

The Gateway Academy

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 133114 |
| Local Authority | N/A |
| Inspection number | 381480 |
| Inspection dates | 9–10 November 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Stephen Abbott |

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 | 11–18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 942 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 44 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ian Cleland |
| Headteacher | Kevin Sadler |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 July 2009 |
| School address | Marshfoot Road Grays RM16 4LU |
| Telephone number | 01375 489000 |
| Fax number | 01375 489001 |
| Email address | info@thegatewayacademy.org.uk |

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Age group | 11–18 |
| Inspection date(s) | 9–10 November 2011 |
| Inspection number | 381480 |

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 Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

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

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including the academy's development plan and self-evaluation documents, records of visits from other external bodies, various policies, the incident log, behaviour-management records, information about students' participation in extra-curricular activities, risk assessments and the single central register of safeguarding checks. They observed 38 lessons taught by 37 different teachers and visited Connect, a facility for previously disaffected students. The inspectors also made short visits to several other lessons to check on marking, behaviour and the quality of support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspection team also analysed questionnaire responses from 216 parents and carers, 127 students and 61 members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent are all students making sufficient progress and gaining worthwhile qualifications, especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics?
- How well does the academy meet the needs of the most able students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- How well do senior leaders and the governing body ensure that procedures for safeguarding and tackling discrimination are comprehensive and up to date?
- How much impact do the academy's specialisms and its various collaborative arrangements have on students' outcomes and on the wider community?

Information about the school

The Gateway Academy is an average-sized academy with specialist status in arts, design and engineering. It is based in an award-winning building situated midway between the two main communities that it serves, Tilbury and Chadwell St Mary. Several minority ethnic groups are represented in the school, but most of the students are White British. Boys outnumber girls slightly. A small minority of students speak English as an additional language, but few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average.

The academy has the Inclusion Quality Mark and Healthy Schools status. It holds awards recognising the quality of its careers advice and guidance and its international links. It has also received a number of local business awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The Gateway Academy is an outstanding academy which provides good value for money. Under the inspirational leadership of its principal, the academy's relentless pursuit of excellence has resulted in standards improving markedly in each year since its formation. Leadership and governance are outstanding and all aspects of provision have improved since the last inspection. The impact of extensive partnership working is evident in the innovative and wide-ranging systems for care, guidance and support and in the exceptional way in which the curriculum caters for the varied needs of the students. These features have combined with good teaching and assessment to transform the attendance, behaviour and aspirations of students, so that their learning and progress are now outstanding and their achievement is good. The academy's outstanding capacity for improvement is illustrated by a startling statistic: since the last inspection, the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at A* to C, including English and mathematics, has climbed from 17% to 56%. Students are proud to attend the academy, valuing and contributing exceptionally well to its highly cohesive community. Every student participates in activities that benefit the wider community, contributing to the academy's very considerable impact on community cohesion.

The attainment of students on entry to the academy is well below average. Many have under-developed social skills and lack confidence. The academy liaises very effectively with its primary partners to place students onto learning pathways that meet their needs very well. It provides a very supportive environment, including a rapidly developing literacy programme that helps students to accelerate their learning as they move through the academy. In Years 7 and 8, students make steady progress as they gain in confidence and become more effective learners. From Year 9 onwards, they make rapid progress on a very wide range of academic and vocational qualifications. Senior and middle leaders monitor the progress of each student, taking action at the first sign of underachievement. The very extensive after-school activities include many opportunities for students to seek additional help with their work. Excellent academic monitoring and support supplement the good learning in lessons, so that students make outstanding progress over time. Attainment has been improving rapidly each year and is now broadly average by the end of Key Stage 4. As students' aspirations rise, they are turning more to academic GCSE courses. In 2011, attainment in mathematics and English was broadly average for the first time. Standards in Years 10 and 11 are currently higher than at the same time last year.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

As senior leaders are very aware, some aspects of the academy's work are not consistently good. There is a small minority of less effective teaching, particularly in mathematics and across other subjects in Year 7 and the sixth form. In these lessons, teachers are less skilled in using informal assessment to ensure that all students are making good progress and to reshape the lesson where necessary. In mathematics, marking is inconsistent and some teachers do not allocate enough lesson time to independent work by students. This exacerbates a problem already identified by the subject leader, that the scheme of work is too fragmented, with classes moving on to new topics before students have mastered the previous one.

More generally, learning and progress are not quite as strong for the most able students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Although teachers plan their lessons to meet the different needs of these and other groups of students, some are less skilled in asking searching questions to stretch the most able. This is reflected in the below average proportion of A and A* grades achieved in academic GCSE courses, particularly in science and English Literature. In addition, the individual education plans for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not always provide precise guidance for teachers about how best to help individual students to meet their targets.

The academy's excellent qualities of leadership and management are applied to the sixth form, but it is in a much earlier stage of development. Developing the sixth form is an important part of the academy's strategy for raising aspirations, and for this reason, places have been offered to students with lower than usual prior attainment, who do not always appreciate the higher levels of commitment and rigour required for success in advanced study. This is reflected in higher than average drop-out rates on some courses.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise standards, particularly in academic GCSE subjects, and accelerate the progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
 - increasing the proportion of good or better teaching in mathematics lessons and in Year 7 classes
 - ensuring that all teachers are skilled in using informal assessment to check that all students are making good progress and to reshape the lesson where necessary
 - making sure that the most able students are fully stretched to increase the proportion of A and A* grades in academic GCSE subjects
 - providing more detailed guidance to teachers on how to help students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to reach their targets.
- Increase retention and success rates in the sixth form by ensuring that students understand the levels of commitment and rigour required for advanced study.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Learning and progress are good or better for all groups of students and outstanding overall. When students join the academy, just under half are working securely at the level expected for their age, and a quarter are a year or more behind. At first, students make satisfactory progress as the academy works to develop their confidence and to improve their numeracy, literacy and speaking skills. From Year 8 onwards, students' learning and progress are good or better in most lessons, helping them to close the gap with national expectations. In Years 9 to 11, many students follow one or more vocational courses where they acquire knowledge, understanding and skills exceptionally well. For example, during the inspection, Year 11 hospitality and catering students demonstrated very well-developed cooking skills and were strongly developing their understanding of how to adapt recipes for specific dietary needs and religious beliefs. Students also learn well in traditional academic subjects. In an outstanding science lesson on renewable energy resources, Year 9 students showed very good independent learning skills, organising themselves very efficiently to work in groups, challenging each other's ideas and drawing conclusions for themselves.

Students feel safe and secure in the academy and are confident that they can approach any member of staff to get the support they need. They have a good understanding of internet safety and safe behaviour in the classroom. Students understand the importance of a balanced diet and most apply this knowledge in their food choices. They participate well in the wide range of opportunities for physical exercise and many enjoy competitive sports.

Students' enjoyment is evident from their above-average attendance and their enthusiasm for learning. They are polite and welcoming, and get along well with adults and each other. Every student makes a contribution on community days, for example by painting fences, packing supermarket bags, clearing litter and helping old people. Their spiritual development is good and they have a well-developed moral code. Students develop a good understanding of the variety of cultures they will experience in modern Britain because the school arranges a good range of visits and visitors. Most students behave well in lessons and around the academy and the small number who misbehave are dealt with exceptionally well. Students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties make excellent progress in overcoming them because of the outstanding care they receive. The academy prepares students well for their future working lives, ensuring that they learn to apply their improving skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Nearly all students follow at least one vocational course, where work-related skills are developed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 1 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons, teachers make effective use of assessment data in their planning, using resources and approaches suited to the needs of the groups of students present. Most make frequent checks on learning to adjust, tailor and refocus learning activities. As a result, students usually receive feedback that helps them to know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. During the inspection, outstanding teaching was seen in dance, geography, history, hospitality and catering, physical education and science. In a Year 7 drama lesson, students were highly engaged by a task to devise an anti-smoking scene. The lesson featured excellent modelling by the teacher and well-developed peer assessment to support learning. In the best lessons students are encouraged to be independent learners, but more often, learning is quite tightly controlled by the teacher.

The academy ensures that every student has the chance to succeed. It played the leading role in setting up the Connect facility, which provides alternative vocational courses and work-related learning for disaffected students for several local schools. Most of the students who attend Connect gain qualifications and progress to further education or employment. Students on the academic pathway take double science and English literature and can access psychology and a modern foreign language. Students on the vocational pathway study a core of academic subjects and then choose from an exceptional range of certificates and diplomas, including options in the academy's specialisms of art, design and engineering.

The curriculum is very well adapted to meet the needs of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly through the 'Pathway 3' provision in

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Key Stage 3. However, the guidance provided to teachers about the students’ specific needs lacks detail. For example, deaf students are not consistently provided with additional visual resources or a hearing ‘buddy’, because such strategies are not mentioned in their support plans. Students at an early stage of reading have targets to know the 44 different phonemes, but teachers are not always informed about which ones they are currently learning.

The academy has developed an outstanding range of support in partnership with outside agencies for students and their families. Students’ progress is tracked constantly and the academy’s innovative ‘advocacy teams’ provide a systematic solution-focused approach to the problems experienced by students. The use of mixed-age tutor groups within four colleges encourages older students to act as role models and mentors for the younger ones. Behaviour management is based on students’ understanding their rights and responsibilities and the consequences of their choices. Guidance on option choices is very well linked to careers education. A consequence of this exceptional academic and pastoral support is that students are very keen to succeed and make excellent use of the many after-school opportunities to extend and improve their learning. Their attendance has shown exceptional improvement since the last inspection. Incidents of poor behaviour that warrant a fixed-term exclusion have virtually disappeared.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The academy’s vision is to transform its community through education. The principal’s passion for this cause is contagious and staff are very proud to work for the academy. Senior and middle leaders monitor and evaluate all aspects of the academy’s work very rigorously, seeking both to tackle weaknesses and to refine practice that is already good. They identify strengths and weaknesses in provision through regular subject reviews and devise sharply-focused action plans to make the necessary improvements. Any underperformance is tackled firmly, but humanely. The leadership of teaching and learning is outstanding. A constant emphasis on driving up standards ensures that a common sense of purpose is shared by all staff. A system of peer observation allows teachers to learn from their colleagues’ best practice. The academy’s specialist areas of arts, design and engineering have a prominent role in professional development. The academy is also employing a strategy of deploying effective teachers to the nurture groups in Key Stage 3 to develop innovative approaches to teaching and learning for students with very low

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

prior attainment.

The governing body holds the academy to account highly effectively through its committee structure and system of link governors. It works well with senior leaders to ensure that safeguarding is effective and that the academy’s policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. The Ormiston Trust and the governing body have been very influential in the strategic thinking that has placed the academy at the heart of its community. The outstanding promotion of community cohesion has been a critical factor in bringing together students from the two main communities it serves. The extensive community development programme includes a well-regarded community education programme and local credit unions.

The academy acts vigorously and successfully, using information from an incisive analysis of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context at local and national levels to focus its exceptional contribution to community cohesion. It evaluates its work rigorously in order to build on its many strengths. The academy’s actions have a markedly beneficial impact on community cohesion within its local community and beyond. The academy community is highly cohesive and the students have a strong understanding of what is required to maintain this state.

Racial incidents are rare, but when an incident occurred during the inspection, it was dealt with immediately by the principal. The fact that many students immediately voiced their disapproval is a testament to how well the academy promotes equality and tackles discrimination. Senior leaders regularly check on the progress, attendance and participation of different groups of students and as a result, gaps are narrowing. For example, a programme for gifted and talented students has helped improve the progress of the most able from satisfactory to good.

The academy communicates well with parents and carers, informing them and taking their views into account through regular questionnaires and meetings. Its outstanding liaison with parents and carers is critical in supporting the achievement and well-being of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, medical conditions and/or complex social and emotional problems.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and | 2 |

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

| | |
|---|----------|
| tackles discrimination | |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Sixth form

The sixth form is very small and in an early stage of development. However, its expansion is part of the academy’s strategy for increasing aspirations and raising standards for students of all ages. Achievement for students who complete their courses is often good, but outcomes are satisfactory overall because of the above-average drop-out rate, an issue that is currently being addressed. Although leaders have ambitious plans, set clear targets and engage well with students and stakeholders, sixth form leadership and management are judged satisfactory, in line with students’ outcomes.

Provision is satisfactory. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in four of the seven lessons seen, including an outstanding dance lesson featuring well-developed peer teaching and assessment, backed up with excellent coaching from the teacher. In the satisfactory lessons, students were not always pushed hard enough. There was sometimes a lack of urgency and rigour, with some students arriving late.

The sixth form benefits from the academy’s outstanding systems for care, guidance and support and sixth formers play their part in students’ outstanding contribution to the community. Given the small student numbers, the curriculum is satisfactory. It originally consisted mainly of vocational BTEC certificates and awards, but has recently been supplemented with a small range of AS and A-level courses.

These are the grades for the sixth form

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the sixth form | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for students in the sixth form | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the sixth form | 3 |
| Leadership and management of the sixth form | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

The views of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive, particularly about the leadership of the academy. Several parents and carers were very appreciative, praising transition arrangements and pastoral care. One wrote: ‘My daughter had an excellent start to Senior School. She had the opportunity to attend the summer school prior to her start in September.’

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

She has had fantastic support in her tutor group and encouragement in her lessons. She is happy and very comfortable within the school environment.' Another commented: 'My daughter has had to deal with a lot of personal issues and the school have been there for her. I am very grateful for their support and would recommend the school to any parent.'

A few parents and carers have concerns about disruptive behaviour. Inspectors agree that a small minority of students misbehave at times and judge that such incidents are usually well managed. A few very specific concerns were raised about unresolved issues. The academy is keen to follow these up and would welcome direct contact from the parents and carers involved.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Gateway Academy to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 216 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 942 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 87 | 40 | 117 | 54 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 92 | 43 | 115 | 53 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| The school informs me about my child’s progress | 84 | 39 | 116 | 54 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 86 | 40 | 118 | 55 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 81 | 38 | 129 | 60 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child’s learning | 68 | 31 | 124 | 57 | 15 | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 60 | 28 | 138 | 64 | 14 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 67 | 31 | 133 | 62 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| The school meets my child’s particular needs | 67 | 31 | 136 | 63 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 71 | 33 | 123 | 57 | 11 | 5 | 7 | 3 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 48 | 22 | 133 | 62 | 17 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 84 | 39 | 126 | 58 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school | 98 | 45 | 105 | 49 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 November 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of The Gateway Academy, Grays, RM16 4LU

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you all for the welcome we received, and especially those of you who gave up your time to talk to us or to complete our questionnaires. We judged the academy to be outstanding. We were highly impressed with the improvements made since the last inspection. You benefit from excellent care, guidance and support and an exceptional range of courses to meet your different needs. These combine with the good teaching and assessment to enable you to make outstanding progress, both academically and in your personal development. This means that you are well prepared for the future.

We think that the main reason your academy is outstanding is because the leadership is so strong, from the principal, the senior staff and all the heads of department and college leaders. We are very impressed with the academy's determination that it should be at the heart of the local community. Every one of you takes part in one or more of the many extra-curricular and enrichment activities.

You get along very well with each other and with the adults in the academy, and you make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. Many of you completed our questionnaire, and most of the responses were positive. You enjoy attending and feel safe. You know how well you are doing and how to improve your work. A small minority of you felt that behaviour is not always good. We recognise that some students do misbehave but judge that behaviour overall is good.

The academy is very keen to improve further, and to this end we have asked its leaders to raise standards further in academic GCSE subjects, and to continue to develop the sixth form. You can help by aiming for higher standards in your GCSE courses, especially in mathematics.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Abbott
Her Majesty's Inspector

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