

# The Rawlett School (An Aet Academy)

Comberford Road, Tamworth, B79 9AA

## Inspection dates

26–27 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students achieve well. They make good progress, particularly in English, and achievement overall is improving.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress as a result of high-quality teaching and support. Some of these students make rapid progress and achieve exceptionally well.
- Teachers have good working relationships with their students. They have a thorough knowledge of the subjects they teach and often use resources well to support students' learning.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are polite and courteous, showing respect to one another and to the adults in the school.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- Senior leaders have worked successfully to drive improvements in teaching and achievement. There is a strong commitment from all leaders and governors to improve the school further.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. The school has worked well to improve communication with parents, providing them with detailed information on their children's progress.
- The school's work on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Students benefit from a rich variety of activities, including international links and opportunities to contribute to the local community.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough to result in all students making rapid progress. Tasks are not always explained clearly enough to students.
- Action planning does not focus enough on the most important priorities for the school. This limits the pace of school improvement.
- Occasionally, teachers do not check students' understanding thoroughly enough before moving on to a new task. This slows the progress of some students, particularly in mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 47 lessons taught by 47 teachers. Eight of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the school’s leadership team. Inspectors also carried out a series of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of students, two members of the governing body and a representative of the academy chain.
- Inspectors took account of the 42 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Responses to questionnaires completed by 49 staff were also analysed and considered
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including national published assessment data and the school’s own data, the school’s self-evaluation, improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, safeguarding policies, behaviour policies and records and documents relating to setting targets for teachers to improve their work.

## Inspection team

Julie Price Grimshaw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector
Rena Saggi	Additional Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The great majority of students are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The Rawlett School (An Aet Academy) converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Rawlett Community Sports College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional support for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services.
- Seventy four students from Years 10 and 11 attend alternative provision at the Torc Vocational Centre for between three and six hours every week, where they follow a range of vocational courses. A few other students attend South Staffordshire College on a part-time or full-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - tasks are always explained clearly to students, so that they know exactly what is expected of them
  - teachers check students' understanding before moving on to new tasks so that all students make rapid progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Accelerate the school's improvement by making sure that action plans focus on the most important priorities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- There is no information on GCSE results as the school did not open until September 2012. However, current evidence from students' work and information on their attainment and progress shows that standards are above average. As students join the school with skills that are broadly average, this represents good progress. Achievement in English is especially strong. Students also perform particularly well in science, physical education and French, with attainment being well above average in these subjects.
- Students' progress is accelerating. The school's new systems for tracking students' progress are helping students, and their parents, to gain a clear awareness of individual targets. This is beginning to help students to make more rapid progress.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve particularly well. Some make outstanding progress from their starting points. This is due to the high quality of teaching and support offered to these students.
- Students who receive support through pupil premium funding make at least good progress. The funding has been spent on additional staffing, resources to support progress and activities to broaden and enrich learning for these students. They attain better, in both English and mathematics, than similar groups nationally and the gaps between their attainment and that of other students in the school are closing.
- Those students who attend alternative provision at the Torc Vocational Centre and South Staffordshire College achieve well, both in their vocational courses and the programmes followed in the school.
- The school is working well to develop students' literacy skills and there is a strong focus on encouraging students to read. This is reflected in the school's preparation for the forthcoming World Book Day, as well as the aim to increase the variety of books available by building a 'book mountain', made up from students' own books that they are willing to share. There is evidence that the introduction of an 'accelerated reader' programme at Key Stage 3 is improving the reading skills of these students.
- Achievement in mathematics is not yet as high as that in English. School leaders have begun to tackle this issue and students' progress in mathematics is now beginning to improve. However, a small minority of students fall behind in some lessons when the teacher moves on to new tasks before checking that all have a secure understanding of the work covered.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Classrooms are welcoming and provide a positive environment for learning. Relationships between staff and students are strong.
- The vast majority of teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and are confident in helping students to develop their use of language specific to particular subject areas. Most teachers have high expectations of what their students can achieve.

- Teachers take care in planning their lessons with the aim of building students' skills and there is a strong emphasis on tracking progress. Staff use a range of resources well in order to support students' learning.
- Many teachers use questioning well to check students' understanding and extend their learning. Where teaching is best, questions are tailored so that they are at just the right level of difficulty for individual students.
- Students learn best when teachers inspire them to find out things for themselves, often working in groups and sharing ideas, with staff skilfully guiding the learning. For example, in an excellent history lesson observed during the inspection, students explored aspects of the English civil war using the format of a popular television talent show. Groups of students passed information to each other and gave feedback. They were highly motivated and made outstanding progress. One student, expressing a typical view, said 'We always have fun in history!'
- Support staff make a strong contribution to students' learning. They are confident in offering guidance and are successful in encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning. The high-quality teaching and support offered to disabled students and those who have special educational needs results in many of these students making rapid progress.
- Occasionally, teachers do not explain tasks clearly enough and do not always demonstrate or model activities so that the students understand exactly what is expected of them. Although most students will attempt the tasks set, their limited understanding sometimes results in wide variations in the quality and quantity of work produced.
- Where teaching is best, staff make sure that they check students' understanding throughout the lesson, adjusting tasks or offering further explanations where necessary. However, where learning is not checked frequently or thoroughly enough, a few students do not make as much progress as they should.

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

- Students are mannerly and conduct themselves well in school. They often show kindness and respect towards each other. Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school.
- Students have good attitudes to learning and appreciate the work of their teachers. When teaching results in engaging and exciting lessons, students are full of enthusiasm and strongly motivated to achieve. Where teaching is less than good, a small number of students occasionally lose concentration and their progress slows as a result.
- Students have a good awareness of how to stay safe and feel that the school is a safe place to be. They say that they are cared for well and feel confident that they can share any concerns they may have with members of staff. Although a few of the younger students said that there is the occasional incident of teasing, this was seen as a minor issue and bullying was not felt to be a problem by students across the school.
- The school makes sure that the students who attend alternative provision off-site behave well and are safe. The students themselves said that their safety is a high priority to staff at the Torc Vocational Centre, as well as to school staff.
- The school works well to promote good attendance, and attendance rates are consistently above

the national average. The number of exclusions is low and has reduced during the course of the year.

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

- The headteacher and senior leaders have worked successfully to drive improvements to the quality of teaching and students' achievement. There is a strong determination, shared by leaders at all levels, to build on this and to bring about further improvements.
- Staff work together well as a team and are committed to the school's ongoing success. The responses to the staff questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive.
- The school has recently introduced a new approach to tracking students' progress. This is helping students and their parents, as well as staff, to focus on ambitious targets. Students know that they are expected to work hard and make at least good progress, and the large majority respond very well to this.
- The school's systems for managing staff performance are effective and have helped to improve the quality of teaching. Targets for individual teachers are linked to students' progress. The school has clear expectations of those staff on the higher salary scales and pay progression is not automatic.
- School leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They know what issues they must tackle in order to bring about further improvement. However, the school's action planning documents do not show exactly how the school will deal with the most important priorities for improvement. This slows the school's progress in moving forward rapidly and raising achievement further.
- The school offers a range of subjects and courses that meet students' needs and appeal to their interests. Students have many opportunities to practise their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across a range of subjects. This ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education or the world of work. The good partnership work with external providers, such as the Torc Vocational Centre and South Staffordshire College, means that all students can follow suitable courses. This reflects the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Excellent displays around the school represent a wide range of cultures, and students benefit from international links with other schools. During an outstanding citizenship session observed during the inspection, a large number of students worked exceptionally well together to carry out research on the British Parliament, talking enthusiastically about what they had learned. Students are rightly proud of their fundraising work for charities, chosen by the students themselves.
- The academy chain provides good-quality support to the school. A representative from the academy chain carries out regular visits to the school and has helped to make sure that the transition to academy status has gone smoothly.
- The school has worked very successfully to develop partnerships with parents. Frequent newsletters keep parents informed of events and developments in the school as a whole and they are also given valuable information about their children's progress. The responses to the Parent View questionnaire show that almost all parents are very positive about the quality of

education provided by the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors share the commitment of senior leaders and staff in driving forward further improvements. The governing body has benefited from training provided by the academy chain and governors have developed confidence in the analysis of information on students' achievement. As a result, they are able to ask searching questions of school leaders, relating to students' progress, and have a good understanding of the school's performance compared to that of other schools. Governors pay close attention to the achievement of those students eligible for support through pupil premium funding and are checking the impact of this spending on an ongoing basis. Governors have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching across the school, informed by visits to lessons. They are also involved in discussions on managing staff performance. The governing body makes sure that all statutory requirements are met, including those related to safeguarding and child protection.

## 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>	138728
<b>Local authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	409389

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	947
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lynn Middleton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Bassett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	N/A
<b>Telephone number</b>	01827 57178
<b>Fax number</b>	01827 68423
<b>Email address</b>	office@rawlettschool.org

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