

Featherstone High School

11 Montague Waye, Southall, UB2 5HF

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher, other leaders and the governing body ensure outstanding achievement and teaching across the main school. From starting points that are well below average, students make rapid progress and reach standards that are well above average.
- Governors give the school powerful support to maintain high standards and students' safety.
- Accurate, detailed and widespread use of information about students' progress enables teachers and teaching assistants to plan learning to support this rapid progress. As a result, teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers give students helpful feedback to enable them to improve their work, but do not always allow them time to do so.
- All students are very enthusiastic learners. They are highly motivated, proud of their achievements and extremely keen to succeed. They enjoy coming to school and actively participate in the wide range of learning opportunities available.
- Students say that they feel safe at school, and are right to do so. They understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They are very proud of their school and value the extensive support provided by staff.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school site is exemplary. All students demonstrate the utmost respect and courtesy towards each other and adults.
- The sixth form is good. It is a large and inclusive community, where students are ambitious, motivated to work hard and achieve highly in most, but not all, subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 44 parts of lessons, of which 12 were joint observations with senior leaders. They made shorter visits to assemblies, special sessions helping individuals and small groups, and extra-curricular activities.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, other staff, five groups of students of all ages, representatives of the governing body, and the school’s external improvement consultant.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and scrutinised a range of school documents, including the school’s self-evaluation and data about students’ progress and attainment. Inspectors scrutinised the school’s procedures and records for safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Questionnaires from 45 members of staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Glen Goddard, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Helen Matthews	Additional inspector
Mary Davies	Additional inspector
Michael Elson	Additional inspector
Avtar Sherri	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized secondary school. Most students live locally.
- The school day is staggered for different year groups, to support a range of extended-day learning and extra-curricular activities before and after the start of the day.
- Featherstone High School converted to become an academy school on 1 December 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- Almost all students are of minority ethnic heritage, of which Indian, Black African and Pakistani are the largest groups.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for students in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is nearly double the national average. This group represents over half of the school population.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above the national average and represents one in five students in the school.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students attend off-site alternative provision at the Ealing Alternative Academy and West Thames College.
- The school holds Leading Edge, Capita Partner and was awarded London Gold club status in the 2013-2014 academic year. School leaders regularly support other schools at local and national conferences and through regular senior secondments to local schools.
- The sixth form was established in 2009, when new accommodation was opened for it.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the progress of all students still further by consistently giving them time to reflect and act on feedback from teachers about their work and how to improve it.
- Reduce the differences between the results gained across sixth form subjects by:
 - developing further support for less able students so that they can be more successful on some courses
 - creating further opportunities for the best teachers in the sixth form to share their experience and subject knowledge with those new to teaching BTEC and A-level courses.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have exceptionally high ambitions for all students to be successful. Leaders purposefully maintain students' rapid progress across the main school. They are passionate about improving the life chances of all students, particularly the large majority who start school with levels of attainment that are well below the norm.
 - The school's statement of purpose – 'together we achieve' – illustrates an ethos where excellence in teaching and students' conduct is seen daily. Highly positive relationships among staff and students support excellent teaching across the school. Leaders are determined to maintain the highly inclusive nature of the school and ensure the success of each student – and do so exceptionally well.
 - The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders have a clear grasp of school priorities, including sustaining students' outstanding achievement. All leaders closely monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of all students, particularly those attending alternative provision. Consequently, they are able to provide effective support and additional help when needed.
 - The broad curriculum meets the needs of all students and provides very well for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The values of tolerance and respect for different cultures make the school a harmonious community. Discrimination is rare and tackled effectively and directly. The school's multifaith and multicultural sense of community actively promotes and ensures equality of opportunity. This fosters good relationships.
 - Students are prepared well for life in modern Britain. The school has a democratic system for electing students into leadership roles on various committees and councils representing students' opinion. Consequently, students participate actively and share in making important decisions in school. They attend student learning conferences and have played a significant role in the Ealing Youth Mayor and Youth MP programme.
 - Leaders at all levels carefully manage the performance of teachers to ensure that all teaching is to the high standards expected. All teachers, but particularly those new to the school, are supported by very effective middle leadership and the teacher-development team, which promotes and develops their skills. As a result of this training and support, teaching is outstanding.
 - Subject leaders have a clear understanding of the school's priorities and strengths. Their regular use of progress data enables them to check how effective teaching is in enabling students to make rapid progress. Subject leaders manage the extensive and effective coaching programme in all subject departments well. The impact is that teachers are outstanding practitioners and enable students to achieve their best.
 - The use of pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding is very effective in raising eligible students' achievement. Students benefit from additional timetabled help, including learning in small groups and individualised tutoring and mentoring. The success of this support is evident in the outstanding progress of eligible students, who achieve as well as their classmates.
 - As a Leading Edge School, leaders support other schools in the local authority and deliver workshops at local and national conferences. They are keen to improve their own practice, as seen in their drive and success in ensuring teaching is consistently outstanding.
 - All safeguarding and child protection arrangements meet statutory requirements. The safeguarding of students is a very high priority. Support for vulnerable students is extensive and enhanced by a strong team of learning mentors. As a result, the school environment is a place where students are safe, secure and well supported.
 - Students receive high-quality, impartial careers, education and training advice, which is very helpful in guiding the choices they make through the school. However, sometimes, when students enter the sixth form, this advice is not always heeded and some students choose courses for which they lack the interest or academic ability necessary for them to be successful.
 - The school works closely with the local authority, which has helped the school to maintain its excellent record of performance
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors are highly effective, know the school extremely well and are fully committed to its continued success. They are keenly aware of priorities.
 - Governors are determined to sustain students' outstanding achievement. They confidently analyse and interpret data on students' attainment and progress and know how the school's performance compares with that of schools nationally.

- The governing body understands how the performance management of staff is used. Staff salary progression is closely linked to students making the excellent progress expected. Governors understand the links between the quality of teaching, the management of the performance of teachers and the achievement of students.
- Governors work with school leaders to identify outstanding teaching and take decisive action when teachers do not meet the school’s high expectations.
- The governing body closely monitors the performance of the headteacher and other senior leaders and holds them to account for the school’s performance.
- Governors monitor the school’s finances carefully, including the use of pupil premium funds. They regularly discuss the performance of different groups of students to confirm that all make rapid progress.
- Governors take part in regular training and Saturday workshops to develop their role in challenging and supporting the school. They regularly involve themselves in the life of the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students’ attitudes and relationships are exemplary and enable them to thrive and make outstanding progress. There is a sense of purpose and a thirst for knowledge in lessons. Students relish the wide range of opportunities available to help them learn – as seen in an assembly about the Holocaust.
- For the very small number of students attending alternative provision, the school works closely with providers to ensure students’ positive attitudes to learning and regular attendance.
- The attendance and punctuality of students are high. All students, including those who are supported by the pupil premium, attend regularly.
- Students in both key stages are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners. Their very positive attitudes are reflected in the very few fixed-term exclusions.
- Throughout the school, students behave in a calm and orderly manner. They willingly engage in conversation, are respectful to each other and adults and are tolerant of each other’s differences. Students confirm that behaviour seen during the inspection is typical and is a key reason they feel safe and thrive. They have good understanding of different types of bullying and report that incidents are very rare.
- The school has a highly effective system of rewards which promotes good behaviour and reinforces the very positive attitudes to learning. The house and tutor system is an integral part of school life and successfully develops students’ pride in and support for the school. Tutors regularly meet with students to review their work and listen and respond to their concerns.
- Parents endorse the school’s success in managing students’ behaviour and confirm that rare cases of minor bullying are dealt with effectively.

Safety

- The school’s work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. The building and open spaces of the school are very secure and, as a result, the environment is an extremely safe place to live and learn.
- Risk assessment across the school’s premises is regularly conducted and is effective in ensuring students’ safety.
- Robust safeguarding systems, including arrangements for child protection, are monitored closely by senior leaders and the governing body and all students are kept very safe.
- Students are confident to talk to adults about concerns and are fully aware of whom to approach. Full-time mentors provide confidential support to students across the school. Relationships and trust among students and adults are excellent and support the high quality of safeguarding arrangements.
- All staff are well trained to support students and provide clear lines of communication with trusted adults to ensure students’ safety.
- Students say they feel safe at all times, and know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. Inspection findings endorse their positive views. Students note that there is little bullying, including racist or homophobic bullying. They struggle to give examples, but can explain how incidents are effectively dealt with if they do occur.

The quality of teaching**is outstanding**

- Teaching enables students to make excellent progress, irrespective of their attainment on entry to the school. Outstanding teaching and teachers' high expectations ensure all students achieve in an environment that promotes successful learning and exemplary behaviour.
- Students' progress is closely monitored and assessed. The information gathered helps teachers to make learning challenging for all students. Students' specific learning needs are known to staff and the purpose of each learning activity is made clear to the students. As a result, students are able to make rapid progress from often well-below-average starting points and achieve exceptionally well.
- Teachers regularly share ideas to ensure teaching is outstanding in the main school. All teachers in the main school are supported to develop their skills and improve the quality of their teaching in maintaining students' rapid progress.
- Relationships between students and staff are extremely positive and purposeful. Students are eager to learn and keen to engage with their teachers and other staff. As a result, teachers and support staff are able to develop students' deeper understanding of ideas and give them the confidence to succeed. Students are proud when they have learnt something new or grasped a new concept. Learning is made lively and interesting, with a wide range of helpful resources to support students' accelerated progress.
- Teachers regularly celebrate students' academic success informally in class and formally through the achievement points system. The system motivates students well.
- Teaching is very effective in advancing students' reading, writing and mathematical skills. For example, students who need extra support in developing their literacy and numeracy skills, including those who speak English as an additional language, get strong support in small groups, often as part of the extensive, extended-day activities. Teachers and support staff are skilled at supporting students with special educational needs. Consequently, they make rapid progress in developing their basic skills.
- Homework is set regularly. Teachers require very high standards in students' completion of work at home and in class. As a result, students' develop pride in their work – and said so during the inspection.
- Teachers mark students' work and provide them with detailed feedback, verbally and written. While there is always guidance for how the work can be improved, sometimes students are not given enough time to think through the guidance given, respond to these comments and improve their work. As a result, their progress does not improve as much as it could.
- Parents who expressed a view agreed with inspection findings that students are taught extremely well.

The achievement of pupils**is outstanding**

- The London Schools Gold Club evaluates the school as exceptional in improving students' aspirations and achievements. Inspection findings endorse this evaluation of the school's performance as accurate.
- Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are well-below average. By the end of Key Stage 4, the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is consistently above or in line with national averages. The performance of students in English and mathematics at A*-C is consistently above national averages. Students' current performance, particularly in English and mathematics, has risen further and school data predict well-above-average results in 2015.
- The proportion of students making three or more levels of progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 in both English and mathematics is well above the national norm. Inspection findings indicate continuing strong performance.
- The attainment of disadvantaged students is exceptional. In Year 11 in 2014, the proportion of disadvantaged students attaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was barely below that of their classmates. There was no gap between the attainment of these students and that of others at the school in English. In mathematics, there was a slight gap of approximately one third of a grade. The attainment of disadvantaged students was ahead of that of all students nationally to a broadly similar extent to that of others in the school in English and mathematics.
- In English and mathematics over three years, disadvantaged students have made at least the same exceptional rate of progress from their starting points as their peers in school. Their rate of progress is well ahead of that of students in most schools nationally.
- The school's expert use of tracking data to monitor the progress of students enables school leaders and teachers to target extra help where it is most needed. As a result, all students are making outstanding progress from well-below-average starting points. The tracking of the few students who attend off-site provision shows they achieve very well.

- Disabled students and those with special educational needs consistently make outstanding progress relative to their starting points. Strong relationships among teachers, teaching assistants and students ensure progress is rapid and sustained and that students' individual needs are met.
- Most students join the school with reading skills that are below levels expected for their age. As a consequence, school leaders focus on improving students' reading ability in Years 7 and 8 through a comprehensive, individualised reading programme.
- The highly effective leadership of literacy, two well-stocked libraries, knowledgeable librarians and teaching assistants provide engaging reading initiatives which support students' rapid progress in reading throughout their early years at the school. Catch-up funding for Year 7 students provides additional mathematics and English lessons as part of the school's extended day and is having a marked impact on the progress students make.
- There are no significant differences in the rates of progress made by Indian, Pakistani and Black African students. These students start school with attainment that is well below average and make excellent progress in English and mathematics.
- Students who speak English as an additional language often arrive at the school with little command of English. Their needs are rapidly assessed and they receive strong support from teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors to improve their English skills. This support enables these students to acquire the necessary language and literacy skills to make rapid progress.
- The school does not enter students early for any examinations. The focus is on the usual entry dates and all abilities benefit from this approach.
- Over time, the achievement of the small group of most able students is at least good. However, there was a dip in the performance of those students in 2014. Senior leaders reacted very quickly and effectively to this and, as a result, current evidence in students' work and in the quality of teaching seen in lessons, indicate that the most able are set to attain results considerably ahead of the national average again this year.
- Parents who expressed a view are right to be very pleased by the progress made by their children.

The sixth form provision

is good

- The sixth form is a large, vibrant and inclusive community, where students and staff share high expectations for the quality of their work.
- Students and staff form a warm and caring community. Students are extremely respectful towards each other and the adults working with them. They present themselves very well and are punctual and proud of the new sixth form building. They are mature and articulate, taking on further responsibilities both in school through the student leadership structure and in the local community. Most students' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They work hard and are self-disciplined in their studies.
- There is an effective mentoring programme. Academic tutors know the students very well and support them emotionally and academically throughout their courses.
- The sixth form is not yet outstanding because students' success across subjects varies too much where students have not followed school guidance concerning their suitability for some courses. This particularly applies to less able students who choose mathematics and the sciences. Leaders are strengthening the course guidance provided and continue to work closely with students and parents to ensure that courses match students' individual academic needs. However, it is too soon to evaluate the impact of the current guidance provided.
- Overall, students achieve well on BTEC and A-level courses in most subject areas. The school's current tracking information on students' progress and the – often outstanding – teaching indicate stronger academic performance in 2015.
- A wide range of courses is provided, including BTEC, AS and A level, and combinations of both. Students are expected to continue to study GCSE English and mathematics if they do not gain at least grade C by the end of Year 11. Some particularly able students undertake the challenging Extended Project. Success on these courses is high.
- Students are actively encouraged to participate in the many additional opportunities available, including sport, the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, charitable work, trips, work experience and visits to universities. They undertake these activities with enthusiasm.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of priorities for development. They systematically track the performance of all students and offer individual help as required. They have some way to go in ensuring

that teachers with sixth form expertise fully share their skills and expertise with those who are new to the teaching of sixth form subjects.

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	137729
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	453340

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1533
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fay Haras-Gummer
Headteacher	Gerry Wadwa
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8843 0984
Fax number	020 8574 3405
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