

Stamford Welland Academy

Green Lane, Stamford, PE9 1HE

Inspection dates 21–22 January 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The proportion of students achieving five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics was well below average in 2014.
- The proportion of students making expected progress in mathematics was below average.
- Attainment in subjects remains inconsistent and the proportion of students gaining higher GCSE grades in mathematics and science continues to be below average.
- Until recently progress data has not been accurate and as a result groups of students have neither been given the support they require nor been challenged enough in lessons.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good across all subjects, as teachers do not plan activities that meet the needs of the different groups of students.
- Not enough teachers are questioning students' understanding and subject knowledge in enough depth to move their learning forward.
- Despite recent improvements not all subject leaders are yet monitoring the quality of teaching and students' progress effectively enough. As a result students are making no more than expected progress in a range of subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- The strong leadership from the new Principal, supported by the academy trust, has already had a clear impact on improving behaviour, the monitoring of student progress, teaching and raising the expectations of students and staff.
- The new governing body have a wide range of knowledge and experience of school governance and use it to effectively monitor the work of the academy.
- Teaching is consistently strong in English and as a result attainment is at least average and often above average
- Teaching Assistants are effective in supporting students' learning.
- Behaviour in the academy is good. Students have positive attitudes towards their learning and the academy.
- The academy provides a safe, supportive environment for students. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students’ learning in 19 lessons; four of these were joint observations with senior leaders. They looked at work in students’ books in lessons and carried out four separate work scrutinies, focusing on mathematics, English and science. Three of these were carried out with senior leaders.
- Inspectors also observed a variety of other activities such as literacy support sessions, tutor period and an assembly.
- Discussions were held with three groups of students, the Principal and other members of the leadership team, subject leaders and senior tutors. Inspectors also spoke with five members of the governing body and the Executive Principal.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took into account 23 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 28 staff questionnaire responses and one parent who asked to speak to them.
- Inspectors observed student behaviour in lessons, around the academy and at break and lunchtime. They also held informal conversations with students at these times.
- The inspectors reviewed a number of documents including the academy’s evaluation of its work, the academy development plan, information on students’ current progress, policies relating to the safety and safeguarding of students and records relating to behaviour, attendance and punctuality.

Inspection team

Caroline Parry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jamie Clarke

Additional Inspector

Janet Duggan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy was last inspected in March 2013, when it was Stamford Queen Eleanor School run by the CfBT Trust. During the summer of 2014 the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust (CMAT), a multi-academy trust, was asked to take over the running of the Academy by the Department of Education. In September 2014 the academy changed its name to Stamford Welland Academy in preparation for the change of trust leadership. CMAT officially took over the running of the academy in October 2014.
- The academy is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are White British.
- The proportion of disabled students or those who have special educational needs, at just over a third, is above average.
- Just under a third of all students are eligible for the pupil premium, which is above average. This additional funding is given to schools for students who are looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Two students in Year 11 and one in Year 9 are on a long-term full-time placement at the Pilgrim School. This is specialist educational provision for students with medical conditions.
- The academy does not use any other alternative provision for its students.
- In 2014 the academy failed to meet the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress at GCSE.
- The current Principal was appointed by CMAT and officially took up post in October 2014. A team of experienced leaders from the trust supports him.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment data to plan lessons which meet different students' capabilities, especially the most able
 - frequently check students' understanding and knowledge in order to move their learning forward.
- To raise attainment and accelerate progress in science and mathematics.
- To improve the effectiveness of middle leadership by making sure that:
 - when monitoring standards of teaching and progress all curriculum leaders adopt the practices of the most successful subject leaders
 - subject leaders and senior tutors take swift action to support students identified as falling behind with their learning and evaluate the impact of the actions.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because since the last inspection the leadership of teaching has not been robust enough to secure good teaching across all subject areas. As a result students are not making good progress in some key subjects.
- In the past, teachers' assessment has not always been accurate and as a result students' progress has been limited. The Principal has introduced a more rigorous assessment practice so the academy's assessment of students' attainment and progress is now accurate.
- The trust is supporting the improvement of teaching by providing a part-time Vice-Principal to work with identified teachers. Leaders visit lessons regularly in order to monitor teaching and they look at students' work. In the past the evaluation of teaching has been slightly generous, as it has not yet sufficiently focused on student progress.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders is too variable. The work of subject leaders has been tightened up and they are all expected to monitor the quality of teaching, students' work and progress. Together with senior tutors they are expected to track student progress and provide appropriate support to students who fall behind with their learning. Inspectors saw some good practice from some subject leaders. However, not all leaders are carrying out this monitoring with the same level of urgency and rigour.
- The newly appointed Principal has provided the academy with strong leadership and has a clear vision for the school. He is ably supported by the trust. Since his appointment he has introduced a house system. Students cited this as the change that has had the most impact on them. They told inspectors that this has resulted in improved behaviour and punctuality to school and that there is always someone to support them in the house office if they need it. Academy records on attendance, incidents of poor behaviour and punctuality support this.
- The Principal has set high expectations for staff and students and he has quickly won the support of staff and parents. All parents who expressed a view would recommend the school.
- The academy ensures that all students have equality of opportunity. For example, pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide extra support for students with their literacy and numeracy along with guidance for careers. This is having an impact as the gap in attainment between pupil premium students and their peers is closing. The proportion of disadvantaged students going on to further education is above average.
- The Principal, supported by the trust, has carried out staff restructuring and tightened the ways the performance of teachers is checked. Staff have performance targets that are linked to teaching and student progress and are aware that they will receive pay awards only if they achieve these targets.
- The academy provides a balanced curriculum for students which allows them to progress to a range of post 16 courses. The trust has modified the curriculum by increasing the number of mathematics and English lessons in order to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills and raise attainment.
- The academy curriculum provides well for students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. British values are embedded in the curriculum and ethos of the academy so students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Students are encouraged to attend an extra session at the end of the day known as Session 6. This provides students with the opportunity to catch up with their studies and also sign up for one or more 'PLEDGES', an awards system which offers students a range of opportunities that enhance their learning and development. Students can develop a range of personal skills such as responsibility and problem solving by completing activities in an area of their choice.
- Students also have the opportunity to participate in enrichment programmes and sporting activities such

as horse riding, hockey, trampolining, army cadets, art, music, drama activities, Latin and mandarin. These sessions are well attended and students appreciate the opportunity develop new skills and knowledge to widen their experiences.

- The Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust provides the academy with expertise in all areas of leadership and teaching. Staff have the opportunity to work with other schools in the trust to learn from their successful practices. The Executive Principal's support in instigating staff restructuring and clarification of responsibilities has contributed to addressing some of the key aspects that has led to the academy's underperformance
- The academy monitors the attendance and progress of students at Pilgrim house. These students are making expected progress.
- Leaders fulfil their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding and the arrangements to keep students safe are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - At the time of this inspection the governing body had been in place for 60 days. Governors have a wide range of relevant skills and knowledge. The Chair of the Governing Body is a National Leader of Governance. Their first task was to review the work of the academy and to ensure that the academy was a safe environment for students.
 - The governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, student achievement and the impact of the pupil premium funding on the attainment of disadvantaged students. They know which groups of students are achieving well and where standards need to improve. Governors are attached to each house and conduct visits to see the work of the academy first hand and hold discussions with both staff and students. They provide effective challenge to leaders.
 - The governors have a good knowledge of staff performance management and have supported the Principal in decisions regarding pay awards. Pay awards for teachers are only awarded where students achieve well as a result of good teaching.
 - Governors are committed to ensuring that the academy promotes British values.
 - Governors are trained in safe recruitment and are diligent in carrying out the statutory safeguarding duties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students have positive attitudes towards their learning. In lessons they are attentive and most students remain focused on their work. However, inspectors noticed that when the work was not challenging and interesting some students lose focus and have to be reminded to stay on task. Students told the inspectors that behaviour has improved this year. Good behaviour and its importance is reinforced through assemblies and tutor periods.
- Students wear their uniform correctly and are proud of their school. They told inspectors that they appreciate the refurbishment carried out by the trust to improve the academy environment. One group said it made the academy 'more professional and business-like'. As a result the academy is litter free.
- Students arrive to lessons promptly and bring the right equipment. Most students take pride in their work.
- Behaviour at lunch and break-time is good, even in the dining room where it can become crowded at break-time on cold days. Inspectors observed students being respectful and courteous towards one another, adults and the Year 11 prefects on duty.
- Students understand the academy rules, why they are necessary and that there will be consequences if

they fail to comply with them. The number of exclusions has declined as students at risk of exclusion are better supported.

- Most parents and all staff who expressed an opinion feel that behaviour is good within the academy.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust has taken swift action to secure the safety of students within the building and grounds. Visitors are carefully checked and they can no longer access areas where students are taught unless they are supervised. Students no longer have access to the car parking area.
- Students say they feel safe in the school. They told inspectors that bullying occasionally happens and if it does they go to their house office where member of staff will support them. Students are very appreciative of the support they receive from their house office and most say this is one of the best improvements since the Principal arrived.
- All parents and staff agree that the academy is a safe environment and almost all parents agree that the academy deals with bullying effectively.
- Students are aware of different forms of bullying and how to keep themselves safe both inside the academy and when using technology. Curriculum time is used to teach students about keeping safe and is followed up in assemblies.
- Academy Leaders have taken effective steps to improve the punctuality and attendance of students. The proportion of students arriving late to school in the morning is decreasing, as is the number of students who are persistently absent. Attendance has improved and now meets the national average.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding as the proportion of students who are persistently absent from school is still above average and students are not yet taking sufficient pride in their work in all subjects.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been sufficiently consistent in a number of subjects. This results in too few students making good progress from their Key Stage 2 starting points including in key subjects such as mathematics and science.
- Not enough teachers are setting work that has the appropriate level of challenge. Too much similar work is still aimed at all students and as a result students are not making rapid progress, especially the most able.
- Not enough teachers judge students' knowledge and understanding of a topic carefully enough. Inspectors observed too many teachers using questions that did not challenge students sufficiently, especially the most able. As a result the pace of learning was slow.
- Mathematics teaching is not as strong as the teaching of reading and writing. Students' basic skills on entry to the academy are weak and teachers have not put sufficient emphasis on addressing these weaknesses. The academy has recently increased the time given to teaching mathematics and the department is now starting to address these weaknesses in lessons. It is too early to see the impact of this on students' attainment.
- Where learning is at its most effective, teachers choose resources that interest the students and activities that are challenging. For example, inspectors saw students in a Year 9 class using a speech to explore the impact it may have on a variety of audiences. This activity promoted students' enquiry skills as well as deepening their knowledge and providing an opportunity to use a range of English skills.

- In a Year 10 lesson students were using skills learnt in Key Stage 3 to make decisions regarding the best way to reduce the impact of hurricanes on communities. Students made good progress in this lesson because the teacher skilfully used questioning to challenge students thinking which deepened their understanding of the impact of the possible solutions.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support the learning of students both in the classroom and in small group work. Inspectors observed a small number of Year 7 students in a literacy support group delivered by a teaching assistant. The learning was effective because the teaching assistant had good subject knowledge and a good awareness of the needs of the students. In a Year 10 science class a teaching assistant worked with a group of students supporting them with the higher-level work.
- Relationships between students and teachers are positive in lessons. Students told inspectors that they have seen an improvement in teaching since the new Principal arrived. One group said it was 'more structured'. Year 11 students said that the work they are given is harder than last year and they now have practice exams to prepare them for their GCSEs in the summer.
- Teachers mark students work regularly. Inspectors saw some excellent examples of marking where the teachers had given students detailed information on how to improve their work along with time to make the necessary corrections. This is not consistent practice within the academy but inspectors saw signs of improvement.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough students make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects, especially mathematics and science.
- Students start Year 7 with attainment well below that expected for their age. At the end of Key Stage 4 the proportion of students gaining 5 A* to C GCSE including mathematics and English has been well below average. After a significant improvement in 2013 where attainment was broadly average, the proportion of students gaining higher grades was once again well below average. This was partly a result of changes to the GCSE examination format but also because the academy did not have accurate assessment data.
- Teaching in mathematics and science is improving but work seen in most students' books represents expected rather than good progress.
- Although achievement in English declined last year, academy data and work in students' books shows they are once again making good progress and the proportion of students gaining a higher grade at GCSE is due to increase in 2015.
- Students achieve well in English Language, English Literature, statistics and geography.
- Accurate school progress and attainment data, supported by work seen in students' books, suggests that the proportion of students on track to gain higher GCSE grades including English and mathematics is due to rise for the current Year 11.
- Year 7 catch up funding is used to provide well-taught phonics sessions (the sounds that letters make) and students who attend these sessions are making good progress. All students are encouraged to read daily.
- As a result of good support, disabled students and those who have special educational needs make progress that is at least as good as their peers and in some subjects they make better progress.
- The attainment gap of students supported by the pupil premium in English and mathematics has closed when compared to other students in the academy. In 2014 their attainment was in line with their peers. When compared to all students nationally the gap narrowed in English to two thirds of a grade and in

mathematics it was one and a quarter grades.

- As a result of teaching that does not consistently provide most able students with sufficient challenge, the progress they make varies. The proportion of most able students making expected progress in mathematics is below average and for making good progress it is well below average. In English the percentage making expected progress is average and making good progress is below. Current academy data suggests that this is improving as the proportion making good progress is increasing in both Key Stage 3 and 4.

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	137600
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	453606

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Moore
Principal	Anthony Partington
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 March, 2013
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