

The Pingle School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112995
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378628
Inspection dates	29–30 May 2012
Lead inspector	Robert Barbour HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1191
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon Rhind
Headteacher	Bryan Carr
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
School address	Coronation Street Swadlincote DE11 0QA
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ann Behan

Additional Inspector

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This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 45 lessons taught by 44 different teachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle managers, members of the governing body and groups of students. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, and minutes of the meetings held by the governing body. In addition, inspectors analysed 116 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and questionnaires completed by students and staff.

Information about the school

The Pingle School is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is low. The school exceeds the current floor standards which are the government's minimum expectation for attainment and progress. The school has two specially resourced provisions for students with special educational needs. These are Enhanced Resource Facilities, one unit with 24 students with complex learning needs and one with four students with autistic spectrum disorders.

The school has National Healthy Schools Status, the International School Award and the Investors in People Award. The headteacher took up his post in September 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the achievement of students and the quality of teaching.
- The school is not satisfactory because the progress that students make from Year 7 through to Year 11 is too slow. In particular, they are not making enough progress in English and in mathematics. However, students in the specialist units make satisfactory progress as a result of sound provision.
- Teaching is beginning to improve but has weaknesses in too many lessons. Some teachers talk for too long so students become disengaged. Some activities that teachers use are not well matched to the abilities of students. There is some good and outstanding teaching, but not enough high-quality teaching to move the achievement of students forward sufficiently.
- Students behave appropriately around the school, and the school’s behaviour management policy is generally effective in maintaining sound learning conditions in lessons. Very occasionally, low-level disruption occurs. School records show that behaviour has improved significantly since September 2011 and students have satisfactory attitudes to learning.
- Since taking up his appointment, the headteacher has provided a vision of high-quality learning and has empowered the school’s senior and middle managers to become more effective. The management of staff performance has improved. It is robust and is leading to better teaching. The school promotes students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Data on students’ performance is now collected, disseminated and used actively. However the use of data to target students requiring additional support is at an

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early stage and is not yet helping drive up standards. Middle managers have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in their departments, but not all are leading sufficiently rapid improvement.

- The sixth form is satisfactory. Students make the progress that would be expected due to teaching that is satisfactory, and their behaviour is good. They receive good support as they plan for higher education or alternative routes and have a wide range of curriculum opportunities available to them.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, especially in English and mathematics, so that students make at least expected progress by
 - using performance data to identify students whose performance is falling below expectations
 - carrying out timely intervention to support those students.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that by May 2013
 - all teaching is at least satisfactory and a substantial proportion is good or better
 - teachers make greater use of tasks that actively involve students in their learning and are well-matched to their ability.
- Further reduce low-level disruption by ensuring the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently.
- Develop the effectiveness of middle managers as leaders of learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

When students enter the school their attainment in most year groups is average, although in some year groups it is below average. Boys and girls of all abilities make insufficient progress and by Year 11 attainment is below average. In the 2011 GCSE results students demonstrated insufficient progress in English, and in mathematics their progress was very much lower than expected. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make inadequate progress. However, students whose main education takes place in the specialist units make satisfactory progress. In the sixth form students make satisfactory progress; students enjoy their work, know their target grades and say that they know what they need to do to achieve these.

In too many lessons students are restless and easily distracted. This is particularly so when they are not engaged by their work or the teacher is talking for too long.

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However, in lessons where they are actively engaged in interesting tasks, students show enthusiasm and work hard. Year 10 students described their enthusiasm for history and the opportunities they are given to work independently. Year 10 students also described the enjoyment they gained from acquiring new skills in construction and, in a lesson observed during the inspection, they made rapid progress in these skills and used subject-specific vocabulary well. Students enjoy practical work, for example in science and art. However in a number of mathematics lessons there were too few opportunities for students to apply their mathematical skills through a range of tasks and students were not sufficiently engaged in learning.

A small number of students start at the school with weak reading skills. They receive additional support and are making good progress using strategies that help them to decode and understand text. Skills in reading and writing are supported usefully in a range of subjects, although this is not consistent. Inspectors observed these skills being fostered well in food technology, science, history and religious education. In the specialist units students gained independence and confidence in literacy.

In response to the inspection questionnaire, most parents indicated that their children are making good progress. A small proportion expressed concerns. However, based on evidence gathered, inspectors judged the progress being made by students to be inadequate.

Quality of teaching

Currently not enough teaching ensures that students make good or outstanding progress to improve their achievement. Too much teaching is only satisfactory and some is inadequate. In some instances lessons are pitched incorrectly for some students in the class. This leads to students becoming discouraged, or opting out of learning. Occasionally teachers apply the school's behaviour management policy inconsistently and allow low-level disruption to occur. More frequently teachers simply talk for too long and this results in students becoming bored and distracted.

Students in the units receive very individual attention to help them make satisfactory progress. In the main school, however, teaching of disabled students and those with special educational needs is inadequate for the same reasons as it is for all students. While teaching assistants are sometimes briefed well and deployed effectively, there are also times when this is not the case and their contribution to the learning of students with special educational needs is limited.

There is some good and outstanding teaching in the school, although not enough to drive up standards overall. In a Year 11 history lesson, students made outstanding progress as they discussed in groups the significance of sources relating to the discovery of penicillin. The teacher skilfully combined a highly interesting set of activities with effective teaching of examination skills. In a Year 9 lesson in personal, social and health education, students were mature and highly engaged as they learned about contraception and asked intelligent questions about their rights, their well-being and their safety. A feature of good and outstanding teaching is the active

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promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A Year 7 class explored aspects of good and evil in a drama lesson; several religious education classes discussed issues such as racism and world religions; and moral issues of rights and responsibilities formed a backdrop for a lesson on contraception.

Assessment data is starting to be used to identify students whose performance falls below expectations. Learning mentors provide targeted support for these students and are beginning to make an impact. Teachers' understanding of assessment is developing, but all are not yet providing reliable data to enable the process to work effectively. New systems have been put in place since the arrival of the headteacher, and have the potential to sharply improve achievement, but are not yet applied consistently across the school.

While most parents, carers and students, in the questionnaires, said that teaching in the school was good, sizeable minorities disagreed or said that teaching was only sometimes good. Inspectors judged teaching to be inadequate.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour around the school is satisfactory, and there is clear evidence that it has improved since September 2011 in the reduction in the number of sanctions needed. Students describe feeling safe in school. Many have taken part in anti-bullying campaigns. Year 10 students are proud of their roles as mentors to younger students. They describe how the atmosphere and culture of the school has improved over the past year. Their views have been valued and they have been able to exert more influence over not just matters like uniform but also over how they are taught. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe, including on-line.

School leaders keep good records of incidents of bullying and poor behaviour, including racist and homophobic incidents. These are followed up thoroughly. The school also has very good links with a network of local schools and makes good use of managed moves to give students a fresh start as an alternative to permanent exclusion. The school is a net receiver of students in managed moves and has a track record of enabling students at risk of exclusion to remain in school.

Parents and carers expressed concerns over disruption to learning through poor behaviour. Some students also gave negative responses in their questionnaires. Inspectors identified occasional low-level disruption associated with inconsistencies in behaviour management by staff, but also noted the sharp reduction in such incidents since September 2011. Attendance has improved steadily and is now above average. Students are punctual to their lessons.

Leadership and management

Since taking up his appointment the headteacher has focused the school effectively on the key areas of its work. Most notably there are strong improvement in students' behaviour, but also evidence of better teaching. Middle managers have an increased

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understanding of their accountability for students' progress in their subject areas. While some have had limited experience of this, there are examples of effective improvements led by middle managers in using high-quality assessment data and leading the development of teaching in their subjects. These improvements, together with accurate self-evaluation and good planning indicate that there is a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Members of the governing body have developed this year a closer understanding of the school so that they challenge and support school leaders more effectively. They take an active role in ensuring the safety of the school and its students, and the procedures for safeguarding are strong.

Senior leaders know the quality of teaching across the school well, and their judgements are closely in line with those of the inspection team. There are satisfactory systems for the performance management of teachers, and a robust approach has been adopted to tackle any underperformance. Under the headteacher's direction a coaching team has been set up to support teachers to develop their practice, and a whole-staff development forum has been established. Both are having a clear impact in improving aspects of teaching, even though they are too new to have eradicated any inadequacies. Students' feedback on teaching, especially that of sixth formers, is useful and is leading to lessons becoming more interesting.

The curriculum meets the needs of students and prepares them for the next stage of education, training or employment. It has improved this year to meet better the needs of students with special educational needs. The wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities is taken up well by students and contributes to the good promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students speak with pride of their involvement in sport, music and drama. The school has vibrant links with partner schools in Sweden and Bangladesh. In assemblies students take an active role, such as music and dance performances. Sixth form students appreciate the wide range of opportunities available to them including theatre visits, educational and overseas visits, cultural days and exchanges. They are actively involved in raising funds for charities.

School leaders make suitable arrangements to promote equality and tackle discrimination. This is evident in the good recording and monitoring of racist and homophobic incidents, and in their resolution. It is also evident in the careful way data is now used to analyse the performance of different groups of students so as to narrow the gaps between them, and in the effective reception of students from other schools on managed moves.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

31 May 2012

Dear Students



Inspection of The Pingle School, Swadlincote, DE11 0QA

I should like to thank the many of you who spoke with us during the recent inspection or completed our questionnaires.

We have judged your school needs significant improvement. This is because you are not making sufficient progress at present. Results at GCSE for the last three years have been below the level they should have been. However, in the sixth form results are at the expected level and your progress here is satisfactory. We were pleased to see that there are lessons where your progress is good or outstanding, and we want more of your lessons to be like these.

We have recommended to the school that within a year they should ensure that more lessons engage you actively in your learning. We are also recommending that your progress needs to improve, especially in English and mathematics and that the school uses data about your progress better to support your learning and make sure that you do not fall behind. Therefore, we have given the school a notice to improve. We have also asked that all teachers apply the behaviour management policy consistently.

Many of you told us about the range of activities you have available out of lesson time, and we were impressed with the opportunities you have for sport, music and drama. You also told us that many aspects of the school have improved since your headteacher took up his post in September 2011. We noted in particular the improvement in behaviour that has occurred since then. Your headteacher and his senior team are working hard to improve your school. You can play your part by working hard in all your lessons and playing a full part in the life of the school.

Yours sincerely

Robert Barbour
Her Majesty's Inspector

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