

# Queensbury School

Deanstones Lane, Queensbury, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD13 2AS

**Inspection dates** 16–17 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students enter the school with broadly average attainment in English and mathematics. They leave Year 11 with standards which are also in line with those usually found nationally. Their progress and achievement therefore require improvement. Since 2010 boys' progress has not been as good as girls', mainly because their literacy skills are underdeveloped and they cannot always understand and use subject vocabulary.
- There is variability in the performance of subjects across the curriculum at GCSE level. In addition, too few students make four levels of progress across Key Stages 3 and 4.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. Teachers' planning does not always result in students receiving work which challenges them and which is exactly what they need to make good and better progress. Students do not have enough opportunities to work independently of the teacher and to find things out for themselves. On occasions they lack confidence in what they can do because they have insufficient opportunities to talk about their learning. Students' presentation in their books is sometimes untidy and demonstrates a lack of pride in their work.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form requires improvement to students' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership and management, particularly at senior and head of department levels, ensure that students' achievement continues to improve and that there is no longer any inadequate teaching. The school has an accurate understanding of its performance and all staff are encouraged to express their views about how the school can develop.
- The governing body is fully aware of the school strengths and areas for improvement. Members support the school well, yet hold the leadership to account with rigour.
- Students' personal development has improved over the past two years and they are now much more engaged in their learning. They behave well, feel safe and are proud of their school. They speak highly of the adults who work with them, including teachers, support assistants and mentors.
- Achievement in the sixth form, at AS level in particular, is beginning to improve.
- Specialist status has a positive impact in several areas of school life, especially in relation to the use of new technology to help students learn more effectively.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 34 lessons or part-lessons. Two of these observations were made jointly with members of the teaching and learning team.
- Inspectors spoke to four groups of students, including sixth-formers. They also held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, the Operational Director of the Bradford Partnership, heads of academic departments, pastoral leaders and the senior leadership team. In addition, they had discussions with sixth-form leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff responsible for the development of specialist status and leaders of the teaching and learning team.
- Inspectors took account of the 52 responses to the staff questionnaire and also of the 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View.)
- They observed the school at work and looked at students’ workbooks during lessons, internal and external student progress data, school development planning and documentation on the school’s analysis of how well it is doing. They also considered information on performance management, on staff training opportunities and on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

James Kidd	Additional Inspector
Helen Gaunt	Additional Inspector
Jan Peckett	Additional Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school. Student numbers have decreased since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The percentage of students supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, is broadly average but has increased markedly since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is more than twice the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just below average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic heritages is in line with that usually found but has increased over the past two years. The proportion of students with English as an additional language is just above average. It has more than doubled since 2010.
- The school has held specialist status in mathematics and computing since 2004. It holds nationally accredited Healthy School status and the Cultural Diversity Quality Standard. It is also an Investor in Pupils.
- Small groups of students from Years 8 and 9 attend a local church-based charity organisation once a week to follow programmes designed to raise their self-esteem. In addition, some students in Key Stage 4 follow motor vehicle engineering courses with a local provider.

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

- Accelerate students' progress further and thus raise attainment by:
  - reducing the variability in how well subjects are performing across the school
  - increasing the proportion of students who make four levels of progress from the beginning of Year 7 to the end of Year 11
  - fully embedding strategies to develop students' literacy skills to ensure that boys, in particular, can understand and use key terminology in all the subjects they study
  - sustaining improvements in achievement in the sixth form, particularly at AS level in Year 12.
- Continue to improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that all is good or better by:
  - ensuring course and lesson planning is based on teachers' knowledge of how well students are doing and therefore leads to activities in the classroom which challenge students and meet their learning needs more closely
  - reducing the amount of teacher-talk in the classroom so that students can work more independently and find things out for themselves
  - ensuring students take more pride in their work and that they present their assignments in their exercise books more neatly
  - giving students more opportunities to talk about their learning in order to give them greater confidence in what they can achieve.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Although it has improved since the previous inspection, students' achievement is still not as good as it could be. However, inspection evidence, including the scrutiny of students' work and the observation of their learning in class, shows that progress is beginning to accelerate and that the level of progress made by boys is now closer to that made by girls. Specialist status has a positive impact on the performance of boys through the 'accelerated achievement' project funded by the status.
- There remains some inconsistency in the performance of different subjects, demonstrating that students' progress is variable across the curriculum. In 2012, however, students did particularly well in English literature and in a variety of science subjects.
- Although the school met the government floor standards in 2011 and 2012, there was a below-average proportion of students who made better-than-expected progress across the main school.
- Students enter the sixth form with broadly average attainment at best. Their achievement in both years requires improvement, but their performance in AS examinations in Year 12 is better than it was two years ago. The trend in improvement at both A/B and A-E grades is higher than the national trend, with English language, product design and art and design being the highest-performing subjects in 2012.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding to employ two higher level teaching assistants, additional English and mathematics teachers and, because many students known to be eligible for free school meals are at early stages of learning English, a teacher who supports students with English as an additional language. As a result, students with English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers and the gaps between students eligible for the pupil premium and other students in school are beginning to narrow.
- As a result of focused support from committed teaching assistants and learning mentors, disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers and often surprise themselves at how well they can do.

### The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although some inconsistency in teaching quality remains, there is now no inadequate teaching and there are examples of outstanding practice in several subjects. The teaching and learning team and heads of academic departments continue to deliver in-service training focused on improving teachers' skills in the classroom, with an overriding emphasis on ensuring that all teaching is good or better. Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire are satisfied with the quality of teaching their sons and daughters receive.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use new technology effectively in the classroom as a teaching and learning tool. They have good relationships with their students. Students express positive views about teaching and comment, 'We enjoy the many different ways we learn in the classroom'. They also say, however, that they would like more opportunities to work independently or in pairs and groups in order to find out more things for themselves.
- In the most effective teaching, for example in a Year 7 drama lesson when students were considering the use of mime and dance in Native American culture, outstanding questioning increases the level of challenge and students benefit from high expectations of what they can achieve. Pace is brisk, teacher feedback is detailed and students have many opportunities to gauge how well they and their classmates are doing. In such lessons students respond with eagerness and enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoy the activities.
- When teaching requires improvement, lesson planning does not always take enough account of the progress and attainment of students and does not always lead to activities which challenge students to do as well as they can. Activities, therefore, are sometimes not matched closely

enough to what students need to make good progress.

- On occasions there is too much teacher direction in the classroom and students say they are not required to work independently. In these lessons students do not have enough opportunities to talk about their learning and progress and therefore lack confidence in what they can achieve.
- The quality of marking is variable. The best marking tells students exactly what they need to do to improve their work, but some marking is brief and lacking in such comment. Students do not always take enough pride in their work and do not always present their assignments as neatly as they could.

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

- In both the main school and in the sixth form, students behave well and sometimes outstandingly well, in class and around school. They demonstrate good attitudes to learning in lessons and are keen to do well. They show respect to each other, to the staff who work with them and to visitors. They support younger students willingly and look after primary school pupils when they visit the school for extra mathematics lessons that are promoted by specialist status.
- Students respond positively to and enjoy the reward systems and particularly value the vouchers they receive when they have attended 10 'period six' sessions, in which they complete revision programmes in a range of subjects they study. They also respect the sanctions systems which, they say, 'make sure that we behave sensibly and get on with our work'. Indeed, they believe that students' behaviour has improved significantly since the previous inspection and that students are proud to attend the school.
- They feel safe in school because, in their view, 'there are regular fire drills, the building is secure and our teachers are approachable and help us when we have problems'. They understand the need to stay safe and are taught about how to respond to risk in school and when they are outside its walls.
- Students comment that there are very few incidents of bullying and that, if such behaviour does occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively by the staff. They have a keen awareness of different kinds of bullying, including cyber and internet bullying, and behaviour based on prejudice. They say that the school teaches them the appropriate language which should be used when they are communicating with each other.
- Students support a range of charities and also have a keen understanding of cultures and religions which are different from their own. These are just two examples of the school's good promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance is broadly average and continues to improve. Records for the Autumn term 2012 indicate that students attend school more regularly than they did two years ago.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Staff at all levels applaud the principled and committed leadership of the headteacher and senior team for the way they encourage all staff to express their views for the good of the school. They add that performance management arrangements are fair and transparent. One middle leader spoke for many with the comment, 'We are supported but we are challenged too, in a positive, constructive and helpful manner'.
- The school knows itself well and leaders are fully aware that continued improvements in the consistency and quality of teaching are vital if students' achievement is to continue to accelerate. To ensure that students gain the GCSE grades their ability and effort warrant, leaders have amended the early examination entry policy. Student targets now emphasise four levels of progress, not just three. The school recognises that the literacy skills of boys hinder their progress. It is now developing the curriculum to ensure that boys can understand and use the

key words of all the subjects they study.

- Along with the highly regarded teaching and learning team, heads of academic departments have a positive impact on developing the quality of teaching and also on providing a wide range of in-service courses across the school. Experienced subject leaders act as mentors and 'buddies' for their less experienced colleagues, supporting these staff in the development of their leadership skills.
  - Equality of opportunity is promoted soundly and the school has a zero tolerance approach towards discrimination in all its forms. Child protection and safeguarding policies and practice are fully in place and meet all current requirements.
  - The school receives good support from the local authority including the Bradford Partnership, for example in relation to the development of middle leadership.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governance is good and continues to play a major role in ensuring ongoing improvement in all areas of school life. Members of the governing body have an accurate understanding of school performance and of where it needs to improve. They challenge leaders to justify the decisions they make. Governors monitor the spending of pupil premium funding and of the impact it has on improving the progress of students known to be eligible for free school meals. They are also actively involved in improving the quality of teaching and of ensuring that teachers are rewarded when they reach or even exceed their targets.
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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>	107391
<b>Local authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	400064

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,056
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	137
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judy Hooton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alan Worthington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 882214
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