

# Hans Price Academy

Marchfields Way, Weston-Super-Mare, BS23 3QP

## Inspection dates

11–12 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- As a result of the determination and motivation of all senior leaders in school, the academy council and the board of trustees, students have flourished in both their academic and personal development.
- Student achievement is good. The rate of progress made by students has increased considerably and gaps between different groups are closing up fast. The proportion of students who leave the academy well prepared for the next stage of their education has dramatically improved.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. It is improving rapidly as a result of high quality training and strong systems to hold the teachers to account for student progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and most create calm and purposeful learning environments.
- Students behave well. They are polite and courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors. Their attitudes to learning are typically good.
- Students are kept safe. Their attendance is improving and the rate of exclusions is declining.
- The board of trustees and the academy council support the school leaders in their efforts to ensure high quality teaching and improving academic standards.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. As a consequence, there are lessons where the students only make the expected progress.
- Not all lesson activities enable the students to learn on their own and select a range of different resources to support their work.
- The way in which some teachers ask questions does not always challenge students to think deeply and extend their learning.
- There is no consistency in the use of the homework policy across the academy.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons or part-sessions, of which 11 were joint observations with senior leaders. They also attended an assembly and a number of learning family tutorial groups.
- Meetings were held with academy leaders, staff, and groups of students from Years 7 to 10. Inspectors also met with representatives of the academy council and the executive principal of the academy.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including the academy's self-evaluation and development plans, records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance, and data on students' current attainment and progress.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 online responses to the Parent View questionnaire, one written comment from a parent, three comments made via Ofsted and a meeting held with one parent.
- Inspectors also looked at documentation relating to performance targets for staff, the school's monitoring of teaching and evidence of support for students identified as needing extra help.

## Inspection team

Lorna Brackstone, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Howe

Additional Inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Davison

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Hans Price Academy opened as an academy in May 2011. This followed the closure of its predecessor school, Wyvern Community School, which was judged to be satisfactory overall when it was last inspected by Ofsted.
- The academy is a smaller than average-sized secondary school and is part of the Cabot Learning Federation, which is sponsored by the University of the West of England and Rolls-Royce PLC. The federation consists of a group of five primary schools and six secondary academies who work together to share effective practice and leadership to accelerate school improvement. A board of trustees oversees the work of the academies which is led and coordinated by an executive principal.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students using English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who are disabled and those with special educational needs who are supported by school action is well above the national average.
- The proportion of students who are supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of students who are eligible for pupil premium, which is additional government funding for those students who are in the care of the local authority, are eligible for free school meals or come from service families, is well above the national average. A high proportion of Year 7 students are eligible for 'catch-up' funding.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision at Weston College.
- The academy meets the government floor targets standards, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The academy received a monitoring visit in June 2012 and was judged to be making good progress in raising standards.
- The inspection took place during a major project to build a new academy building due to be completed in spring 2014.
- The academy runs a breakfast club.

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

- Increase the amount of teaching that is good or better, so that all groups of students make better than expected progress, by ensuring that all teachers:
  - extend the opportunities for students to show initiative, gain confidence in researching information themselves, and develop their independence in using a range of resources to extend their learning
  - make better use of questioning to involve all students and deepen their understanding
  - review the homework policy and ensure that both teachers and students adhere to agreed procedures.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points in Year 7 that are well below the national average, the proportion of students making good progress compare favourably with national figures.
- The speed in which the 2012 Year 11 students and those currently in Year 11 have improved the standards of their work is impressive. In 2012, the proportion of students gaining five good quality GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, doubled and is set to continue to improve this year. This is a result of improvements in class teaching and extra sessions which have helped groups of students to improve specific skills and approach external examinations with greater confidence.
- Many of the students who start in Year 7 do not read as well as they should and their mathematical skills are underdeveloped. Extra help with the teaching of letter sounds and key mathematical skills is enabling them to catch up with national averages and speed up their progress.
- High quality support sessions in reading and mathematics have helped students in Years 7, 8 and 9 to improve their rates of progress and match or exceed the performance of Year 11 students in 2011 and 2012.
- The academy makes extremely effective use of the pupil premium funding to provide additional staff and intensive support to help students make progress. It also continuously checks and targets individual student progress. In the current Year 11 year group, those students who receive this funding have made slightly better progress than those who do not. This is a considerable improvement since 2012, when students who received pupil premium funding were working at about a year behind their peers.
- The gender gap between the achievement of boys and girls in English is steadily decreasing. Boys are now doing much better than they did previously because the academy has successfully encouraged them to read more widely and use the library regularly to support their work. Boys and girls do equally well in mathematics.
- The progress made by those students who use English as an additional language has improved significantly. In the current Year 11, all students have made good progress in English and mathematics and nearly all are working at a C grade or above at GCSE.
- The academy does not encourage entry into GCSE examinations before Year 11 and thus gives the students the best possible chance to gain the highest grades.
- Students who attend alternative provision at the local college for one day a week make good progress in their vocational skills. A few students who have specific special educational needs attend local authority centres, which provide specialist support to enable them to achieve at an appropriate level and enhance their behaviour for learning and social skills.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is not outstanding because some of the temporary teachers do not teach consistently good lessons. During the inspection, a few parents and a good number of students raised a concern about the temporary teachers who are providing cover until the start of the next academic year. Inspection findings confirm that in a few of these lessons, behaviour management is not good as those sessions taught by permanent staff. They do not always ask questions skilfully to promote deeper thinking and fail to promote independent learning and encourage students to use their initiative.
- Most teachers create a positive, calm and encouraging atmosphere in their classes and work hard at planning activities, which are supported well by resources that interest and engage the students. High quality display work is particularly effective in promoting a learning environment conducive to work.
- In the best lessons, teacher expectations of students are high and learning moves along at a

good pace. In these sessions, the way that students are encouraged to seek out their own resources to solve problems by themselves or with a partner helps them to consolidate their learning. In an outstanding information and communication technology session, Year 8 students were given high levels of challenge when they were required to produce their own charts and graphs. By sending electronic messages (blogging) to their class teacher to ask questions or by working in a group to solve a problem, there was a high level of independent learning.

- Subject knowledge is strong, lessons are well planned and the purpose of the session shared with the students. The highest quality learning takes place in lessons where the teachers use questioning effectively to stretch, individualise and encourage the students to use their initiative. In an outstanding mathematics lesson for Year 10 students, the high quality questioning and the way in which students led their own learning enabled them to make outstanding progress during the lesson.
- Most students know what level they are working at and understand what they need to do to improve their work. This is supported well in those subjects where teachers mark books regularly in considerable detail. By encouraging the students to respond to the comments made by the teacher, the positive working relationship promotes better learning and develops greater independence in learning.
- Well-trained teaching staff enable those students who have low levels of literacy skills to increase their knowledge of the sounds that letters make and to gain practice in reading aloud to an adult. Teachers make links in their teaching of mathematical concepts with everyday situations such as managing money, and this helps the students to develop better numeracy skills.
- Students who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are taught well and supported effectively in class with in-class support staff.
- A few parents and some students raised concerns about homework, highlighting a lack of consistency and a poor response from staff when it had been completed. Inspection findings agree that the homework policy is not used systematically to support all students' learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of students around the academy and in lessons is good. Students are polite and courteous to one another, to staff and to visitors.
- A significant strength of lessons is the good relationships between teachers and students and between different groups of students who support in each other in small-group and pair work.
- In most lessons students have very good, and sometimes, exemplary attitudes towards learning. However, behaviour is not outstanding because not all temporary teachers engage their students in lessons and when the pace slows, there can be some low-level disruption.
- Students from all year groups reported that incidents of bullying are rare and when reported to academy staff, issues are appropriately resolved. Racial incidents are rare and students report that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Students feel safe in the academy and although very few parents responded to the questionnaire, no serious concerns were raised with the inspection team.
- By using the additional government funding to employ counsellors and other professionals, vulnerable students have access to support to help them cope with emotional, social and behavioural issues.
- Students are made aware of the different forms of bullying and the harm involved with drug-taking and smoking. A group of students have successfully given up smoking following support provided by the academy.
- The academy's behaviour policy management policy, which focuses on rewarding positive actions and working with individuals to resolve disputes, has had a positive effect on behaviour

in and around the academy.

- The exclusion rate has dropped significantly and attendance rates continue to rise.
- Students who attend alternative provision are well supervised by the academy.

## **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The determined and highly motivated leaders and managers of Hans Price Academy ensure that all those who attend 'flourish in life', which contributes extremely well to the strong improvement of students' academic and personal development. The strong vision and clarity in the way in which the principal has rapidly forged forward making improvements is to be commended.
- The way in which academy leadership at all levels, including the executive principal of the Cabot Learning Federation and the academy council, have secured improvements in the quality of teaching is exemplary. This has been successfully achieved through the development by academy leaders of high quality training resources coupled with the provision of an exemplary programme of coaching and training. An observation of an impressive staff training session illustrated a strong professional commitment to improvement and provided an excellent role model for students. The rigours of the performance management systems have left no place to hide for weaker teaching and the secure link between successful student outcomes and salary progression ensures that only good practice is rewarded.
- The Cabot Learning Federation has provided training programmes of the highest quality for middle managers, such as subject and key stage leaders.
- The decision taken to release those staff who were not performing at an acceptable level and replace them temporarily with supply teachers was not taken without considerable thought from academy and federation leaders. The academy is fully aware of the concerns that parents and students have raised regarding the high proportion of temporary teachers. The academy's leaders have taken action to remedy this situation and appointed permanent members of staff who will begin at the start of the new academic term.
- By working closely and consistently together, the leaders of English and mathematics have secured considerable improvements in literacy and numeracy skills, the results of which are demonstrated by the good rates of progress in both Key Stages 3 and 4. This has been achieved by ensuring that the students who were at most risk of not doing so well have had access to the best teachers and extra sessions to boost their confidence and subject knowledge. Detailed systems to continually check progress are used relentlessly to make sure that the students progress at the fastest rate possible.
- The innovative way that subjects are taught in Year 7 is helping students to link what they learn in the academy with everyday life and use this in the next stage in their education. For example, 'Global Literacy' lessons, which have a specific focus on developing key skills, support the students well in their ability to use different ways to learn, helping them to develop an individual approach to their studies.
- Activities such as an 'international day', organising tea-parties with local senior citizens, involvement in enterprise projects and representing the academy as ambassadors at a range of events promote their spiritual, moral, and cultural development well. The way in which the students work out disputes amongst themselves through a 'restorative justice' programme has had a very positive impact on their social development.
- The pupil premium funding is used with skill and precision to improve student achievement and well-being. Achievement mentors are funded to coordinate extra sessions, such as revision classes and one-to-one tuition, and a careful check is kept on individual progress. A breakfast club is attended by nearly all students who are eligible for this additional funding, enabling them to feel nourished and ready for the academy day. The way in which every penny of the pupil premium funding is accounted for is exemplary.
- The academy works hard to engage the parents in its work and operates an 'open door policy' where they are welcome to come to share concerns at any time. As one parent commented, 'I

am very impressed with the academy ethos.....the staff are very welcoming and helpful.' The latest parental survey undertaken by the academy in April 2013 indicates a high level of satisfaction by parents.

- The way in which expertise and skills are shared across the Cabot Learning Federation is exceptionally impressive. It has given the academy an extremely high level of support which has helped it provide a good quality education and is continuing to improve at a fast rate.
- The level of support provided by Weston College, especially with the academy council, curriculum development and advice with the new building project, is exemplary.
- All safeguarding and child protection procedures are rigorous. Detailed records are maintained and kept up to date.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Academy councillors are strongly committed to the academy's success, have a detailed understanding of academy life and are very well trained. Councillors gain an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and the nature of what is being taught, as well as the quality of outcomes. They have clear policies for the management of staff pay. They understand the process by which effectiveness of teaching is measured and the links between this and teachers' pay. Members of the Cabot Learning Federation board of trustees, and in particular the executive principal, are extremely proactive in ensuring that performance management systems are robust, providing excellent support to senior leaders when difficult decisions need to be made. Working in partnership with the Cabot Learning Federation board of trustees, who oversee the financial management of all their academies, councillors at Hans Price Academy have a detailed understanding of how resources are used to raise standards and achievement. They are exceptionally clear about how extra government funding is used to support those students who are at risk of not doing as well as their peers. All their legal duties, including those around safeguarding, are carried out very effectively. Councillors consult students and parents regularly.
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## 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>	136708
<b>Local authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	399833

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	743
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peggy Tovey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Armando DiFinizio
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Nor previously inspected
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