

Woodcote High School

Meadow Rise, Coulsdon, CR5 2EH

Inspection dates

21–22 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- GCSE results were well above average in 2014. Over twice the national percentage of students achieved the English Baccalaureate qualification.
- Sixth form results also improved in 2014. They were close to average, particularly at AS level.
- The most able students are attaining higher standards than in recent years.
- Most students make very good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Students with disabilities and others with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Students behave well. They enjoy lessons and work hard. They feel safe and secure.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers prepare students very well for examinations.
- At all levels, leadership and management are well organised, determined and effective.
- The quality of academic and pastoral care for disabled students and others with special educational needs is outstanding.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have made significant improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievement in the last two years. They know exactly where further work is needed.
- Governors carry out their duties diligently. They were fully involved in the recent improvements and regularly attend meetings on current developments.
- Now in its fifth year, the sixth form is good and becoming a popular choice for Year 11 students.
- The academy's work to foster students' tolerance, for example of different faiths and lifestyles, is a strength of their personal development.
- Students mature into thoughtful, considerate young adults and, as a result, many proceed to university.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The academy has not yet eliminated the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and others.
- The percentage of top GCSE, AS and A-level grades is not high enough in several subjects.
- The quality and regularity of marking is inconsistent and, in some cases, is holding back rapid progress.
- The quality of teaching is not as strong in Years 7 to 9 as it is in Years 10 to 13.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed over 50 part lessons, many of which were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors observed tutor sessions and assemblies.
- Inspectors spoke to many students informally as well as meeting representatives from several year groups.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, and staff with responsibility for subjects and other aspects of the school's work.
- Interviews were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors.
- The lead inspector held telephone calls with representatives of the local authority, the Teaching School Alliance and an organisation supporting the school's academic work.
- Inspectors discussed their observations with teaching staff and examined a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, monitoring records and reviews. They also scrutinised minutes of governors' meetings and information about progress, standards, exclusions, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students' work in lessons and outside of lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 61 questionnaires completed by members of staff and 50 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clare Gillies, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stuart Davies	Additional Inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional Inspector
James Waite	Additional Inspector
Michael Walters	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The sixth form is smaller than average.
- About two thirds of the students attending the academy are White British, along with an above average percentage of students from many different minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A lower-than-average proportion of students speak English as an additional language, of whom only a few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of students who receive support through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for specific groups, including students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children. A few looked after children attend the academy.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average. The most common needs relate to students with autism, physical disability or moderate learning difficulties.
- Since the previous inspection, an Enhanced Learning Provision facility has been set up for students with physical disabilities. It is funded by the local authority and run by the academy. Ten of the 14 places available have been filled so far.
- About 30 students are eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- A very small number of sixth form students study one of their subjects at Riddlesdown Collegiate. The academy does not use any other off-site education provision.
- The school is a member of the Valley Teaching School Alliance which includes two other secondary and several primary schools.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further by:
 - focusing on work which leads to the highest GCSE and sixth form grades for students of all abilities
 - embedding the sharp monitoring of pupil premium students to generate, in all subjects, the same achievement for all students
 - strengthening the quality of teaching and accelerating progress in Years 7 to 9 to match that seen in other years.
- Improve teaching by:
 - middle leaders insisting that all teachers set and mark homework regularly, particularly in Years 7 to 9
 - ensuring that homework deepens students' knowledge and understanding
 - making it clear to students, from Year 7, that the presentation of their work must be of a high quality.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has generated significant improvements since the previous inspection. He has established a highly effective and determined senior leadership team, dealt with weak teaching and kept staff on board. Reflected in the very positive responses to the questionnaire, staff morale is high. Several teachers wrote about the 'tremendous improvements' and how they enjoy working at the academy. All staff want good teaching and behaviour to pervade the academy's work.
- Middle leadership is good, and improving. Heads of departments identify and confront weaknesses. For example, the Years 7 to 9 marking policy in mathematics is already under review. The core subjects of English, science and mathematics are represented on the senior leadership team, but some members have a large load to oversee. For example, an assistant headteacher has stepped in as the leader of science because the academy could not make an external appointment.
- Leadership and management are strong. However, there are several new middle leaders and a number of new teachers (seven in the science department). So it will take time for improved homework and consistency within and between departments to be established. The three recently appointed pupil premium leaders are already having a very positive impact on improving the progress of disadvantaged students, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- The leadership of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Observing lessons, senior leaders consider progress first rather than what the teacher is doing. They now have an accurate view of where there are strengths in teaching and tailor support according to individual needs.
- Several staff were keen to describe how helpful they find the training and development they receive. Many teachers are involved in small scale research projects linked to their particular responsibilities or interests. This is contributing to improvements in learning.
- Senior leaders and governors are meticulous when they review how additional government funding is spent, and carefully evaluate their impact. They refer to a wide range of national and voluntary organisations' research to support their deliberations before they adjust allocations.
- The academy successfully gives a high priority to equality of opportunity, good relationships, inclusion and eradicating discrimination. This is witnessed by how students enrolled in the enhanced learning provision attend all lessons and achieve at least as well as others. It also dominates the content of students' personal development plans.
- Tutor sessions, personal, social and health education lessons and many subjects prepare students very well for life in modern Britain and develop their awareness of global issues. Year 11 students described how they discussed the Middle East in an English lesson and cover moral issues in religious education. An assembly prepared by students focused on recent tragic events in France.
- Teaching assistants receive high quality training and support all students with special education needs most effectively. A wide range of techniques is used as necessary, for example to boost students' self-esteem, to improve reading and through learning effective strategies for anger management.
- Leadership and management of the enhanced learning provision and for all students with special educational needs are outstanding. This is seen by the complete integration of disabled students into academy life and the academic and social success the staff have with students needing support.
- The academy greatly values the support provided by the local authority, external consultants and the partnership with the Teaching School Alliance. Sharing good practice and an outstanding teaching programme are successful features of the alliance.
- The curriculum is well balanced, with a rich range of trips and visits as well as extra-curricular music, dance, drama and sports, including a daily after-school athletics academy. Tutor sessions, assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons are planned carefully. Numerous links with external business and education organisations extend students' experiences and give students tasters of future career options. The work-related courses on offer in Years 10 to 13 are popular and worthwhile.
- A parents' 'Think Tank' meets regularly and its views are welcomed by senior leaders. It has prepared very useful advice leaflets about each year of the academy for parents to refer to. Parents receive regular, colourful and informative newsletters and the academy's website has numerous links to relevant websites related to health and safety or careers, for example.
- A quarter of the parents who responded to the online questionnaire, representing only 4% of parents, expressed concerns about behaviour. The academy has prioritised raising its profile within the local community.
- The academy ensures its safeguarding duties are thoroughly carried out. All the required policies are up to date and available on the academy's excellent and informative website. All current statutory requirements

are met.

■ The governance of the school:

- Since the previous inspection, governors have arranged two reviews to ensure they carry out their duties efficiently and correctly; they are doing this with expertise and confidence. They bring a wealth of valuable professional experience, in education and finance for example, to their deliberations.
- Governors check statistics carefully relating to students' progress and have a clear understanding of how the academy performs against national standards. Governors are delighted with the considerable rise in GCSE and sixth form outcomes in the last two years. They fully acknowledge that some areas, such as the percentage of high examination grades, need to improve.
- Many governors helped to write the academy's development plan, and are linked to the five key improvement areas identified in it. They attend regular meetings to monitor progress.
- Governors are aware of the improving quality of teaching and know which teachers are receiving support. They understand procedures for setting targets for staff well. They ensure teachers' targets are used as a tool to motivate and reward teachers who attain outstanding results or to provide support for those needing to improve. Governors seek external support when they carry out the headteacher's annual review.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. On the questionnaire, a member of staff wrote that the 'fabulous students' are what make working at the academy so enjoyable. Students' behaviour in lessons could indeed be described in this way as students are attentive, hard working and, practically always, keen to learn. They get down to work fast and keep going diligently.
- Only a small number of students do not take pride in the presentation of their work and only a small number of teachers do not insist they keep their notebooks neat and organised. When the two are combined, it holds back progress and good habits are not established.
- Most students behave sensibly during breaks and lunchtime, but a few of the older students can be boisterous. The academy has a firm stance on bullying and students, fully aware of the difference between right and wrong, know any form of bullying is totally unacceptable. Year 9 students say that misbehaviour is rare and only happens if teachers do not apply the behaviour policy quickly. The academy keeps meticulous records of any behavioural incidents.
- Attendance improved in 2012 and 2013 but slipped back a little in 2014; it remains in line with national figures. The percentage of persistent absentees has declined. Students eligible for free academy meals do not attend as well as others. The academy has tight systems to monitor absence and support families. Exclusions are rare.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Students are confident that they receive a great deal of advice about how to cope with cyber bullying and say it is rare. They are fully aware of the potential dangers whilst using the internet.
- Stonewall posters in classrooms and around the academy challenge any negative homophobic attitudes. Recently, a famous actor spoke to older students on this topic. They were adamant that he made a powerful impact on their acceptance of different lifestyles.
- The academy develops students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. It is an integral part of the its work and permeates many lessons in a range of subjects, not just religious education.
- Students in Years 7 to 10 are not confident that they have enough careers guidance, although Year 10 students are well prepared for their work experience. By Year 11, students have received detailed advice about their future options and pathways towards different careers. In 2014, all Year 11 students moved on to further education, training or employment.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Many classrooms have stimulating and attractive displays, including examples of students' work. Combined with teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects and students' willingness to learn, lessons proceed in an atmosphere of enjoyment and mutual respect. Teaching is good and students learn well.
- Teaching assistants are experienced and deploy their skills wisely. They help those enrolled at the enhanced learning provision, as well as others with special educational needs, to make the best possible

progress. They carefully judge when to intervene and when to stand back.

- In an invigorating Year 10 mathematics lesson, the teacher made it clear that all students were expected to attain high grades. Students responded well and kept trying, even when they found the work difficult. They did not mind making mistakes.
- Students often make rapid progress in lessons where they work together to solve problems. Rapid progress was a feature of several lessons where students had enough time to get inside tasks before the teacher intervened.
- In some lessons, teachers prepare work at two or more levels so that all students can be involved and participate. Nevertheless, the percentage of top GCSE and sixth form grades is not high enough. This is partly because not all teachers have the highest expectations of what students can achieve, particularly in Years 7 to 9, where teaching is not as strong as in the other years.
- With increased monitoring, teachers know which students are eligible for pupil premium and are becoming increasingly alert to their needs. Consequently, these students' are doing much better than they did in 2014. Teachers are fully aware of the need to monitor and develop students' literacy and numeracy skills. Many give students subject-specific guidance about improving their writing or insist on accurate spelling. Learning in science is occasionally held back by a lack of data logging equipment and limited practical work, both of which could also extend students' numeracy skills.
- A literacy and numeracy specialist and the special educational needs coordinator work with students needing additional support. As a result, by the end of Year 11, students read well and their literacy and numeracy competence is good enough for whatever post-16 route they choose.
- In several subjects, such as English and geography, the content, regularity and marking of students' classwork and homework are mostly of a high standard. However, its quality in other subjects is too variable, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
- In some cases, weak marking holds back rapid progress because students do not receive detailed advice, the work is superficial or their books are not marked often enough. Younger students observed that, in mathematics particularly, they would like their work marked by teachers more often than doing it themselves. Untidy work is not always tackled firmly in science.
- The focus on progress occasionally leads to lessons where levels and grades dominate the learning. This is at the expense of teachers conveying how interesting a topic is and how valuable it will be to students' future lives.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In 2014, the local authority awarded 'Secondary School of the Year' to the academy for its improvements over the last two years. GCSE results were much higher in 2013 than they had been in 2012. They were not quite as high in 2014, but were still well above average. Just over three quarters of students gained five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics.
- Girls did better than boys by a margin similar to that seen nationally. There were no significant differences in the results attained by different ethnic groups or those who speak English as an additional language. However, students of non-British White backgrounds, mainly from European countries, attained a lower percentage of good GCSE grades than others and their progress was not as strong.
- Students with disabilities and others with special educational needs make faster progress than other students and attain high standards. This is also the case for students attending the enhanced learning provision. The academy gives all these students, along with looked after children, excellent pastoral and educational support and fully meets their needs.
- Despite overall positive GCSE results, achievement is not yet outstanding because only 45% of disadvantaged students attained five or more good GCSE grades including English and mathematics in 2014. Despite narrowing in 2013, the negative gap in GCSE English and mathematics results between disadvantaged students and others in the academy, and others nationally, widened in 2014.
- The academy gap between disadvantaged and other students increased to over one GCSE grade in both English and mathematics, and the gap to other students nationally was over half a GCSE grade in both subjects. Disadvantaged students made less progress than other students nationally in English and mathematics. However, this year, the gap between disadvantaged students' progress and others is narrowing in all years, particularly in Years 7 to 9, which bodes well for the future.
- In the past some students were entered early for GCSE mathematics. This was valuable experience for the most able students, most of whom attained high grades and studied for higher qualifications in mathematics. For a few other students, early entry released time for them to improve other skills, for example in literacy. Retakes increased the percentage attaining GCSE mathematics by two percentage

points. The academy is not entering students early any more.

- All the most able students took three science GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics in 2014 and 99% of them attained all three subjects. However, the percentage of A*/A grades was below average, particularly in biology and physics, and also in English, English literature and a few other subjects. This is also why achievement is not yet outstanding.
- Nevertheless, overall, and particularly in English and mathematics, the most able students made much more progress than the same students nationally, an improvement since the previous inspection. Nine out of 10 of them attained the English Baccalaureate qualification; nationally, only just over half of the most able students did so.
- Students' progress in Years 10 and 11 improved considerably in 2013 and in most areas it went up a bit more in 2014. Students now make more progress than expected nationally in both English and mathematics. Progress in Years 7 to 9 has not been so strong, but senior leaders know that learning in these years must improve to generate more of the highest GCSE grades and stronger foundations for sixth form courses.
- Students following work-related courses make very good progress and attain well above average standards. All students take a National First Award in computer use; one-third attained distinctions in 2014. Over 40 students took a BTEC qualification in art and design, with a similar percentage of distinctions.

■ The sixth form provision is good

- Since the previous inspection, standards have risen steadily and are now average in academic subjects, and above average in work-related courses. In 2014, students made better progress in Year 12 than in Year 13, so their AS results gave them a secure start to Year 13.
- The small number of students following courses at Riddlesdown Collegiate achieve similarly to other sixth formers. The academy has regular contact with the collegiate so checks their attendance, behaviour and progress closely. The very few students who did not attain GCSE English or mathematics in Year 11 now have timetabled lessons; one has already attained English.
- Subjects which did not perform well in the past have been identified and courses changed. The work-related and academic subjects offered ensure all students, following helpful consultation, start courses which match their abilities and aspirations.
- In the past, Year 11 students have been attracted to sixth form colleges or grammar schools. For September 2015 this pattern has shifted, with over 100 internal applications for the sixth form.
- Under a new, experienced leader, combined with an effective team, leadership and management are now good. Sixth form targets have been raised. More frequent checks have started, with sharper monitoring of students' folders and quality of work. Current predictions, which have been accurate in the past, suggest that the actions taken will be evident in improved results in 2015.
- Following staffing changes, teaching is good. Mature relationships give students the confidence to express themselves, make mistakes and pose questions. Teachers encourage students to develop study techniques, such as note taking or summaries, and keep a careful eye on their literacy and numeracy. Outstanding sixth form teaching is often reflected in well-organised files containing helpful notes and valuable feedback, which support effective revision.
- Sixth formers feel safe and secure and enjoy their studies. They are keen to learn, behave sensibly and get on very well together. Many help younger students, with reading, support those finding academy life difficult or involve themselves in community work and fundraising.
- The academy gives sixth formers much good advice about future careers and higher education. The academy encourages applications to Russell Group and Oxbridge, but all those going to university receive one-to-one support. Those moving to employment are linked with an external partner. Almost all students moved on to study, training or employment in 2014.
- Sixth formers are encouraged to consider the wider world, for example through a Year 12 art project exploring conflict in the Middle East or tutor time discussions about extremism.

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	138187
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	453721

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1,193
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Driscoll
Headteacher	Mark Southworth
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 January 2013
Telephone number	020 8668 6464
Fax number	020 8660 9038
Email address	enquiries@woodcote.croydon.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', 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.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 and 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 2015

