

Montsaye Academy

Greening Road, Rothwell, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 6BB

Inspection dates

30 November – 1 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Key aspects of the school's performance have declined significantly since the last inspection, with the result that outcomes for pupils by the end of key stage 4 are inadequate.
- In the last two years, pupils' achievement has been inadequate in mathematics, science, modern foreign languages and humanities.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is particularly poor. In both of the last two years, disadvantaged pupils' achievement by the end of key stage 4 was weak across a range of subjects. Disadvantaged pupils continue to achieve far less well than they should.
- The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also inadequate. These pupils do not receive the support they need in lessons in order for them to achieve well.
- Boys achieve less well than girls.
- Leaders and managers of the school have proven incapable of tackling the decline in performance quickly enough.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Pupils experience far too much inconsistency in the teaching they receive. Their learning depends too much on the qualities of individual teachers. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching across the school have not been effective enough.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. While pupils behave well when they are taught well, where teaching is less effective, pupils' learning is hindered by low-level chatter. Teachers do not consistently enforce the school's behaviour policy.
- The sixth form requires improvement. While pupils who complete their A levels achieve well, achievement at AS level in Year 12 is not good enough. Last year, too many pupils failed some of their AS-level courses. This was particularly the case for boys.
- Neither the local governing body nor the trust have been effective in holding school leaders to account and ensuring that pupils receive the good quality of education they deserve.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel safe and receive good-quality pastoral support.
- Achievement in English has improved. Pupils in the school now make similar progress to other pupils nationally.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly increase the effectiveness of the leadership and management of teaching by ensuring that:
 - senior and middle leaders quickly and successfully tackle the weaknesses in teaching that they have identified
 - teachers implement, consistently, the school's policies with regard to teaching, learning and assessment and the management of pupils' behaviour
 - teachers are held fully to account for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - the link between the pay increases awarded to teachers and the achievement of their examination classes is strengthened
 - the training provided for teachers has a clear and demonstrable impact in improving the quality of teaching across the school and, consequently, outcomes for pupils
 - the monitoring of the curriculum is sufficiently strong to ensure that the new arrangements for mixed-ability teaching meet the needs of the most and least able pupils consistently well
 - strategies to improve the quality of pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar across the curriculum are embedded quickly and consistently
 - the quality of pupils' presentation of their work improves in the lessons where it is weak.
- Ensure that the funding the school receives to support disadvantaged pupils is used to raise their achievement rapidly.
- Urgently raise achievement in key stage 4, particularly in mathematics, science and humanities, by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently make effective use of assessment to plan learning which meets the needs of different groups of pupils, including pupils of all abilities
 - ensuring that teachers implement the school's marking and feedback policy consistently so that pupils have a secure understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work
 - tackling weaker aspects of teaching quickly so that pupils receive the consistently good teaching they need to catch up
 - equipping middle leaders with the skills necessary to bring about the improvements needed in their subject departments more quickly.

- Improve outcomes for students in Year 12, particularly boys.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of pupils' behaviour by ensuring that teachers implement the school's behaviour policy consistently and that incidents of low-level disruptive behaviour are eradicated.
- Increase the effectiveness of the governance of the school by ensuring that members of the local governing body and trustees have sufficient oversight of the school's performance and hold leaders to account effectively.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, key aspects of the school's performance have declined significantly. Leaders and managers have proved to be ineffective in arresting this decline and bringing about the rapid improvements needed.
- Senior staff have failed to ensure that their good intentions and high aspirations for pupils are reflected in the day-to-day teaching and the behaviour the pupils experience. As a result, in the last two years, pupils have underachieved in their GCSE examination classes in mathematics, science, humanities and modern foreign languages. Pupils' achievement in design and technology was poor last year, apart from in food technology.
- The school's arrangements for the performance management of staff have proved to be ineffective in securing the improvements needed. The link between the pay increases awarded to teachers and the performance of their examination classes is not strong enough. As a result, most teachers progress through the pay scale despite pupils in Year 11 achieving poorly.
- Strategies to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils are not effective enough. In 2015/16, the school received an additional £211,000 of funding through the pupil premium. Despite this, the disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 made progress in line with the bottom 10% of all pupils nationally this year.
- The school has commissioned two reviews of its use of the pupil premium. The most recent review, in May 2016, identified a range of appropriate strategies to help raise the achievement of this group. While the school has implemented many of the approaches recommended, the quality of teaching that disadvantaged pupils receive is still not consistently good enough to ensure that their achievement improves quickly to match that of other pupils nationally. A further review is scheduled to take place this term.
- While the school's 11 to 16 curriculum is broad and balanced, it has not proved to be effective in rapidly raising achievement. Strategies to secure high standards of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum are not well embedded. This year, the school introduced mixed-ability teaching across a wide range of subjects. Weaknesses in this provision have led to the least able pupils not receiving consistently the support they need and the most able pupils not being challenged sufficiently well. Most of the pupils that inspectors spoke with said that they did not like this change. A number of parents who contacted inspectors were also critical of the effect this approach was having on their children's learning.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has proved ineffective in ensuring that these pupils make adequate progress. No coherent strategy is in place to ensure that the training teachers receive is resulting in teaching which consistently meets the needs of pupils who require extra help.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback is too variable and does not follow the school's policy. While some excellent examples were seen of pupils making good use of

'target time' to improve their work, for example in geography and in English, some of the marking in mathematics and science shows that not all teachers adhere to the school's marking and assessment policy.

- While some parents are highly supportive of the school, others are not. Of the 81 parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, over one third indicated that they would not recommend the school to other parents. A similar proportion indicated that they did not have confidence in the leadership and management of the school, the school's management of pupils' behaviour or the quality of teaching. Outcomes from the school's own surveys of parents' views are more positive.
- There are some skilled middle leaders in the school, for example in English and mathematics. Good leadership in English has remedied the inadequate achievement seen in 2015 and there are some signs of improvement in mathematics. However, the school's recent allocation of increased time for middle leaders has not had time to have the impact needed to improve teaching and raise achievement in all curriculum areas, including in mathematics.
- Leaders have made good use of additional funding to support the Year 7 pupils who need extra help to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. A good range of strategies, involving parents, has resulted in good gains in these pupils' reading and numeracy skills.
- Good improvements to the management of assessment information mean that leaders have a much clearer understanding of how well pupils are achieving than at the time of the last inspection. This has not yet resulted in the significant improvements in achievement needed, however.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including in sports and the arts. They have a growing understanding of fundamental British values through activities such as the mock referendum the school ran at the time of the EU referendum.
- Inspectors recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers at this time.

Governance of the school

- Governors acknowledge that the school's performance is inadequate. They recognise that they have proved to be ineffective so far in holding school leaders to account for the quality of education pupils receive.
- Until recently, members of the local governing body did not have the skills necessary to carry out their roles effectively. Their understanding of performance information has not been strong enough to challenge the school's poor performance. Governors have been over-reliant on the additional expertise provided by the trust.
- In light of this, the governors recently commissioned an external review of the effectiveness of the school's governance arrangements. The findings have yet to be published.
- Leaders from the trust acknowledge that they too have been slow in bringing about the improvements needed. A range of external support is now in place to support the

school in subjects where improvements are needed most urgently. It is too soon to see the difference this is making.

- Nevertheless, the trust's capacity to support and challenge the school has become stronger as a result of clear leadership by the chair of the trust, supported by knowledgeable trustees, including a highly skilled and effective executive headteacher of two of the primary schools within the trust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's policies and procedures fully meet statutory requirements. Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training and log this carefully to ensure that all staff know exactly what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. Senior staff have ensured that all staff understand recent changes to statutory guidance. Leaders make good use of external services to support pupils who are potentially vulnerable to harm. They follow up referrals to social care tenaciously to ensure that timely and appropriate action is taken to protect children at risk.
- Leaders use their knowledge of potential local risks to pupils' well-being effectively to ensure that pupils understand how to stay safe. They are alert to the risks associated with political extremism and take appropriate action if ever a pupil exhibits potentially extremist views. Similarly good provision is in place to protect pupils from child sexual exploitation.
- Good support is provided to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe, including those who have experienced bullying out of school through social media. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils who receive part of their education elsewhere attend well and are protected from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable to remedy pupils' underachievement quickly enough. Leaders recognise that significant weaknesses in teaching remain, and that they have not been effective in remedying all but the very weakest teaching. Their very recent review of teaching in science, for example, highlighted accurately some of the key weaknesses in the quality of science teaching. However, the weaknesses identified have yet to be tackled effectively.
- While there is undoubtedly some strong teaching in the school, for example in English, in too many lessons, teachers focus unduly on delivering the content they have planned rather than ensuring that all of the pupils have understood before moving on to the next task.
- The work in pupils' books shows that the least able pupils often fail to complete the work they have been set. Their standards of presentation are poor because not all teachers ensure that pupils adhere to the school's expectations with regard to underlining titles or completing diagrams using a pencil and a ruler, for example.
- Teachers have not been equipped with the skills necessary to meet the differing needs of the pupils they teach, particularly in the mixed-ability classes. In discussions, the most able pupils said that the changes made to the curriculum mean that they are not regularly challenged enough and that behaviour in their lessons has also deteriorated.

The least able pupils said they felt ignored in some of their lessons, one commenting that 'the stars dominate the lesson and I get left behind'.

- Similarly, in mathematics and science, which are taught in ability groups, teaching does not routinely meet the needs of the whole class. The most able pupils who met with inspectors said that their teaching in mathematics is not challenging enough. While the school has revised the mathematics curriculum to improve pupils' mastery of the subject, the most able pupils perceive that too much time is spent going over work they find easy and have understood already.
- Teachers aspire for their pupils to achieve well. Too often, however, they do not put the necessary building blocks in place to enable pupils to enjoy success.

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 receive appropriate careers guidance and benefit from one-to-one interviews with a careers specialist in Year 11.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were complimentary about the pastoral care they receive. They know whom to turn to if they have any worries and say that bullying has reduced significantly in the last two years. Inspectors' analysis of the school's records confirms this.
- The pupils know how to keep themselves safe from risks associated with social media and the misuse of technology.
- Pupils are respectful of differences with regard to ethnicity, sexual orientation or religions. In discussions, pupils agreed that 'it is safe to be different at Montsaye Academy'.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values, including the values of tolerance, freedom of speech and democracy.
- Pupils' attendance overall has improved and is in line with the national average. Leaders and managers know that continued work is needed to build on the improved attendance seen among disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils welcome visitors to the school responsibly and politely. During the inspection, pupils routinely held doors open for inspectors or stepped aside to allow inspectors to pass in the corridor.
- Pupils who need extra support to ensure their well-being receive good-quality pastoral care.
- The school's effective use of alternative provision contributes well to the behaviour, attendance and personal development of the pupils who receive some of their education elsewhere.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- Although in many lessons pupils behave well, this is not always the case. In discussions, pupils said that their learning is sometimes affected by pupils chatting, not getting on with their work or being silly.
- Teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils say that, on occasion, pupils receive warning after warning to little effect. Some of the Year 10 pupils who met with inspectors said they thought the school's revised behaviour system was no longer in use. This is not the case, but reflects the inconsistency with which it is applied. Almost all of the pupils who met with inspectors said that the behaviour policy is not adhered to in some of their lessons. The Year 12 pupils inspectors met with said that variable behaviour in their Year 11 classes had affected their learning last year.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well around the school, though are occasionally too boisterous as they move from lesson to lesson and at lunchtimes.
- The school's work to improve the behaviour of pupils who find it particularly difficult to behave well is well-considered and effective. It reflects leaders' aspirations that the school is inclusive and that 'no one should be turned away'. As a result, the proportion of fixed-term exclusions has reduced significantly and is in line with national figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' achievement by the end of key stage 4 has been inadequate for the last two years. While attainment in mathematics has risen, in 2016, pupils' progress in mathematics corresponded to the bottom 10% of all schools nationally. The gap in attainment between the most able pupils in the school and their counterparts nationally equated to over half a GCSE grade. This was also the case for the least able pupils.
- Pupils' achievements were also significantly below average last year in science, modern foreign languages and humanities. This is a similar picture to the year before. In addition, progress across a range of design and technology subjects was inadequate in 2016.
- Pupils' attainment was low in business studies, child development and drama.
- Boys made more progress by the end of Year 11 than in the previous year, but their achievement remained significantly lower than expected.
- Disadvantaged pupils have achieved poorly by the end of Year 11 for the past two years. In this summer's examinations, for example, their achievement was in the bottom 10% compared to pupils' achievement nationally across their best eight subjects. Disadvantaged pupils with high, middle and low starting points all made significantly less progress than expected. Disadvantaged pupils made inadequate progress in mathematics, science, humanities and modern foreign languages.
- While the school's data shows that outcomes are beginning to improve, particularly in key stage 3, the improvements being secured are not rapid enough to eradicate past underachievement. For example, pupils studying GCSEs in core and additional science are still not doing well enough and disadvantaged pupils continue to make less progress than other pupils.
- Pupils' achievement in English has improved and this year was in line with expectations, having previously been inadequate. As a result, attainment in GCSE

English language and GCSE English literature improved dramatically. Nevertheless, the 23 disadvantaged pupils with typical starting points significantly underachieved. Published performance information, together with first-hand inspection evidence, indicates strongly that the pace of improvement to the quality of teaching in English is not being matched in mathematics or science.

- The proportion of pupils who attained a grade C or above in both GCSE English and mathematics rose considerably in 2016, though it was still too low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils attained well in food technology, media studies and music.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- While all aspects of provision are better in the sixth form than in the main school, the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes requires improvement.
- Pass rates at AS level were too low last year, with only around three quarters of entries securing a pass at grades A to E. The pass rate for boys fell to 60% of entries, compared to almost 80% the year before.
- While some students leave at the end of Year 12 as part of their planned progression to apprenticeships, student retention rates from Year 12 to Year 13 are too low. In some subjects, there is too much variation in students' achievement between the different components of their courses.
- The quality of teaching is better in the sixth form than in the main school. On the whole, students benefit from the personalised teaching they receive due to the small class sizes. This impedes their breadth of learning experiences, however, where classes are particularly small.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge makes a good contribution to students' achievements by the end of their A level studies. The students who progressed to Year 13 last year made consistently good progress. An increasing proportion of students progress to university, including Russell Group universities. This includes students from disadvantaged backgrounds. All students who leave the sixth form progress to further or higher education or employment.
- Students are generally positive about the quality of teaching they receive, though some Year 13 students raised concerns about how well they are being prepared for examinations. They judge that time is sometimes wasted in lessons on unchallenging activities, with the result that they are left to tackle more difficult concepts independently. The Year 12 students who met with inspectors spoke extremely positively about the quality of education provided in the sixth form.
- Students who are retaking GCSEs in English make good progress. While progress in GCSE mathematics is less strong, more students improve their grades than seen nationally.
- Students benefit from a strong programme to develop their wider personal and employability skills. All students participate in community service, for example, by mentoring younger pupils, supporting lower-attaining readers or by helping out in local primary schools.
- Students receive impartial careers advice and guidance. The school ensures that

students are well informed about opportunities for sixth-form study elsewhere and provide good support for students whose learning needs and personal aspirations would be better served by different providers. Students are well supported in preparation for the next stages of their education or employment, including, where appropriate, in their applications to Oxbridge.

- The leader of the sixth form is highly respected by sixth-form students. The students know that their attendance, punctuality and attitudes to learning are monitored very closely by the sixth-form leader, with support from the sixth-form receptionist. 'They are like a shadow over your shoulder,' said one student. Nevertheless, sixth-form leaders do not monitor the quality of sixth-form teaching to ensure that the progress information they are given by staff is always accurate.
- Sixth-form students are well aware of the changing nature of the potential risks to their safety and well-being as young adults. They have high regard for the school's personal, social and health education programme, which ensures that they know how to stay safe from harm.

School details

Unique reference number	137049
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10009830

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 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,061
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Emery
Headteacher	Jason Cumming
Telephone number	01536 418844
Website	www.montsaye.northants.sch.uk
Email address	head@montsaye.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 April 2013

Information about this school

- Montsaye Academy was formed in 2011 as a converter academy. It is part of the Montsaye Community Learning Partnership. However, the responsible body is the local governing body.
- A new headteacher was appointed in June 2014.
- The school is slightly larger than average. It serves the communities of Rothwell, Desborough and surrounding villages in Northamptonshire.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is very low. There are more boys than girls.

- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan.
- The school uses two providers of alternative education for a very small number of pupils. These are the Enterprise Education Foundation and Rockingham Speedway.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. Current unvalidated performance information indicates that the school is likely to meet the government's floor standard in 2016.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the content of the curriculum on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the content of the curriculum. Information is not provided in all subjects about the content of the curriculum for each year group.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in visits to 39 lessons. They were accompanied by members of the school's leadership team during the lesson observations on the first day of the inspection. In the lessons, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to individual pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the school's senior leadership team and also met with middle leaders and other teachers. Inspectors met with members of the local governing body, including the chair and representatives of the Montsaye Community Learning Partnership. The lead inspector also spoke by telephone with a consultant employed by the trust to monitor and support the school's work.
- Inspectors held formal meetings with a wide range of pupils and spoke to pupils informally at other times during the inspection. They listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a wide range of other information. They looked at a range of the school's policies and scrutinised the school's child protection arrangements. Inspectors considered the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and evaluated pupils' academic performance over time and the school's current performance information. Other documents they reviewed included the school's recent review of science provision, information about the school's performance management arrangements and the findings of external reviews of the school's use of the pupil premium.
- Inspectors spoke by telephone with the providers of alternative provision used by the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of 81 parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, together with comments parents made through the Ofsted free-text service.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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