensure that disadvantaged students achieve as well as non-disadvantaged students nationally.
- The academy's evaluation of its own effectiveness is accurate, reflecting a thorough and honest view of its performance. Appropriate improvement plans are in place, which leaders and governors review each half term.
- Leaders have ensured that the teaching of English has improved. A higher proportion of students in 2014 achieved a good GCSE grade in this subject than previously. Initiatives, such as time set aside for 'curriculum innovation' in Key Stage 3, are helping to promote improvement in students' basic skills, particularly in literacy, through other subjects such as geography or history. However, leaders are yet to ensure that the policy for promoting literacy across all subjects and year groups is fully adopted by all staff.
- Leaders are yet to ensure that provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs is good. Although the individual needs of students are identified and tailored support is planned, the quality of this support remains too inconsistent. A new leader for this group of students has been appointed but is yet to take up post.
- The curriculum has been remodelled to provide more appropriate pathways for students. These changes are impacting very positively on Year 10 students and show that the profile of improved achievement is likely to continue. Although some adjustments have been made to provide greater opportunities for the most able students, such as opportunities to learn French, leaders are yet to ensure that work in lessons provides a consistently good level of challenge for this group.
- Leaders have successfully extended provision to ensure the vocational needs of students are met. The Elland Academy provides a range of work-related experiences and courses.
- Advice and guidance to inform and raise students' aspirations begins in Year 7; all year groups attend the on-site careers fair. Year 10 students receive an early insight into post-16 education, with university visits arranged for some groups of students. The proportion of students that go onto further education, employment or training is above average.
- 'Period 6', an optional period at the end of the day, enables students to take part in a range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities beyond lessons, as well as opportunity to catch up and extend their learning in subjects. Take up of these opportunities is good. This, alongside experiences in the curriculum,

assemblies and special events through the year, contribute to students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

- The academy sponsor provides effective support through its regional director of education and educational advisor. It has been instrumental in securing appropriate leadership support and in supporting the recruitment of staff at various levels, including at leadership level, which has helped build the leadership ability to improve the academy's performance. Sponsor support has now reduced as a result.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements. They ensure that students are kept safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Since the last inspection several new governors, with the necessary expertise and experience to provide appropriate challenge and support to the academy's leaders, have been appointed. Governor expertise extends to education, finance and human resources. Over the last year, governors have been involved in managing significant staffing changes and the restructuring of the senior leadership. Governors give of their time generously and visit the academy on a regular basis. They have been involved in linking with curriculum areas, reviewing safeguarding procedures, undertaking learning walks with senior leaders, scrutinising work in students' books and speaking to students. A regular focus on the achievement of groups is maintained at 'keeping in touch' meetings and this allows governors to evaluate the effectiveness of pupil premium funding. A review of allowances held by teachers under performance management arrangements is securing better value for money. The frequency of meetings has been reduced as capacity within the academy has increased. Meetings last year were held every three weeks but now are once each half term. Governor commitment to improvement is clear. All of this contributes to making the governing body effective and has contributed to the improvement in student experiences in classrooms and in achievement outcomes.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Students' attitudes to learning are not always positive in lessons and this impacts on their progress. Sometimes, students lack the enthusiasm to get fully involved in lessons, opting not to respond to teachers' questions, especially where the work lacks enough interest or challenge. Students are not always well prepared for lessons and do not take enough care in how they present their work.
- Behaviour throughout the academy has generally improved since the previous inspection; a view supported by students, and most parents and staff. Students are rising to the higher expectations of staff of their good behaviour. The number of fixed-term exclusions has dropped dramatically and is now below average. The introduction of provision at the Elland Academy, for example, offers facilities for students to re-adjust their attitudes to learning without missing out on learning.
- The social skills of the vast majority of students are well developed. There is a cohesive atmosphere around the academy and students of different cultures and backgrounds get on well together. Students gather in an orderly manner in the canteen and there is little or no pushing in queues. Most students engage well with visitors. Many are courteous and polite, often going out of their way to open doors and welcome visitors.
- Attendance and punctuality have improved significantly across the academy. Attendance is now close to the national average. The proportion of students who are persistently absent remains above average but significantly reduced on the high levels reported at the previous inspection. Lateness has significantly reduced; students arrive at the academy and lessons on time.

### Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Parents confirm that the academy keeps their children safe.
- All students spoken to say they feel safe and know there are adults in the academy they can turn to for support. Older students are clear that behaviour in the academy has significantly improved making it a much safer place to be.
- Students speak confidently about how they can stay safe when using the internet and are aware of cyber-bullying. They acknowledge that occasionally some bullying takes place but are also confident that the academy deals with it effectively if reported. Students confirm that there is no racist bullying.
- The attendance and safety of students attending provision off site is closely monitored.

**The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- The appointment of several new staff, along with a strong focus on the professional development of staff since the previous inspection, has successfully improved the quality of teaching. More teaching is now good and, as a result, standards are rising and progress is speeding up, particularly in English. Teaching in the sixth form is good; however, between Years 7 and 11, teaching has not yet led to good progress for students over time and, as a result, still requires further improvement.
- Higher expectations of what all students can achieve, by most staff, are helping to ensure more students make better progress. The most able students, for example, are often provided with specific activities, which challenge their thinking. However, students are sometimes not moved on to more challenging work quickly enough and sometimes spend time completing work that lacks challenge. Teaching does not encourage students to aspire to reach the higher levels of attainment. Opportunities to show students examples of high-quality work are overlooked.
- Arrangements to assess and track what students know and can do have been strengthened. In many cases, teachers now use their knowledge of what students know and can do, to provide work that meets students' varying needs. However, not all teachers make full use of this information to plan lessons so that all students make good progress.
- The teaching of English has improved strongly. Teaching ensures that students are fully involved with their learning and study relevant and interesting topics to apply their skills, such as when making comparisons between the past and present day. The teaching of mathematics is also improving. Opportunities for students to learn through solving real-life mathematical problems are helping to promote students' interest in learning in this subject. New teaching staff appointed to teach mathematics are now bringing fresh approaches to teaching and this is starting to pay dividends.
- Relationships between staff and students are generally good. Most students respond positively to the opportunities given to contribute to lessons by answering teachers' questions. Students' responses and contributions are valued and this encourages them to do well. However, the questioning skills of some staff require improvement. Sometimes, teaching takes the lead from those students who volunteer to answer their questions and gives too little regard to encouraging the participation of those students who choose not to contribute. As a result teachers are unclear whether students have grasped a good enough understanding of the learning or if any misunderstandings need to be addressed. Opportunities to extend and deepen students' understanding and develop their oral skills and vocabulary are missed because short, sometimes one-word answers are accepted too readily.
- Marking across the academy, although improved, especially in English, is still variable in quality. In good examples, teachers make it clear to students what they have done well, what they need to do to improve and give students opportunities to respond to their advice. This is not always the case in many subjects; although students work is usually marked regularly, teachers' comments do not convey clear enough steps for improvement and sometimes, even when they do, students are not given a chance to respond.

**The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- The progress that students make has improved since the last inspection, especially in English. Overall, given their well-below-average starting points, most students now make at least expected progress between Years 7 to 11. Although standards reached overall by the end of Year 11 are on a rising trend, overall they remain below average. The proportion of students making more than expected progress in English and mathematics, although improving, is also still below the proportion that do so nationally and, as a result, achievement, including in English and mathematics, requires further improvement.
- Unvalidated results in Year 11 in 2014 show that across a wide range of vocational subjects an above-average proportion of students achieved A\* to C grades. However, in a number of academic GCSE subjects, including English and mathematics, the proportion was below the national average. Even so, in English, the proportion of students achieving an A\* to C GCSE grade increased significantly on the previous year. The proportion achieving an A\* to C GCSE grade in mathematics also increased but to a lesser extent.
- Inspection evidence, including a review of academy data and work in students' books, shows that across the academy more students are now making better progress and attainment is rising. Achievement in the sixth form has improved and is now good.
- Since the previous inspection, the achievement of disadvantaged students has improved. Nationally published data of results in Year 11 in 2013 shows that the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students compared to non-disadvantaged students in the academy and nationally were very wide. In English, for example, disadvantaged students were about a grade behind others in the academy and two

grades behind non-disadvantaged students nationally. In mathematics, they were over a grade behind others in the academy and two and a half grades behind non-disadvantaged students nationally. Academy data and inspection evidence, however, show that in 2014 disadvantaged students did much better, especially in English and the gap in the academy between disadvantaged students and others has narrowed significantly. Even so, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged students in the academy compared to non-disadvantaged students nationally is still too wide and, as a result, their achievement requires improvement.

- The achievement of the most able students is improving. Better access to a more challenging curriculum has improved the percentage of A\* and A grades in 2014 compared to 2013, Inspection evidence shows that this improvement is set to continue in Year 11 in 2015. Even so, across the academy, the most able students do not make consistently good progress because they are not always moved on to more challenging work quickly enough.
- Despite improvements to the arrangements for supporting disabled students and those with special educational needs, including identifying specific tailored support for individuals, the quality of this support is still too inconsistent in classrooms and, therefore, has not yet had the intended impact on improving their achievement to a good level.
- The achievement of students who speak English as an additional language is better than their peers in the academy. Improvements in the quality of teaching and support for these students mean that the proportion of students making the expected rate of progress is higher than their peers in English and in mathematics.
- Since the summer term 2014, a few students attend provision off-site at the Elland Academy. This provides a wider range of alternative, mainly vocational, curriculum options for students, as well as a place to re-adjust the focus on learning for some students. Students are provided with the support they need from a wide range of external support organisations and this is having a positive impact on students' achievement so that they are better prepared to go onto further education, employment or training.
- Students' basic literacy skills are improving. The additional funding provided to improve the skills of Year 7 students is used to good effect, through a range of small group work and the use of computerised support programmes.

### The sixth form provision

is good

- The sixth form has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The cooperative arrangements with the outstanding Garforth Academy afford students access to a wide range of academic and vocational courses at different levels. Students particularly appreciate this level of choice so they can tailor their studies in order to progress successfully to their next stage of learning, employment or training.
- Students make good progress from their starting points in both their academic and vocational learning. Academy data and inspection evidence show that a trend of above-average, average points scores is set to continue. Students who enter the sixth form without achieving a GCSE 'C' grade in English and mathematics receive effective additional support. Pass rates, when they re-take their examinations, are above average.
- The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. Expectations of what students can achieve are high. They are challenged to achieve their best. This is reflected in students' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. They apply themselves well to activities and enjoy opportunities to learn by finding things out for themselves. Most remain on their courses for the duration of the two years. As a result, students are well prepared for their next stage of learning, employment or training.
- The leadership of the sixth form is good. Arrangements to check the quality of provision have been strengthened since the previous inspection and, as a result, teaching has improved. Leaders ensure that students are kept safe. The transport arrangements between the two sites, for example, are secure. Leaders ensure that students' aspirations for the future are high. Almost 70% of Year 13 students go on to university; many are the first ones in their family to do so. The remainder go onto employment, apprenticeships or other learning.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135969
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	447725

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,052
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sally Cieslik
<b>Principal designate</b>	Marc Doyle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 212 7147
<b>Fax number</b>	0113 276 0936
<b>Email address</b>	info@tsla.org.uk

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