

# Halewood Academy

The Avenue, Halewood, Knowsley, Merseyside, L26 1UU

**Inspection dates** 28–29 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b> <b>4</b>
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils	Inadequate	4
Sixth form provision	Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders have failed to improve the academy's effectiveness rapidly enough. Students' achievement has declined and is now inadequate due to weak teaching over time.
- Boys and disadvantaged students underachieve, particularly in mathematics and English. Students do not make sufficient progress and consequently standards are too low.
- Despite improvements, attendance remains below average and this impacts negatively on some students' learning.
- Behaviour requires improvement. Students' attitudes to learning are not consistently good. Some students do not take good care over the presentation of their work or make adequate notes.
- Governance is ineffective. Governors do not hold leaders to account well enough.
- Leaders have not ensured that teaching is good enough. Teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are too low. Some teachers do not follow the academy's procedures for setting, marking and assessing work. Students do not always know how well they are doing or how to improve.
- Due to weak assessment systems, leaders are unable to check and evaluate accurately or confidently the impact of their actions to improve students' outcomes.
- Leaders and governors do not ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively. The achievement of disadvantaged students is significantly behind that of their peers.
- Provision in the sixth form requires improvement. Some students do not complete their courses and those taking vocational subjects make less progress than those on academic courses.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders ensure that disabled students and those with special educational needs are monitored closely. Support is increasingly well targeted to their particular needs and their achievement is improving as a result.
- Students are safe. Their well-being is managed particularly effectively, in all year groups, including in the sixth form.
- A new school improvement plan is in place, which accurately identifies the areas of weakness in the academy. Planned actions are extensive and starting to improve provision, particularly in Years 7 and 11.
- Students achieve well in arts subjects and benefit from a range of opportunities to develop their creativity.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of lessons across the academy in many subjects. They also observed registration periods, an assembly and sessions in the inclusion room, known as 'inclusion school'. Three lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed students' behaviour around the academy and in lessons.
- Inspectors held formal meetings with students from all key stages, as well as speaking with students informally in lessons, and at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for disabled students and those with special educational needs, those responsible for behaviour and the leader of the sixth form.
- The views of the 18 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account, as well as the academy's own recent surveys of parents' opinions.
- The views of 55 staff who responded to the questionnaire were also taken into account.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including documents evaluating the academy's performance, information on students' progress and attainment, and staff training and support programmes. In addition, inspectors considered each department's leadership and management documentation. Information relating to behaviour, safeguarding, and attendance were examined, including for those students who attend off-site provision.

## Inspection team

Rebecca Lawton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Julian Grant	Additional Inspector
Kevin Harrison	Additional Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- Halewood Academy converted to become an academy in May 2013.
- It is a slightly larger than the average-sized secondary school with a small on-site sixth form. The vast majority of students in the sixth form are former students of the academy.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by the pupil premium funding is above average. This funding is provided for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The academy uses alternative provision for a very small number of students, from providers including the Everton Free School and Liverpool Community College.
- The academy is currently undergoing significant changes to its leadership team. Many roles and responsibilities are changing. A number of departments have had a new leader since the school became an academy.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013 and the vice-principal in September 2014. In the past, the academy has brokered one-off support days from a number of specialist leaders of education (SLE).
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Swiftly improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good in order to raise the achievement of all groups of students, particularly in Key Stages 3 and 4 and in English and mathematics, by making sure that:
  - there are high expectations of what students can achieve, including the quantity, quality, care and presentation of students' work
  - students' attitudes to learning are consistently good
  - all staff, including those in the sixth form, regularly and accurately assess students' achievements so they set challenging work that matches the needs and abilities of all groups of students, particularly for disadvantaged students and boys
  - students' literacy and numeracy skills are developed effectively across all subjects
  - all teachers follow the academy's agreed policies and procedures for marking students' work and that clear guidance is given to students on how they can improve their work
  - students in the sixth form make good or better progress in vocational subjects.
- Rapidly improve the impact of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by ensuring that:
  - there is clear senior leadership responsibility for the leadership of teaching and a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching so that any inadequate practice is swiftly eradicated
  - accurate systems are established for assessing students' achievement to ensure that leaders can confidently check and measure how well their actions improve students' outcomes, including in the sixth form
  - heads of department, including those new to post, are rigorously held to account for checking and improving the quality of teaching and students' achievement in their areas of responsibility
  - the pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement of disadvantaged students so that the gaps between their achievement with that of others close quickly

- governors hold leaders rigorously to account for improving students’ achievement and the quality of teaching
  - the findings of the recent review of governance are quickly and fully implemented.
- Continue to implement current strategies to improve attendance, particularly in Year 11, so that it is at least in line the national average.

An external review of the academy’s use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- As a result of ineffective leadership, management and governance, the academy's performance has deteriorated. Students' achievement has declined and is now inadequate due to weak teaching over time.
- The leadership of teaching is weak. At present there is no senior leader with a clear responsibility for leading this aspect of the academy's work. A significant number of heads of department are very new to post and they have not yet had enough impact on how well teaching is checked and improved. These managers are not held rigorously to account for improvement in their areas of responsibility. Policies, such as for marking, are not adhered to by all staff across the subjects. Leaders do not ensure that staff check regularly and accurately on how well students are learning.
- In the past, arrangements to manage the performance of staff lacked rigour and were ineffective. Staff have not been held to account for failures in their departments until very recently, so although improvements are now evident, teaching remains too variable and some is inadequate.
- The new headteacher and vice-principal have provided extensive staff training and support for teachers. They have identified the right areas for improvement and put in place an extensive plan of the actions to be taken in response. Their actions are already helping to accelerate the progress of students currently in Years 7 and 11. However, the many changes in leadership at other levels have meant that some improvements have been too slow. As a result, students' achievement across the academy is not improving quickly enough and remains inadequate.
- The academy's promotion of equal opportunities is inadequate because too many groups of students underachieve and progress across year groups and subjects is too variable. Leaders have focused their attentions on the students in Year 11 who are closest to taking their examinations.
- Disadvantaged students underachieve because the academy makes ineffective use of the pupil premium to narrow the gaps between their attainment in English and mathematics with others in the academy and nationally. Some disadvantaged students' learning is slower because of the variation in the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum has recently been improved to better match students' needs and to allow students to follow courses where they can succeed. A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities is on offer and the sporting and cultural development of students is well supported. The arts, in particular, are a strength of the academy. All students can benefit from regular artistic opportunities. Leaders have yet to ensure that students' develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively across their various subjects.
- Provision to ensure students are well prepared for life in modern Britain is regular, detailed and well promoted across the curriculum. Students learn about the law, democracy and other faiths and religions in weekly lessons. They describe these sessions as interesting and useful. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and students know how to report any instances. Good relationships are evident between groups of students of different backgrounds.
- Leaders closely monitor the progress, attendance and behaviour of those students who attend alternative provision and ensure that they make good progress. These students have access to appropriate qualifications and their provision is managed well.
- Leadership of the sixth form, and of the provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs, are stronger than in other parts of the academy. Here, students' achievement and the quality of teaching are checked more effectively. Sixth form students, disabled students and those with special educational needs make faster progress as a result.
- Leaders have had some successes in improving student behaviour, students are enjoying learning more as a result and their attendance is improving. However, in Year 11, attendance is low. This is detrimental to some students' success.
- Recently, information and guidance for course choices and careers has improved significantly. Students' qualification choices are now better matched to their needs, and they receive good quality work experience and careers advice.
- The local authority remains in contact with the academy but has not identified it as a particular cause for concern. The academy's work with specialist leaders of education has helped to secure improvement to Year 11 student outcomes. In addition, it has helped leaders to identify ways to improve their use of information on students' progress.
- The academy's arrangements for safeguarding students are effective and meet statutory requirements.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is ineffective. Over time, governors have not held leaders successfully to account for the

achievement of all groups of students or for the quality of teaching. They do not have an accurate understanding of information about how well the academy is performing, including how well it performs in comparison to other schools.

- In the past, governors' involvement in the performance management of staff and leaders has not been robust enough. Although performance is linked to pay, the academy's inaccurate data on how well students are doing means underperforming teachers have previously received pay increases.
- Governors ensure that the academy's finances are managed appropriately. However, governors do not ensure that the pupil premium is used to good effect. Gaps between the achievement of students supported by this funding and others remain too wide.
- Governors ensure the systems for checking that students are kept safe and secure are good. Training for safeguarding students is up to date.
- Although a recent external governing body review has been undertaken and governors have agreed on new systems and training, this has not yet had any significant impact on improving the academy's performance.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- Some students show poor attitudes to learning and do not take care over their work. Students' workbooks are sometimes messy and for some, very little work is completed. This limits the usefulness of these books to help students to learn and revise for tests or examinations.
- Attendance has recently improved but is still below the national average in some year groups. Absence in Year 11 is too high and slows the progress of some students.
- Students are generally considerate and work together well around the academy and in lessons. They know how to keep themselves safe and are careful during practical lessons and when using equipment. In the arts in particular, students show a sensible maturity and can sustain their concentration on their work.
- Students told inspectors of their enjoyment of school and stated that they felt their lessons had recently improved. They say that poor behaviour rarely disrupts their learning and they appreciate new systems in place to reward their good behaviour.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions and serious behavioural incidents has reduced. The on-site 'inclusion school' provides good care and guidance for those students in need of additional support.
- The behaviour of students attending alternative provision is checked regularly. Alternative providers support the behaviour and well-being of those students well.

#### Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students say they feel safe and are well cared for.
- The academy site is well maintained. Students are safe around the academy and when attending courses at off-site alternative provision. Students' well-being and safety are given a high priority and checks on alternative provision are regular and robust. Attendance at alternative provision is closely monitored.
- The academy's arrangements to ensure students know about staying safe online and different forms of bullying are comprehensive. Incidents of bullying are reducing. Students praise the academy's system for dealing with any bullying that occurs. Students have confidence in staff to deal with any incidents.
- There are few concerns from parents, staff and students about safety in school. No complaints were received from any of these groups during the inspection.

### The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Weak teaching over time has led to students making inadequate progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 in a range of subjects, including mathematics and English. Disadvantaged students and boys in particular make too little progress due to the weak teaching they experience.
- Teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are too low. For example, inspectors saw work set for students in Year 8 which was too easy. The quantity and quality of work is often not sufficient to lead to fast enough progress. In turn, students, including the most able, are not encouraged to strive to attain higher standards.

- In some subjects, too little work is completed over the academic year. Some students told inspectors they were unclear where their previous work was or if they would get it back. Low expectations of the quality of work students are expected to produce are sometimes reflected in their lack of pride and care in their written presentation. The books of these students are often too messy to be helpful for revision for tests or examinations.
- Work is not well matched to the varying needs and abilities of groups of students. The assessments made of students' previous achievements are sometimes over-generous. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan appropriate work to challenge students to do better or to ensure that students have effective support. Some assessments show that students' achievement has fallen back. This is confusing for students. The challenge provided by teachers varies significantly and in many cases, a lack of challenge leads to slow progress.
- The quality of marking of students' work is inconsistent. Not all teachers follow the academy's agreed policies and procedures. Some work is unmarked and there are too many examples where marking does not provide useful advice. Students are unclear about how well they are doing and what to do to improve. This hinders their achievement.
- The teaching of basic literacy skills is not good enough to improve students' skills. Not all subject teachers reinforce core literacy skills to ensure students make effective progress; their skills remain too low as a result. Students are sometimes presented with resources that contain spelling and grammatical errors. Students are not consistently encouraged to answer questions in full sentences, to use capital letters where needed, or to correct spellings of key words such as 'algebra' or 'physics'. Revised programmes aimed at motivating boys to read are starting to have a positive impact. Boys' reading ages are now improving more quickly.
- As a result of more stable staffing, the teaching of mathematics is improving. Even so, mathematics teaching is not effective enough. Too many opportunities to develop students' numeracy skills in a wide range of subjects remain overlooked.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are being supported increasingly well to make better progress. More effective support, including from teaching assistants, ensures that students are clear about what they can do to improve.
- Teaching in the sixth form is better than seen in other key stages and is improving. Improved support, resources and planning from teachers challenge students to achieve more. However, teaching is not consistently good in vocational subjects. Assessments of students' learning are not always accurate. The work students are set therefore does not always match their needs.

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- By the end of Year 11, students, especially boys and disadvantaged students, underachieve in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, due to weak teaching.
- By the time they take their GCSE examinations, students are not achieving in line with national expectations. The proportion of students reaching a grade C or above is lower than the national average. The proportion attaining five or more GCSE grades between A\* to C, including in English and mathematics has declined and in 2014 was exceptionally low. This represents inadequate progress from students' broadly average starting points at the start of Year 7. Achievement in mathematics and English was particularly weak, with only a minority of students making the expected rate of progress.
- An analysis of students' work by inspectors as well as the academy's current data of students' achievement indicates highly variable and overall insufficient achievement across the academy. A large proportion of students are not making expected progress in English and mathematics across Key Stage 3, and many are working at levels below those expected by the end of Year 9 in several subjects. Although progress has accelerated in Years 7 and 11 this academic year as a result of improved teaching, in other year groups, progress, including in English and mathematics, remains too slow.
- Disadvantaged students underachieve. In 2014, by the end of Key Stage 4 in English, disadvantaged students were one GCSE grade behind other students in academy and one and two-thirds of a grade behind others nationally. In mathematics, they were one grade behind others in the academy and two grades behind others nationally. Overall, disadvantaged students' slower progress from their starting points means that achievement gaps are widening rather than closing.
- The achievement of boys is well-below average and below that of girls in the academy. There are significant differences between the progress of boys and girls in different subjects and year groups. Boys can be as much as a whole grade behind.
- The achievement of the most able students varies. Although they are now making better progress than

their peers, this is not consistent across all subjects and all year groups. The lack of challenge in the work students are set means that too few students reach the highest level of attainment of which they are capable.

- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make expected progress from their starting points. Provision matched to their specific needs helps them to close the gaps relative to their peers. A significant number have returned to classes with no further support as all of their needs have been met.
- Those students who attend alternative provision make good progress from their starting points and are provided with opportunities to achieve qualifications appropriate to their needs.
- Achievement in the sixth form is better than in the main academy as a result of better teaching. It is improving quickly. Even so, it still requires improvement. While many students achieve well in academic subjects, fewer do so in their vocational studies. In addition, a number of students do not do well enough in their first year of their A-Level courses and so do not continue to the second year.
- The academy does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.

### The sixth form provision

### requires improvement

- Attendance and recruitment into the sixth form have both improved. Students now receive improved advice and guidance about which courses to choose. This is helping to reduce the number of students who drop out of their courses during Year 12.
- Teaching in the sixth form is better than in the other key stages. Work seen shows students often receive good quality support and make good progress in academic subjects. However, their learning in vocational subjects is sometimes slower with too few making good progress.
- As there are very small numbers in the sixth form, comparisons with national averages in measuring students' achievements are not always helpful or reliable. There are variations in the success of students on different courses, but this is at least adequate on all courses.
- Leadership of the sixth form is stronger than in the main school and, as a result, the sixth form is steadily improving. However, it still requires improvement. Although significant improvements have been made, for example in matching students to courses and in the quality of teaching, there remains work to do. This includes, as in the rest of the academy, improving the accuracy of assessment and the predictions of students' achievement, and the quality of monitoring of progress.
- Students say they feel safe and value the steps taken by sixth-form leaders to promote their awareness of personal safety and well-being. They are well aware of how to keep safe and are clear about what to do should there be any safety issues. Students are polite, pleasant with one another and with adults. They typically behave well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139614
<b>Local authority</b>	Knowsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	453406

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	965
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	76
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 477 8830
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