

Winstanley Community College

Kingsway North, Leicester, LE3 3BD

Inspection dates 27–28 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching is not good enough to support good achievement in all subjects.
- Achievement requires improvement in mathematics.
- In mathematics in particular, the tasks students are set are sometimes too hard or too easy.
- When teachers ask questions in lessons, they are not always probing enough to give them a clear picture of what students understand, or to make students think deeply.
- Teachers do not always ensure students are fully engaged in lessons. Students sometimes lose attention.
- Teachers' marking of students' work is not consistently good across the academy. Students do not always know how to improve their work.
- Attendance is not good enough. The proportion of students who are persistently absent is higher than average.
- Leaders judge some aspects of the academy to be better than they are.
- Teachers responsible for subjects are not all doing enough to improve them rapidly.
- Governors are not holding senior managers sharply to account to make sure progress and attendance improve.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' progress is good in English; literacy is developed well.
- The subjects and topics that are taught, the academy's atmosphere and the range of extra-curricular activities mean that students' social, moral, cultural and spiritual education is good.
- The new leadership team has had a good impact. Teaching and progress are improving, for example, in subjects other than mathematics.
- Students feel safe, and they behave well when teaching is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lesson or parts of lessons. These were taught by 25 different teachers, representing nearly all of the teaching staff. Four of the lessons were observed together with senior leaders. Inspectors also visited an assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, a group of subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, heads of year, and two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors met with three groups of students. Two groups were selected randomly and one meeting was with the student council.
- The inspection team analysed the views of staff and parents gathered by the academy, and the 17 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Three parents made direct contact with the inspection team and their views were also taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work and looked at information about students’ progress and attainment, the academy’s improvement plan, and its analysis of how well it is doing. They also looked at the system for managing the performance of staff, records of governing body meetings and a range of policy documents.

Inspection team

Victoria Bishop, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Talmadge	Additional Inspector
William Cassell	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Winstanley Community College converted to become an academy school in August 2012. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students identified as disabled or having special educational needs supported by school action is above the national average, as is the proportion supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. This additional funding is given to schools for students known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or from families with a parent in the armed forces.
- The Principal has been in post since September 2012. One Vice Principal joined the academy in January 2012 and another in September 2012.
- The academy has only Key Stage 3 students, for whom there are no government floor targets.
- The academy sends two students off site for half a day a week each to sessions run by the local authority youth service.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that marking is consistently good and developing feedback to students so that they know how to improve their work
 - improving teachers' questioning of students so they better assess students' learning in lessons and encourage students more to develop their thinking skills
 - raising the pace of learning, ensuring that students are actively involved
 - enabling teachers to learn better practice from each other
 - using information on what students can already do to make sure tasks are at the right level of difficulty for students, especially in mathematics.
- Raise students' attendance and reduce persistent absence.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the judgements leaders and managers make about the academy's effectiveness, particularly the quality of teaching, are thorough and accurate
 - all teachers responsible for subjects are fully effective in leading improvements
 - governors are aware of all the academy's strengths and weaknesses, and challenge leaders appropriately.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because progress is not yet consistently rapid across key subjects. Progress is good in English but requires improvement in mathematics. In other subjects, students have made good progress in the year since the academy opened.
- Reading development is good. The students' literacy skills are promoted well in Year 7 and they read widely and often. Additional support for students who join the academy with reading skills below nationally expected levels has been effective, and as a result these students have made two months more reading progress than expected over the school year.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are making similar progress to their classmates. They receive good support to develop their literacy skills and their progress is carefully tracked. They do not receive the same level of support with their mathematics. Sometimes they struggle to make progress in mathematics lessons when they are given the same work as other students.
- Students supported through the pupil premium make progress at least as quickly as other students in the academy in English. However, like the others, their progress requires improvement in mathematics. In many subjects the academy is successfully closing the attainment gap between students supported by the pupil premium and their classmates.
- The students who are educated off site are catered for effectively, and this is helping to improve their attitudes to learning and to school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because students' progress is not yet consistently good in all main subjects. Teaching particularly requires improvement in mathematics. However, teaching is improving, especially in some of the other subjects.
- In the lessons seen during the inspection where teaching was not good, the pace of the lesson was typically slow. Teachers sometimes talked for too long, which meant that students did not always fully engage with what was happening. Tasks were not always challenging enough. In the least successful lessons students became easily distracted and there was some low-level disruption of learning.
- In mathematics, a key problem is that tasks do not take enough account of what students can already do. Sometimes they are not challenging enough for the more-able students, while the less-able students do not always understand what is required of them and make little progress. Sometimes tasks have not been thought through well enough, so the mathematical skills to be learnt are not given enough prominence. In one lesson, for example, less-able students spent too much time copying a recipe and did not manage to get on to the mathematics of working out quantities.
- At its best, for example in a Year 7 English lesson, teaching is engaging and the work challenges the students due to high expectations and planning that supports their learning. In a Year 9 science lesson, good planning allowed students to work independently and carry out good-quality scientific investigations.

- Some teachers ask good probing questions, which encourage students to develop their thinking skills and show the teacher how much they have understood. Where questioning is less successful students can only answer with short responses, which do not develop their thinking skills and give the teacher limited information. In some of lessons seen questions were directed at only a few of the students in the class, so other students were passive and not fully involved in learning.
- Inspectors saw some examples of good marking, especially in English. In some other subjects marking was less successful as it did not show students how to improve their work. Students were able to give the National Curriculum levels set as their targets, but in many cases they were not able to say what they needed to do to achieve them. Leaders are aware of these variations and are developing a new policy for marking and assessment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Attendance is below average. It is improving, but remains in the lowest 20% of secondary schools. The percentage of students who are persistently absent has reduced but is still too high. Leaders continue to make efforts to reduce persistent absence and raise attendance.
- Students behave well and respectfully around the academy at break and lunchtimes. They are punctual to their lessons. In the better lessons students behave well, show positive attitudes and are engaged in their learning. In the less successful lessons students are compliant and passive, or there is some low-level disruption. Students mentioned this disruption in the interviews they had with inspectors.
- Rates of exclusion have reduced significantly due to a clear behaviour policy and a broad range of strategies to support and encourage better attitudes to school. Inspectors saw the behaviour policy used effectively in lessons and were given clear evidence of improvements in the behaviour of individual students.
- Discussion with students showed that they felt bullying was uncommon, and that it was dealt with effectively when it was reported to teachers. Students have a good knowledge of how to use the internet safely.
- Students said that they felt safe in school but some did express concern about the openness of the site. Inspectors recognise that the academy is weighing the importance of access as a community college with the need to monitor visitors, and is taking steps to ensure the right balance is maintained. During the inspection they discussed the location of the academy reception with senior staff.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- This is an academy in transition. The relatively new Principal and senior team are working hard to lead the academy well and ensure further improvement, and are having an impact. However, their judgements about the academy's performance were more generous than those of the inspection team, and the checks on teaching and learning are not thorough enough to ensure rapid progress in all subjects, although some strengths and weaknesses are appropriately identified.
- The senior team uses data well to set challenging targets for students, but not all of the other leaders who are responsible for subjects are driving improvement effectively. Not all are using checks to identify exactly the right areas to improve and tackle them by developing good support and training for teachers. Teachers have few opportunities to learn from the good

practice of colleagues in the academy.

- The Principal is determined to challenge underperformance and is making changes to enable this to happen. Senior leaders manage the setting of targets for teachers appropriately. Pay rises and promotion are suitably based upon teachers' success in meeting targets linked to how well their students are doing.
- Students study a well-designed range of subjects, topics and activities, taught by specialist teachers with good subject knowledge. A particular strength is the SHINE (Supporting others, Hard work, Independence, Never giving up, and Excellence) curriculum, which encourages the development of the academy's clear ethos and values. Inspectors observed a good and moving assembly on 'never giving up' in which students were visibly involved and thoughtful about the messages given. The students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is promoted well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are enthusiastic and committed to the success of the academy. They understand some aspects of data about the academy's performance and are aware of some of the key areas to develop, but not all. They know about the quality of teaching in broad terms. They are aware of how the pupil premium is spent, but not of the impact it has had on eligible students' achievement. Governors are not as effective as they should be, because although they support the academy they do not provide sharp enough challenge to senior leaders. They ensure safeguarding and child protection processes and procedures meet current national requirements, and that the performance of staff is managed appropriately.

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	138537
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	409377

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	500
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Henton
Headteacher	Alan Russell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0116 289 8688
Fax number	0116 289 3736
Email address	office@winstanley.leics.sch.uk

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