

Skegness Academy

Burgh Road, Skegness, PE25 2QH

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Since the academy opened, the quality of teaching and achievement has improved rapidly and continues to do so because of outstanding leadership and governance.
- From low starting points in English and mathematics, most students make better than expected progress and leave the academy with standards that are rising each year and are currently average overall. In some groups, a high proportion of students make excellent progress.
- Teaching is usually good with a growing proportion that is outstanding.
- Students' good behaviour spreads beyond the boundaries of the academy and has helped to improve its reputation in the community.
- Students' understanding of how to stay safe, particularly from bullying, is outstanding because of highly-effective safety procedures.
- Attendance has improved significantly and is now above average.
- An outstanding curriculum has been established that meets the needs of students exceptionally well.
- The promotion of literacy skills in all subjects is making an extremely effective contribution to raising standards.
- The sixth form is good. This represents an impressive improvement in teaching and achievement since it opened two years ago.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough.
- The proportion of more-able students making better than expected progress is not yet high enough.
- Teachers do not always give the most-able students work that is sufficiently challenging.
- In some lessons, students do not get sufficient opportunity to take full responsibility for their learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 48 lessons taught by teachers, teaching assistants and instructors.
- Inspectors heard students read, met with them to discuss their lessons and behaviour, and scrutinised their work.
- Meetings were held with members of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, the Acting and Executive Principals, staff, and students.
- Inspectors took account of the questionnaire responses from 78 staff, responses from the recent parent questionnaire issued by the academy and the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Academy assessment data, self-evaluation information, procedures for the performance management of teachers and the academy’s development plan were scrutinised.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of students were examined by inspectors.

Inspection team

Tim Bristow, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Timothy Pank

Additional Inspector

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Additional Inspector

Derrick Baughan

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Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized secondary academy.
- The very large majority of students come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average (those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs). The proportion supported by school action is above average.
- An above average proportion of the students are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The Acting Principal took up his post at the beginning of September 2012. He is supported by an Executive Principal.
- The Skegness Academy, opened in September 2010, is sponsored by the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust. They are responsible for the governance of all the academies they sponsor. A governing council is appointed by the Trust to represent the Skegness Academy
- Education in Skegness is selective. Nearly all the students attending the academy were not selected for the local grammar schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of more-able students that exceed the rate of expected progress to high by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use their knowledge of these students effectively to prepare work that is more challenging
 - providing more opportunities in lessons for these students to demonstrate their independence, use their own ideas and take more responsibility for their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards on entry to the academy in English and mathematics are low. Overall, students start the academy in Year 7 with attainment that is a year behind the average.
- Examination results have improved each year. By Year 11, all the important measures show that most students now attain average or above average standards in English, mathematics and other key subjects. For example, in 2012 all the students gained five GCSEs graded C or above and the proportion that gained five GCSE graded C or above including English and mathematics was broadly average.
- One reason why achievement is rising in most subjects is because of the corporate responsibility taken by all teachers to develop the students' literacy skills. The impact they are having on improving the quality of reading, writing, speaking and listening to prepare students well for the next stage in their lives is at the heart of the success of this academy.
- In the sixth form in 2012, the pass rate was 100% in nearly all subjects at A and AS level. This represents a significant improvement on the results in 2011. All the students who left the sixth form in July 2012 have embarked on further training, education or employment.
- Achievement in the vocational subjects is high. This is because of the good and often outstanding quality of teaching and learning in these subjects.
- A high proportion of students in some groups make progress that exceeds the expected rate. This is particularly the case for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, students that struggle to learn to read and those who benefit from pupil premium funding. The gap between their attainment and the national average overall has reduced considerably because of the challenging targets and high expectations set by the academy.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because a few students entering the academy with above average standards do not make the same rapid progress as other groups. In some lessons, the work they receive does not challenge a high enough proportion to exceed the expected rate of progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Students benefit from teaching that is mostly good in all subjects. This is endorsed by the views of nearly all parents and students who think that teaching is good.
- One impressive feature is that most of the teaching of the inexperienced and trainee teachers is consistently good or better as a result of highly-effective performance management by school leaders.
- School records show that the proportion of teaching that is outstanding is growing. In these lessons, the quality of learning is excellent. For example, in an English lesson where the teaching was outstanding, students were analysing poetry. The level of challenge for all students was very high. They all worked extremely well together in groups demonstrating a high degree of independence and creativity when articulating their perceptions of the poem they were analysing. The teacher facilitated this expertly by asking questions that elicited very thoughtful

answers.

- In lessons where the teaching is good, most of the students make better than expected progress. This is because teachers effectively plan work that is pitched at the right level for them. They ensure that students clearly understand what is expected at the beginning of the lessons.
- Marking and the guidance students receive throughout the school, including the sixth form, is a strength of the teaching. Students benefit from consistently good advice on the next steps they need to take to achieve their targets.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because in some lessons it does not enable a few more-able students to make the same rate of progress as the others. While the work they do maybe harder, it does not challenge these students to be independent or to use their skills and knowledge creatively.
- Very occasionally, there are lessons where teaching requires improvement. In these lessons teachers talk for too long which restricts the time in which students could be engaged in their work.
- Nearly all disabled students and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress overall because of the high quality additional activities provided for them inside and outside of lessons. Occasionally, in lessons a few of these students make slower progress. This is because teachers do not use their knowledge of them well enough to pitch work at the correct level. When this happens, the students find the work too hard.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students report that they are proud to attend the academy. Nearly all parents agree that behaviour is good. Students behave politely and considerately to each other and adults.
- Attendance has risen rapidly from low to above average and the exclusion rate has dropped considerably. Excellent procedures and provision are in place to ensure that students attend regularly and that the rare occurrences of extreme behaviour are managed effectively.
- One very strong feature of behaviour and safety is the very sensible attitude adopted by students over the last two years as the academy is demolished and rebuilt around them. They have had to tolerate continuous changes in their routine as buildings close and new ones are opened.
- Students are very knowledgeable and understand how to deal with bullying because the curriculum promotes anti-bullying and tackles discrimination for all groups extremely effectively. For example, in a very good tutor group lesson, students worked together to decide how best to combat bullying if it arose inside or outside the academy. They reported how worthwhile they thought these activities were in preparing them for the future.
- There is a significant group of students whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The academy has very effective procedures and partnerships to make these students safe and to improve their well-being. One very effective measure taken by the academy is the club that has been formed to equip some of these students with the strategies necessary to resist the temptation to become involved in anti-social behaviour in the town. The number of reports of

anti-social behaviour has dropped markedly as a result of this.

- Students' behaviour and safety is not yet outstanding because they do not always have sufficient opportunity to demonstrate that they can take full responsibility for their learning. In these lessons, teachers give them insufficient opportunity to use their initiative or to demonstrate their independence because instructions are too directed. When this happens, students remain well-behaved but are too passive.
- Sixth form students demonstrate that they have a responsible attitude to their work when embarking on the necessary requirement for independent study.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The governing body of the academy have established a team of senior leaders who demonstrate outstanding leadership. They have been relentless in driving improvement to teaching and learning that has resulted in good achievement in a relatively short time.
- Teachers and the significant number of trainee teachers benefit from very sophisticated procedures for performance management. Not only are they held to account rigorously to improve their teaching, but they benefit from professional development that is very well tailored to meet their particular requirements.
- Morale is extremely high. School leaders and the Trust have together established an excellent learning community for the staff as well as the students. Good and outstanding practice is shared effectively and success is celebrated.
- Most middle leaders are well equipped with the skills and experience to drive improvements in their departments, but there is some inconsistency. The senior leadership team have been highly effective in ensuring that this has minimum impact on the students while middle leadership is strengthened.
- The academy demonstrates outstanding capacity for further improvement. One example of this is the very successful corporate approach to teaching literacy skills taken by all departments that has resulted in the impressive improvement to achievement in literacy and the rise in standards in other subjects. This has been led highly effectively by the Acting Principal in his previous role in the academy.
- Students across the school benefit from an outstanding curriculum that gives them an excellent choice of vocational and academic subjects to choose from. The sixth form has greatly increased the academic opportunities for students. One consequence of this is that the numbers enrolled has risen rapidly in the last two years.
- The academy offers students an excellent range of enrichment activities to broaden their horizons.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is promoted very effectively. Teachers look for opportunities to promote their development regularly in lessons. For example, in a biology lesson where the teaching was outstanding the students were very maturely considering the ethical implications of fertilisation treatment for childless couples.

■ The governance of the school:

- demonstrates that it is extremely effective in holding school leaders to account to achieve their vision of outstanding education, which has been instrumental in the rapid improvement in teaching and achievement over the last two years
- fulfils all its statutory requirements to an extremely high standard and promotes equality of opportunity for all groups very well
- has ensured that the pupil premium money that the academy receives is directed specifically to help those students it is intended for, enabling them to make excellent progress
- is of great benefit because of the high quality of the resources and expertise it can draw on to support the academy.

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	136217
Inspection number	399822

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

Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
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	1191
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Shelton
Principal	Ian Corns (Acting Principal)
Telephone number	01754 330001
Fax number	01754 330001
Email address	icorns@skegnessacademy.org

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