

Westfield Sports College

Eckington Road, Sothall, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S20 1HQ

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although now beginning to accelerate, students' achievement is not as good as it should be. Progress and attainment are only in line with that found nationally and standards should be higher. The percentage of students reaching GCSE A* to A grades is not high enough and shows that more-able students, in particular, are not doing as well as they should.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teachers' questioning is not always challenging enough to enable students to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The curriculum does not always interest students or motivate them well enough. It is not always what they need to enable them to make good progress in their studies. They do not have enough opportunities to find things out for themselves.
- The monitoring skills of heads of faculty and subject leaders do not enable them to hold their staff to account for their performance effectively enough.
- Strategies to involve parents more in the learning of their children are not fully developed.

The school has the following strengths

- The perceptive leadership of the headteacher, supported by a talented and committed senior team, has brought about sustained improvement in all areas of school life over the past two years.
- Results in both mathematics and English have improved since 2010 and students are now making better progress in these subjects.
- Wise use of pupil premium funding has ensured that the progress of students known to be eligible for free school meals has accelerated more rapidly than any other group.
- Students' personal development, including their behaviour and attitudes to learning is good, and better than at the time of the previous inspection. Students are proud of their school and their confidence and self-esteem are now much higher.
- Specialist status in sport and in business and enterprise, have a positive impact on the life of the school and the local community.
- Although relatively new, the governing body supports the school well and asks increasingly searching questions of its leadership.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 42 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the deputy headteacher with responsibility for improving teaching.
- Inspectors spoke to six groups of students, including Westfield Sports Leaders. They also held meetings with three members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the School Improvement Partner, leaders of academic departments, pastoral leaders and the senior leadership team. In addition, they met with staff responsible for the development of specialist sports and business and enterprise status.
- They also took account of the 50 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school at work and looked at students' workbooks in English and mathematics, internal and external student attainment and progress data, school improvement planning and the school's procedures to enable it to gain an accurate view of its performance.
- They considered the minutes of governing body meetings, faculty and departmental policies and documentation in relation to performance management arrangements and staff training opportunities. In addition, they scrutinised information on child protection, safeguarding, attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

James Kidd, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Isobel Short	Additional Inspector
Gary Kirkley	Additional Inspector
Jane Alexander	Additional Inspector
Janet Pruchniewicz	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average sized secondary school. There are slightly more boys than girls.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority, is below average.
- Most students are White British and there are very few students at early stages of learning English.
- The percentage of students supported at school action is below average. The percentage supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above that usually found, at almost twice the national average.
- The school holds specialist status in sport and also has business and enterprise accreditation. It is an Investor in People and a nationally-accredited Healthy School. It also holds Gold Partner Status with the Youth Sport Trust and won the award for the most innovative physical education department in England.
- Eight students in Year 11 attend off-site provision at a community centre on the Westfield estate. The school also has links with Sheffield College of Further Education.
- There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher and the restructuring of leadership at both senior and middle levels.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate students' progress and raise their attainment by:
 - ensuring that teachers' questioning is searching and challenging enough to get the best out of all students, particularly the more-able
 - providing students of all abilities with work and activities which are exactly what they need to make good and better progress
 - ensuring that all marking is as good as the best and consistently provides students with accurate advice on how they can improve their work
 - giving students in all classes enough opportunities to work independently and to find things out for themselves
 - further developing the curriculum to ensure that courses meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all students.
- Further develop the monitoring skills of heads of faculty and subject leaders in order that they can hold their staff more rigorously to account.
- Continue to explore and develop strategies to involve parents more in the learning of their children.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although there are variations from year to year, students generally enter the school with average levels of attainment in both English and mathematics. They reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 11 and their achievement from their starting points therefore requires improvement. Although the majority of parents are satisfied with the progress their children are making, a significant minority believe that achievement is not as good as it should be.
- In the past two years, there has been a marked improvement in the percentage of all groups of students making the progress they should in English and mathematics. In 2012, for example, the proportion of students progressing well increased and the proportion attaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C, including both these subjects, was higher than for many years as a result. Nonetheless, too few students reached grades A and A*, which shows that the more-able are not reaching the standards they should.
- Inspection evidence, including lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work, demonstrates that progress and achievement are beginning to accelerate and that students in the current Year 11 classes are on course to reach higher standards than last year. Students in Years 10 and 11 are justified in their view that their progress is rising and comment, 'Our teachers now encourage us to aim for more quality in our work'.
- The school's use of pupil premium funding, for example, to employ extra teachers and support staff in English and mathematics, thus reducing class sizes, is beginning to have a positive impact. The gaps between the performance of this group of students and other students in the school reduced in 2012 and have reduced further during this academic year. As a result, the attainment of students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority has risen and is now much closer to the attainment of their peers.
- Similarly, disabled students and those with special educational needs now make the same progress as their classmates because of the good support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. The progress of those students who attend the local community centre is good. They receive focused support based on their personal and academic needs and their achievement is monitored closely and regularly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and also within subjects. There are, however, examples of good and outstanding practice in both key stages. Although teaching requires improvement overall, students are of the view that it is better than it was two years ago and comment, 'Teaching styles are now more modern'. The majority of parents believe their children are taught well, but a significant number are of the opinion that teaching should be better.
- The use of new technology as a teaching and learning tool has been pioneered by the physical education department. Staff within the department have led whole-school in-service training on the use of information and communication technology in the classroom and this has been funded through sports college status.
- Teachers generally have secure knowledge of their subjects and good relationships with their students. In the best lessons, a Year 8 physical education lesson on table tennis, for example, in which teaching was graded outstanding, students were actively involved in taking responsibility for their own progress and worked in groups to support each other's learning. In lessons such as these, students learn quickly, enjoy the activities and are fully aware of exactly what they need to do to make good and even better progress.
- The school recognises, however, that in too many lessons teachers' questioning is not searching

enough to help students think more deeply about the topics they are studying. On occasions, for example, there is a 'one size fits all' approach; although disabled students and those with special educational needs are supported well to help them make progress, more-able students in particular do not receive sufficient challenge to get the best out of them. In addition, activities are not always matched closely enough to what individual students need to make good progress, and there are insufficient opportunities for them to work things out for themselves.

- The extent and quality of marking varies widely across subjects. There are examples of good practice, valued by students, which congratulates them on their efforts and gives them targets for improvement. Too often, however, marking is cursory and lacking in comment to support students' learning. Where teachers set additional questions for students to answer before completing their next assignment, there is little evidence to show that students respond to these.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students are proud of their school and say that it has improved markedly over the past two years. In their words, 'The school is a much better place because behaviour has improved, the atmosphere is more relaxed and trusting and students and adults respect each other'. Indeed, although there are pockets of minor misbehaviour at breaks and lunchtimes, behaviour and enjoyment of learning in classrooms are good and continuing to improve. Students' confidence and belief in themselves are impressive.
- Students feel safe in school and speak well about how the school teaches them about e-safety. They also comment that if they are experiencing any difficulties there is always someone to talk to and that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively if it occurs. They comment positively about the strong support and guidance they receive from the pastoral managers. They have a good awareness of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and bullying based on prejudice.
- Sports College and business and enterprise status have a positive impact on students' personal development. It provides them with a range of opportunities to take responsibility and develop their leadership skills. Westfield Sports Leaders, for example, organise sports festivals for pupils in local primary schools and young enterprise programmes comprise of engagement with the community and the establishment of small businesses. In addition, the lower school 'Challenge Programme' enables students to develop their social and moral skills as 'Young Leaders'. Students respect and value these opportunities and say, 'They help us to develop and grow.'
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development soundly. Moral issues are considered in tutorial sessions, in religious education and in the personal, social and health education programme. Their awareness of religious and cultural diversity is underdeveloped, primarily because they have few opportunities to meet and talk to people representing different faith communities and cultures.
- Attendance remains above average and has improved year on year since the previous inspection.
- The vast majority of parents who completed the on-line questionnaire believe their children are safe and happy in school and that the school looks after them well. As one commented, 'The care of the pastoral staff is wonderful and has given my daughter the hope of a positive future and a belief in herself.'

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The relatively new senior leadership of the well informed headteacher and talented senior team demonstrates high ambitions for the school and a very clear view of how it can move forward. This view is shared by the staff who comment, 'The school has improved well over the past two

years as a result of effective and supportive leadership, which values what we do.’

- Senior leaders know the school well and have put in place well founded plans and actions aimed at improving performance in all areas of its life. Faculty and subject leadership has been completely restructured and staff are now more confident in their ability to promote on-going improvement in the areas for which they are responsible.
- There is no complacency and the leadership recognises that more needs to be done if the school’s improvements in performance are to be sustained. It has, therefore, established a three-tier coaching system to continue to improve teaching. Indeed, the leadership of teaching is strong and staff speak highly of how it helps them share good practice across the school.
- Leaders recognise that the curriculum, although under continuous review and much changed since the previous inspection, does not always meet the needs, interests and aspirations of students well enough. They are aware, too, that although the leadership skills of faculty and subject leaders have developed well since 2010, their monitoring of subject performance does not yet enable them to hold their staff fully to account.
- The school has reorganised a timetable for checking on students’ progress and the opportunities for parents to discuss with teachers how well their children are doing. Nonetheless, many parents still believe that the school does not provide them with enough information on the progress of their offspring. The school is aware, therefore, that the strategies to involve parents more in the learning of their children are not fully developed.
- Child protection and safeguarding policies and practice fully meet current requirements. The school promotes equality of opportunity soundly and rejects all forms of discrimination.
- The local authority continues to provide strong support for the school, particularly in relation to developing mathematics and to supporting the school to develop systems to ensure that all areas of its performance are quality assured. In addition, the School Improvement Partner has provided advice on the improvement of teaching and the restructuring of leadership at both senior and middle levels.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The relatively new governing body already has an accurate understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for development. Members support the school well but also hold the leadership to account with increasing rigour. They oversee the spending of pupil premium funding and monitor its impact closely. They are fully aware of the school’s strategies, for example, different levels of coaching to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They ensure that performance management arrangements are secure, and that they reward staff for reaching their classroom targets.

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

Unique reference number	107135
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	400888

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Stewart
Headteacher	Andy Ireland
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2009
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