

Stanground Academy

Peterborough Road, Peterborough, PE7 3BY

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From their low starting points, students make good progress. The proportion of students attaining five GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics is rising sharply.
- Intensive monitoring and targeted support for individual students are enabling disabled students and those who have special educational needs to progress as well as other students.
- The progress of students eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding provided by the government for children eligible for free school meals) is improving rapidly.
- Teaching is usually good in most subjects because teachers have high expectations and challenge students to work hard. There are examples of outstanding teaching in music and philosophy.
- Students' behaviour is good because clear rules and expectations are set and most students stick to them.
- In the sixth form, students make good progress due to good teaching, the excellent facilities and the good quality of care and support provided for students.
- The Principal's good leadership is focusing all staff on raising achievement throughout the academy. This is raising students' aspirations and ambitions.
- Senior leaders have led improvements well and hold all staff to account for their performance and that of the students in their care.
- The academy sponsor and an advisory council of governors provide good support and challenge for senior leaders. They maintain a close check on the work of the academy

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding.
- There is some inconsistency in the management of behaviour.
- Procedures to support the increasing proportion of students who have English as an additional language are not yet fully effective.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 50 lessons, 10 of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held between inspectors and senior and middle leaders, three groups of students, a representative of the academy’s sponsor and an advisory council governor.
- Inspectors looked at a range of other evidence including the academy’s improvement plan, self-evaluation, attainment and progress data, lesson monitoring information and minutes of governors’ meetings.
- Inspectors scrutinised a selection of students’ books and listened to a group of younger students read.
- They took account of 15 responses to questionnaires completed by staff and 8 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Veronica Young

Additional Inspector

Michael Stanton

Additional Inspector

Aune Turkson-Jones

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Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is a larger than most secondary schools.
- It opened in April 2012 and is sponsored by the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust.
- The academy is governed by the sponsor Trust and a local advisory council.
- Staff and students moved into new buildings in September 2013.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The majority of students are White British. The proportion of students whose first language is not English, mostly from White European backgrounds, is average.
- The percentage of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, mostly moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and the percentages supported by school action, school action plus or by a statement of special educational need are all below average.
- Three students in Year 10 attend alternative provision at Peterborough pupil referral unit. Two pupils in Year 11 attend Peterborough regional college and one pupil is taught in their own home.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching in the academy by ensuring that:
 - lessons are always stimulating, enjoyable and capture the interest and enthusiasm of all learners
 - students understand exactly what they are expected to do so that they can get to work quickly and complete tasks to the standard expected of them
 - teachers' marking and feedback to students are always clear and informative
 - teachers implement the academy's policy on how to manage students' behaviour consistently.
- Refine the procedures used to support students who have English as an additional language by:
 - providing better one-to-one support in lessons from specialist teaching assistants for those students who need it most
 - making more effective use of student interpreters.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The prior attainment of younger students joining the academy is below that found nationally. Older students who transferred from the predecessor school did so with significant gaps in their reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- In its first full year as an academy, most of these gaps have been filled. Good teaching and support for students are increasingly enabling them to make good progress. The proportion of students attaining five GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics is in line with the national average. This represents good progress.
- In English, the proportions of students making or exceeding expected progress and attaining an A* to C grade was above national averages in 2013. Early entry into the GCSE examination and an opportunity to re-sit it the following year contributed towards an above-average proportion of more able students attaining A* and A grades. Similarly in mathematics, these actions led to a rise in the number of students making or exceeding expected progress. The percentage attaining an A* to C grade has risen and is close to the national average.
- Detailed monitoring of individual students' progress in all years is ensuring that they receive the support and challenge they need to achieve well. Current data shows that the accelerated rate of improvement seen last year is being maintained this year and that most students, including those capable of attaining A* and A grades, are on track to achieve their ambitious targets.
- Students who have English as an additional language achieve standards that are in line with the national average for this group. Student interpreters are used well in some lessons to support students who join the academy without a sufficient grasp of English. However, in a few lessons inspectors found that some students did not receive enough specialist support or helpful guidance to help them enjoy learning and achieve well.
- Personalised monitoring and support are ensuring that disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive the help they need to achieve well. Less able students in Year 7 benefit from additional funding to help them catch-up in their literacy and numeracy skills. Inspection evidence confirms the school's view that most of them are catching up quickly.
- In 2013 the proportion of Year 11 students eligible for the pupil premium who attained five or more GCSE A* to C grades increased. Additional support for students in all years, including one-to-one mentoring, booster classes in English and mathematics and revision classes, is narrowing the gap between their achievement and that of other students found nationally.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress, often from below-average starting points because they are taught well, and are closely monitored to ensure they attend regularly and remain on track to achieve their targets. Students' progress is improving strongly. Improved guidance is ensuring that they study appropriate courses. All students in Year 12 without at least a grade C in English and mathematics study these GCSE courses.
- The attendance and progress of a small minority of students who study off-site is closely monitored to ensure that they remain in full-time education and make the progress expected of them.

The quality of teaching is good

- Regular staff training and rigorous lesson monitoring are improving the quality of teaching. The academy's own monitoring and observations carried out by inspectors confirmed the teaching is usually good and, at times, outstanding.
- Most teachers have high expectations and insist on good behaviour. They use their good subject knowledge to plan learning that reinforces students' reading, writing and mathematical understanding, and ensures that the most able students are fully stretched.
- Teachers foster good relations and use questioning well to engage students in thought and discussion. They use technology with confidence to capture and retain students' interest. Students enjoy learning in practical activities in design technology, physical education (PE), music and science.
- Students learn how to productively steer their own learning, and work independently of the teacher. For example, in a PE lesson girls planned competitive mini-games together. Having taught them to their peers, they were able to evaluate the effectiveness of the tasks and suggest ways they could be improved to enable primary-aged pupils to enjoy and achieve in sport.
- Less able students in Year 7 are taught together in small groups to aid their transition into the academy. Good teaching and support from teaching assistants to improve their reading builds their confidence and self-esteem, and prepares students well for learning later in the key stage.
- In the best lessons, teachers integrate activities to reinforce basic literacy and numeracy skills. They plan learning that involves students finding out for themselves, which encourages them to work hard. Regular homework is set and routinely marked to give students clear advice on how to improve. Students quickly engage in learning because tasks are explained fully and teachers show them how to complete each task.
- Senior leaders acknowledge that not enough teaching is outstanding. When teaching is outstanding teachers capture students' interest and enthusiasm. This is not consistent. Tasks that are not explained fully leave students unclear about how to begin their work and prevents them from making exceptional progress. A scrutiny of students' books reveals some marking and feedback are not as good as the best practice.
- Teaching in the sixth form is often good. Teachers' good subject knowledge, the excellent facilities and resources, and teaching in small groups all contribute towards students' good progress. They engage fully with teachers and with their peers to consolidate their learning. Regular assessment of how well they are learning in lessons enables teachers to provide support and advice on how to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Throughout the inspection, students were polite and respectful. They behaved well in and out of lessons. Students understand the expectations staff have of them. They say that the procedures used to promote good behaviour are tough, but realise that they have led to much better behaviour since the academy opened.
- Behaviour is good. No students have been permanently excluded from the academy. The

proportion of students removed from lessons and placed in the academy's isolation room has fallen significantly this year. Attendance has risen since opening and is now broadly average because it is routinely monitored and absences are systematically followed up.

- Students are attentive and responsive in lessons. They readily engage in discussion and most are eager to respond to questions. Inspectors found that students behave well because teachers manage behaviour effectively, but also confirmed the views of some students that when standards of behaviour do drop, a few teachers do not apply rules consistently.
- Students have adapted quickly to their new surroundings; the academy is a calm, orderly and safe place to be. Outside of lessons they cluster in friendship groups and feel quite safe. Students say that bullying is rare. Older students say that any issues are resolved promptly but a few younger students feel that some name-calling and homophobic language is not tackled well enough. Students told inspectors that they would like more clubs and activities to engage in during lunchtimes.
- Sixth form students confirmed that behaviour throughout the academy has improved significantly since opening. Expectations of them, particularly their attendance and attitudes towards learning are much higher. They enjoy working alongside younger students to help them read and want more opportunities to engage fully in the life of the academy.

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal's good leadership has, in a short space of time created a positive environment in which to learn. This has been achieved against a backdrop of a major re-build and moving into new facilities. He leads by example and is popular with students because he is out and about, approachable and listens to their views.
- Standards have risen due to the relentless actions of senior leaders to secure good behaviour and teaching. Regular training and scrutiny of lessons is making staff fully accountable for the quality of their teaching and its impact on students' achievement. Accurate self-evaluation ensures that leaders know where the academy's strengths and weaknesses lie. Lead teachers are driving improvements to teaching but best practice has not been spread throughout the academy.
- Systematic, robust monitoring of students' progress underpins the academy's plans for raising achievement. Staff have a wealth of data to identify underachievement and target support towards those who need it. As a result, standards are rising quickly. Middle leaders, particularly those who lead subjects also monitor and support teachers in their departments and this is adding capacity to secure further improvement.
- Changes made to the curriculum, including in the sixth form have broadened choice and ensured that students are guided into the courses that are the most suitable for them. The proportion of students continuing their studies in Year 13 this year is increasing.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strengthened through weekly religious education and personal and social education lessons, and assemblies. Extra-curricular activities in expressive and creative arts increase their understanding of different cultures and traditions. Students' social skills and morals are developed through a range of after-school sporting opportunities, and by fund-raising activities initiated by students.
- Every opportunity is taken to forge strong relations with parents and carers. Pastoral leaders

communicate with parents to resolve issues arising and also provide a point of contact for parents wishing to express their concerns. They are provided with regular reports on their child's progress. Parents' evenings are well attended and provide an opportunity to survey their views. They are welcomed into the academy to celebrate students' musical, cultural and sporting achievements.

- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Centralised governance from the sponsor Trust is business-like and professional. It provides additional capacity and resource to make improvements quickly. There is a clear vision and ambition for the future development of the academy. They are experienced in managing financial resources and are ensuring that budgets and additional funding are used effectively to raise achievement. Local governors on the advisory council including four parent-governors show a good understanding of the academy. They act as the 'critical friend' and feel that the Trust listens and acts upon their views, and keeps them fully informed of the academy's strategic development.

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	137880
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	399903
Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1350
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Day
Principal	Gerard Rae
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01733 821430
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