

The Giles Academy

Church Lane, Old Leake, Boston, Lincolnshire PE22 9LD

Inspection dates

11–12 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not acted quickly enough to ensure that pupils' achievement improves. Attainment in mathematics and science has been below national averages for too long.
- Attendance remains below the national average. Leaders have helped some pupils to attend school more often, but far too many pupils still miss school.
- Not all teachers use the information available about pupils' current achievement to plan activities that take their learning forward.
Teachers do not always manage low-level disruption in some lessons well. This inconsistency means that pupils make slower progress than they could.
- Too many pupils are late to lessons. This is not being challenged consistently by staff.
- Not all teachers apply the school's policy to provide pupils with helpful guidance to improve their learning.
- Only recently have leaders and governors checked closely on how well pupils are doing throughout the school.
- In the sixth form, standards in academic subjects are too low.
Leaders' use of the pupil premium funding and the Year 7 catch-up funding for literacy and numeracy has not been effective enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is a harmonious community. Pupils are taught to respect one another and get on well together.
Teachers use their good subject knowledge to enthuse pupils in English and in design and technology. Assessment in these subjects is effective in promoting pupils' progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective support and make good progress.
Leaders have been effective in developing enrichment opportunities. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is increasingly successful at promoting community awareness.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
 - consistently follow the school’s policy to provide pupils with helpful guidance when marking their work, and ensure that pupils act on that advice
 - develop classroom routines that eradicate low-level disruption
 - consistently use information about pupils’ current achievement to set work at the right level to ensure that pupils make maximum progress.
- Improve pupils’ personal development and well-being by ensuring that:
 - leaders develop behaviour management systems that improve pupils’ behaviour and punctuality and reduce the number of exclusions
 - staff engage fully with parents over the importance of coming to school regularly to improve the attendance of all pupils, including those in the sixth form.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders and governors rigorously check the effectiveness of the school development plan in rapidly bringing about improved standards
 - information from the systems used to assess and check on pupils’ attainment and progress is accurate, helpful and timely, and is clear to pupils, staff and parents
 - leaders in the sixth form contribute fully to school improvement by rigorously checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in academic subjects.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school’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

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils' achievement has improved quickly enough. Not enough pupils have left the school well prepared for further education, employment or training.
- The school's assessment system is not fully used in all departments and is currently confusing. It does not allow leaders to have clear and accurate information about how well pupils are doing across the school.
- Planning for improvement is not well developed across the school. In some cases, plans lack focus. Objectives do not link clearly to improving pupils' standards.
- Some improvements in teaching, however, have taken place among middle leaders and some teachers have improved their practice through the 'teaching and learning communities' programme. Performance management is used effectively to reward those teachers whose practice is more effective.
- Leaders of the provision that supports the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not ensured that enough of these pupils receive effective support. These pupils do not achieve as highly as they should, especially in key stage 4.
- Leaders' review of the school's use of additional funding is not effective. They have not undertaken thorough reviews of the impact of the support provided for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who begin school with below-average levels of numeracy and literacy. Consequently, senior leaders have been unable to identify and resolve quickly enough those situations where pupils are not making rapid enough progress.
- The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced. Leaders have reviewed aspects of the school's provision and adjusted them, such as allocating more time for English and mathematics in key stage 3.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is made through the curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities and the school's assembly programme. Pupils understand the skills needed to be an effective member of the school community.
- A new programme of advice and guidance is supporting pupils to make informed decisions about their options about careers, education and training.
- Leaders have provided a well-thought-out extra-curricular programme to enable pupils to extend their experience beyond the subjects they study. Initiatives such as 'Giles Adventure' enable pupils to develop their understanding of themselves and the world around them, including cultural diversity.

Governance

- Until recently, the governing body had taken limited action to improve pupils' achievement. Newly appointed governors have the necessary skills to hold senior leaders to account. Governors now have a clear view of how they can be more effective in raising standards.

- Governors have been heavily involved in resolving key financial aspects of their role. As a result, minutes of meetings of the governing body show that not enough time has been spent on ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is improving.
- Governors are well trained in safeguarding and monitor the school's provision effectively, including through visits to check how well the arrangements are working.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured, through appropriate training, that staff have a good knowledge of the risks that pupils may face, including radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Relevant staff have been trained in all aspects of safer recruitment and checks on new staff and volunteers are rigorous. Staff work well with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils get the support they need when they are at risk.
- Pupils have wide-ranging opportunities to learn how to stay safe, both through the subjects they study and through assemblies. Pupils told inspectors that they regularly learn about how to stay safe online.
- Those pupils who inspectors met said they have staff they can go to if they have any concerns. They were confident that adults would listen to their concerns and take appropriate action.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers' use of the school's assessment system is inconsistent. For example, in one subject two different assessment systems are in use. It is difficult, therefore, for pupils to know precisely what they need to do to improve their work.
- Teachers do not use all the assessment information they have about pupils to ensure that the work is set at the right level. Too often, the work set for the most able pupils is not sufficiently challenging.
- In some lessons, disruptive behaviour prevents pupils from making the progress they should. Pupils from key stage 4 spoke of low-level disruption in some lessons that preventing them from learning. When observing lessons, inspectors saw some pupils engaging in off-task behaviour and low-level disruption.
- As expected by the school's policy, teachers' marking and feedback often give guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Not all teachers, however, apply the school's policy, provide useful guidance to pupils and insist they act on it.
- The support for pupils who join the school with low reading ages is improving. Pupils practise reading with an adult to help them improve their reading skills. Leaders, however, do not regularly check how well pupils are doing. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Where pupils make most progress, it is because teachers use their good subject knowledge and enthusiasm to engage pupils in their learning.

- Additional adults work well to support pupils in class. On one occasion during the inspection, it was difficult to distinguish between the teaching assistant and the teacher because they seamlessly worked together to support and challenge pupils.
- Pupils enjoy warm, positive and supportive relationships with their teachers. A calm and purposeful atmosphere prevails in many lessons. Inspectors saw a practical lesson in science, for example, where pupils made important decisions about their investigation with maturity and patience.
- The teaching of design and technology courses is particularly strong. In these subjects, teachers are effective in assessing pupils' work and setting tasks that match their ability and stage of learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe and are clear about how to stay safe online. They said that bullying occurs infrequently. They have confidence that the school deals with it effectively.
- The school's provision for careers education and guidance is effective. Pupils learn about different careers through the school's curriculum and assemblies. Leaders have held weekly drop-in sessions for parents so that they are better informed about their child's options in the future.
- Leaders have enabled all pupils to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils told inspectors that they valued this and other opportunities the school gives them to develop a range of skills.
- Pupils wear their school uniform with pride. They are respectful to each other and polite and welcoming to visitors. This helps to create a smart, litter-free school site.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' levels of concentration are not consistent. When teachers do not set work at the right level, their attention wanders and they create some low-level disruption.
- Attendance remains below the national average. Staff from the pastoral team have had some successes in reducing the absence rates of some disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent, however, is high.
- During the inspection, inspectors saw a small number of pupils who were late getting to their lessons. Some of these pupils told inspectors that they are often not challenged by teachers.

- The school takes an increasingly higher number of pupils from other local schools during the academic year. Despite the actions of leaders, too many of these pupils are excluded by the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The progress that pupils make varies too much between subjects because the quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- From their different starting points, pupils leaving Year 11 in 2016 did not make enough progress in either English or mathematics. This was especially true of middle-ability pupils.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are inconsistent. Teachers are aware of the needs of individual pupils, but leaders have not checked how well their support strategies are working. Not enough has been done to ensure that these pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making enough progress from their different starting points. In-class support is effective, but leaders do not regularly check on the impact of one-to-one interventions and small-group support for these pupils.
- The school's system for using information about pupils' achievement during the school year is not yet supporting faster progress for pupils across all subjects.
- Throughout the school, pupils' learning is showing signs of improvement and they are making faster progress. This is the case in English and in humanities subjects. Pupils achieve well in design and technology and in art and design because teaching in these subjects is more consistent.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in science have been below national averages. The school's own information and this inspection show some evidence of improvement.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the well-coordinated support they receive.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- In 2016, students' attainment and progress in vocational courses were in line with national averages. For academic subjects, however, their attainment and progress were below national averages. The school's own information indicates that these results will improve for 2017.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare in the sixth form is inconsistent. Students told inspectors how they value the careers advice and guidance to help them make appropriate choices after Year 13. Attendance in the sixth form, however, is not high enough. Too many students miss school and, as a result, they do not make as much progress as they should.

- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to enthuse students in lessons. Where teaching is weaker, guidance on how students can improve their work is not clear enough and they do not always follow it.
- Students know how to stay safe. They are taught about a wide range of topics including alcohol and drug awareness, e-safety and radicalisation. Students told inspectors that they can speak with staff if they have any concerns.
- Those students entering the sixth form without a GCSE grade A* to C in mathematics and English are supported well and achieve well when they resit examinations.
- Safeguarding is effective in the sixth form because teachers are vigilant and the school's systems are followed well.
- The school meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programme. Students are well informed about the world of work, including participating in work experience. They are also guided effectively through the process of choosing and applying to a university.

School details

Unique reference number	136282
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10031300

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 modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	994
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	125
Appropriate authority	The Giles Academy Trust
Chair	Stephen Robinson
Headteacher	Ian Widdows
Telephone number	01205 870 693
Website	www.gilesacademy.co.uk
Email address	admin@gilesacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 32 lessons, an assembly and tutor time. Some lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher or another senior leader. Inspectors listened to some pupils in key stage 3 read and talked with them about their reading experiences.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, middle leaders and members of the governing body, which is The Giles Academy Trust. Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including that related to safeguarding, achievement, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at the 36 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also analysed the school's own parental surveys.
- Inspectors analysed the 74 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their learning and safety.

Inspection team

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