

# Landau Forte Academy Tamworth Sixth Form

16–19 Academy

**Inspection dates**

8–10 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good across subjects or curriculum areas to ensure that students make the progress of which they are capable.
- A significant minority of teachers do not accurately judge students' progress towards their target grades.
- Too many students do not develop their mathematics skills well enough to support progression to higher levels of study or employment.
- Not enough students have planned, relevant work experience to ensure that they understand the expectations of employers.
- Quality improvement arrangements do not cover all aspects of the students' experience and improvement plans lack clear interim success measures.
- Governors do not have sufficient knowledge about teaching, learning and assessment or about study programmes to be able to support and challenge leaders to the necessary level.

### The provider has the following strengths

- The new leadership team has successfully developed a culture of high expectations and a clear focus on driving improvement.
- Leaders have a very clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the provision.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in many subjects.
- Students develop mature attitudes to independent learning in the high-quality well-resourced learning environment.
- Students' progression to their next steps is very high.
- Students' behaviour is very good, and they are enthusiastic to learn.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Tamworth Sixth Form opened in 2011 and it is part of the Landau Forte group of academies. It serves Tamworth and the surrounding area. The local area has six secondary schools, only one of which has a sixth form. Other local post-16 provision includes a general further education campus that offers a range of vocational programmes.
- The proportion of Tamworth pupils gaining at least five GCSEs at grade A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is lower than the national rate. Overall, fewer individuals are qualified beyond level 2 than is the case regionally or nationally. This area has lower than average unemployment, but wages are lower. A higher proportion of work is part time and fewer people have professional and managerial roles. The population has a very low proportion of minority ethnic residents.

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

- Improve the accuracy of in-year assessment so that teachers and managers consistently identify those students at risk of not achieving or making good progress, and focus their interventions appropriately.
- Increase students' participation in relevant work experience, enrichment activities and tutorials by emphasising the importance of these aspects of the study programme.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in those subjects where students do not make the progress of which they are capable by establishing an effective process to enable teachers to share and learn from the existing good practice.
- Improve the development of students' mathematics skills so that all students develop appropriate and relevant numeracy skills, and more students achieve high grades in qualifications.
- Extend the existing quality improvement arrangements to cover all aspects of the students' experience. Ensure that action planning includes clear interim success measures to enable managers to judge progress and the impact they have made on improving the provision.
- Ensure that governors have the expertise and information they need to be able to support and challenge leaders more fully to improve students' progress and success.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The new leadership team has rapidly introduced a culture of high aspirations and a strong and effective focus on students' professional behaviours. Staff provide very good role models for students. The principal, chief executive and new senior leadership team, many of whom have only been in post since August 2016, have high aspirations for students and for the academy. They have a good understanding of the key areas for improvement and have begun to implement actions to rectify the underlying weaknesses.
- Teachers overestimated their predictions for students' examination results in 2015/16 and the final results were not as good as expected by the leadership team or governors. The new leadership team has introduced a range of actions to improve students' progress and to monitor it more accurately alongside measures to improve the accuracy of teachers' predicted results. Managers have analysed effectively the reasons for students' low achievement in A-level examinations. They have implemented an action plan to drive the required improvements, but targets are not specific enough to enable managers to evaluate what progress they are making. Actions are not sufficiently prioritised. This has resulted in too many being pursued simultaneously, therefore hindering progress.
- Leaders have the full support of governors and staff, and second-year students welcome the recent changes. There are early signs of improvement in students' satisfaction. Fewer students left without completing their qualifications last year. However, many of these interventions are very recent, and it is too early to be sure of their full impact on students' progress.
- Leaders have worked assiduously and effectively to improve working relationships with local schools. Strong partnerships are developing with secondary schools and the local further education college. Progression routes from the schools are clear. Leaders and managers are increasingly engaging with local industry to secure work-related experience, which has already benefited students on several vocational study programmes.
- Performance management is rigorous. Leaders and managers are committed to improving teaching, learning and assessment, and many actions are being implemented effectively across many fronts. Because of this much greater focus on teaching and the performance of teachers, a number have left the academy. Intensive support has enabled others to improve their skills and meet the academy's expectations. However, although staff are accountable for their subject or curriculum area, there are few measurable targets and milestones other than students' achievement rates to enable managers to monitor performance.
- Self-assessment is highly critical and identifies the key areas for improvement accurately. Curriculum managers are aware of these areas but were not fully involved in the self-assessment process. Managers do not evaluate all aspects of the students' experience such as the quality and impact of work experience and the effectiveness of induction.

- Leaders and managers have a strong focus on developing students' English and mathematics skills. The time allocated for students to study for GCSE mathematics or English resits has been increased, and new teachers have been appointed. Both of these initiatives are beginning to enable the improvement of students' skills. Managers expect teachers to embed English and mathematics in vocational lessons, but not enough is yet being done to enhance the specific higher-level skills of students.
- Students demonstrate high levels of tolerance and respect. They work well together and with teachers. The promotion of students' understanding of British values is evident through tutorials and the wider academy culture. However, the students' voice group has not been elected democratically, and students are not sure about their roles and responsibilities.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors understand well their responsibilities and those of the overarching academy trust. The governing body's membership has been revised and new industry and parent governors have joined. Governors' roles are evolving and now include a board member with overall responsibility for safeguarding. Governors have developed positive working relationships with the academy leaders and increasingly challenge leaders and managers on their performance. For example, they have requested a detailed report and action plan in relation to the 2015/16 examination results.
- There has been no formal audit of expertise on the board. There is no external educational expertise and no staff or student representative. Most governor training is provided by the academy's or the trust's staff. Governors believe their training to be thorough and effective, and much better than in previous years. However, governors still do not have a good enough understanding of the specific requirements of study programmes. This makes it more difficult for them to challenge leaders effectively to ensure that they are meeting these requirements.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff recruitment practices meet statutory requirements. The safeguarding team is enthusiastic and diligent, and members are highly visible around the academy. They have a strong focus on helping students to recognise issues and risks, challenging assumptions and perceptions. They have good links with local safeguarding groups. Referrals of any concerns are well managed. Academy managers act effectively to promote the health and safety of students on campus and while on visits and work placements.
- Leaders have responded effectively to the 'Prevent' duty. Staff and governors have been trained appropriately, including through workshops to raise awareness of 'Prevent'. Safeguarding is a regular item in the tutorial programme and the scheduled student 'gatherings', which ensures that students have regular opportunities to develop their understanding.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across all subject or curriculum areas. Students do not make sufficiently rapid progress in weaker curriculum areas. Teachers do not set work that challenges them enough based on their individual starting points or prior learning, or the results of initial literacy and numeracy assessments. In a few subjects, rapid staff turnover resulted in students not attending well enough. Leaders have resolved most of these staffing difficulties. However, students now in their second year of study have not yet made up for the slow progress in their first year to ensure that they will achieve at the end of the course.
- Teachers assess students' knowledge and understanding frequently to ensure that they are making at least expected progress. Managers regularly and frequently monitor the results of these assessments and know which students make good progress and which need extra support. However in-year assessment of students' performance and predictions for outcomes based on external assessment have not always been accurate or reliable. This means that staff interventions have not routinely and systematically been directed at the students most in need of help.
- In too many vocational lessons, students lose focus on learning because they find the work unimaginative or overreliant on internet searches based on specifications for the qualification. Teachers do not sufficiently link theory and practice in these lessons. As a result, the learning is quite slow or low-level and students are not challenged to develop analytical or evaluative skills.
- In subjects where students do not make good progress, teachers do not set sufficiently detailed or precise targets to enable them to improve. For example in mathematics, students are set targets to improve accuracy and increase speed without reference to what they need to do to support this improvement or how they will measure their success. Teachers in other subjects do not routinely help to develop or reinforce students' mathematical skills well enough.
- In contrast, teachers develop students' technical language well. In some subjects they provide support in relation to writing conclusions and the use of punctuation.
- Students have the opportunity to undertake a wide variety of enrichment activities including trips, visits and competitions. For those students who participate, these activities strengthen their applications for university, jobs and apprenticeships but only around two thirds took part in 2015/16. The 'Sixth form select' initiative supports a small group of students to develop the academic reading and writing skills needed to gain entry to the most competitive universities. For students on academic programmes, work experience frequently equates to existing part-time work, which is not organised by the academy and is not linked sufficiently to their study programme or career aspirations, although students are given the opportunity to monitor their experience through a diary.
- Around two thirds of the students following a vocational study programme took part in relevant, planned, external work experience last year in sectors which reflect the priorities of the local enterprise partnership. The rest took part in work-related activities relevant to their vocational area. For example, sport students organised an event with the Football Association, media students were involved in a commercial filming project at Tamworth Castle and information technology students developed a professional standard website.

- In English, history, politics, sociology and media studies, teachers use learning activities, which develop well analytical and evaluative skills and enable students to write complex text using appropriate technical terms. For example in English, groups of students identified and challenged theories on the key themes in 'The handmaid's tale'. In politics, students worked in small groups to decide on whether the concept of individual ministerial responsibility still existed. Students were given real examples of ministerial actions and had to decide whether these examples supported one side of the argument or the other, and then justify their decision. The most sophisticated responses included drawing on the knowledge of collective responsibility, which was an example of previous learning. In a physics lesson, students evaluated their learning before and after each learning activity and were given a range of graded challenges that were open to all.
- Feedback to students is detailed and helpful, particularly in English, psychology and sociology. Students reflect on feedback and adapt their future responses so that they improve.
- The high-quality and well-resourced learning environment is enhanced by appropriate and stimulating displays, which reinforce learning and help to motivate students.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

- Students have very positive attitudes to learning and are confident, polite and very well behaved both in lessons and in their own study time. They quickly apply themselves to work in lessons and maintain good focus on the tasks they have been given. They are enthusiastic to learn and progress to their next steps. Where teachers include group work in lessons, students develop good teamworking and communication skills, testing each other on their understanding of topics or concepts. They use their free time well in the well-equipped study areas to complete their work.
- The majority of students are very positive about their courses and the support they receive from their teachers in order to complete assignments. They demonstrate a good standard of theoretical understanding on academic study programmes. Advice and guidance for those applying to higher education are helpful and informative.
- Students have a high level of safety awareness and know how to report any concerns. They understand how to recognise and report issues or potential concerns about radicalisation, extremism, forms of abuse and bullying. They have a basic understanding of how to keep themselves safe online, including when using social media.
- Students' understanding of equality and diversity is developed well through the group tutorial programme and in subjects, which readily provide naturally occurring opportunities for discussion, such as psychology and English. In other subjects, teachers are expected to refer to the importance of equality in all their lessons, with the result that students become aware of the effects of stereotyping in daily lives, particularly around gender and race.

- In vocational areas, students have good links to the workplace. For example, students studying performing arts have been commissioned to devise a dance to perform at the local town Christmas lighting event, which needs to be completed to a professional standard and to meet deadlines. Students enjoy wearing business dress in preparation for work. Many students take up part-time jobs or volunteering activities as part of their enrichment programme. These students develop useful communication and time management skills, and an understanding of the demands of work. However, too few students following an academic study programme have planned work experience or employer-based learning opportunities to extend their employability skills further and that link to their career aspirations.
- Group tutorials are well planned and cover important topics such as study skills, safeguarding, equality and diversity, and British values, but until very recently attendance has been optional. Few students value the sessions. Attendance at these sessions is below the academy target and lower than in other lessons.

### Outcomes for learners

### Requires improvement

- Despite significant improvements since the previous inspection in the progress students make, there are still too many students who do not achieve the grade they are capable of based on their prior achievements or starting points. Not enough students who need to retake a GCSE in mathematics achieve a grade C or above. In vocational subjects, students do not develop high-level analytical or evaluative skills as well as students who follow academic programmes. As a result, they are not as well equipped to progress to higher levels of study.
- Standards of written work are too variable across subjects and do not always ensure that students will achieve their target grades in external examinations. Students make too many mistakes in their written work that are not consistently corrected or highlighted by teachers. Students often rely on spell-checking software that uses American English spellings so that they are not aware of the differences between American and English variants.
- Many more students remain on course at the end of their first year of study and continue into their second year than was the case in 2014/15. The proportion of students who complete their course is now high. Students on most vocational programmes made at least the progress and achieved the grades expected of them in 2015/16.
- Most students enjoy their learning and are well prepared for their next steps. Progression to higher education, apprenticeships or employment is very high.
- Students produce work of a good standard in art, dance and applied computer science. They develop and demonstrate good analytical and evaluative skills in English, history, politics, photography and media, and demonstrate and consolidate good knowledge and understanding in performance and dance.
- Students with additional needs achieve at least as well as their peers and there are no significant achievement gaps between other groups.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	141491
Type of provider	16–19 academy
Age range of learners	16–19
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	560
Principal	Greg Williams
Telephone number	01827 301 820
Website	<a href="http://www.lfatsf.org.uk">www.lfatsf.org.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	-	-	14	-	526	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of sixth form, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

## Inspection team

Nick Gadfield, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bryan Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Ward	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Gay	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Deane	Ofsted Inspector

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