

Beaumont Leys School

Anstey Lane, Leicester, LE4 0FL

Inspection dates 18–19 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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' achievement at the end of Year 11 has improved steadily since the previous inspection. Achievement in English, science and a range of other subjects is very strong for all groups of students.
- Current Year 11 students are on track to exceed challenging targets. Achievement in mathematics is improving rapidly.
- Results in GCSE mathematics examinations that have already been completed, and the school's assessment records, suggest that the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics is likely to be close to the national average in 2013. This represents excellent progress from low starting points in Year 7.
- Teaching is good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Students are keen to succeed and relationships between staff and students support high expectations.
- The way teachers use questions to challenge students and deepen understanding is a particular strength of teaching.
- Leaders and governors have a good understanding of how well the school is performing. Checks on the quality of teaching are rigorous. Improvements made as a result have led to increased achievement.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe and secure and say that bullying is very rare. They appreciate and respect the school's 'Gold Standard' behaviour reward system.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics, while improving strongly, is not yet as good as in other subjects.
- Some teachers do not use all the available information about students' progress to plan lessons that challenge all individuals in the group.
- Some teachers' feedback does not always ensure that students know what they need to do to move to the next level in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 38 lessons, of which 11 were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff, including middle and senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to Parent View and other communications from parents by telephone calls, letters and emails.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including: minutes of governors’ meetings, the managing of staff performance, records relating to attendance, behaviour and checks on the quality of teaching and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the 34 staff questionnaires received.

Inspection team

Simon Blackburn, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector
Marian Marks	Additional Inspector
Lesley Voaden	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (those eligible for free school meals, those in care and those with a parent in the armed services) is above average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is well above the national average as is the proportion supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school uses Leicester College of Further Education as alternative off-site provision to support its students. Other students take part in vocational training arranged at a range of providers.
- The proportion of students who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average and the proportion of students identified as speaking English as an additional language is also above the national average.
- 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?

- Accelerate progress, and improve students' achievement, in mathematics by
 - ensuring stability in staffing in the subject
 - providing more opportunities for students to apply their mathematical skills in different situations.
- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that in all lessons there is a closer match between students' current levels of attainment and the level of difficulty of the work that is provided, so that students always make rapid progress from the start of lessons
 - consistently providing feedback to students that gives them clear steps to improve their work to the next level and challenges them with more demanding tasks.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When students enter the school their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is typically well below average. Students are making good progress and, by age 16, the standards reached in many subjects are above average. In English and science they are well above average. The proportion gaining five or more A* to C passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was below average in 2012 because attainment in mathematics was weaker than in other subjects.
- Achievement in mathematics is now improving quickly as a result of better teaching and leadership. The school has experienced difficulties in recruiting and retaining mathematics teachers, and the leadership of the subject has been inconsistent. Staffing is now more settled and teaching has improved. This is as a result of higher expectations from leaders and managers at all levels. The school's data suggests that students in the current Year 11 will exceed challenging targets for attainment, and the proportion gaining an A* to C grade will be close to the national average, representing excellent progress from students' starting points. Early entry policies in mathematics and English do not prevent students from gaining the higher grades.
- Students make good progress in learning basic skills in reading and writing. They are able to communicate their thoughts and ideas to each other very well. This is because they are encouraged to do so in many different lessons across the school.
- There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. The gap between the attainment of students eligible for pupil premium funding and others is closing year-on-year, for example, the percentage of eligible students gaining A* to C in English increased by 15 percentage points between 2011 and 2012 compared to 6 percentage points for all Year 11 students. Eligible students achieved better results than similar students nationally. The government funding provided for these students is used effectively across year groups. This is to support small group teaching in literacy and numeracy, to reduce class sizes in mathematics and to provide breakfast and lunchtime friendship groups for vulnerable students. The Year 7 catch-up premium funding has been used to provide reading support, with the result that some students' reading ages have increased dramatically over the programme's course.
- Those students who are disabled, or who have special educational needs, make good progress. This is because of the good teaching they receive and the well planned and targeted support of other adults. The school's robust tracking data shows that any gaps in attainment between these students and others are closing rapidly. Students from minority ethnic groups, and those learning English as an additional language, make progress in line with other students. Their needs are identified quickly and the support offered meets these very well.
- The small number of students attending courses away from the school make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points. Their progress, behaviour and attendance are checked regularly. The number of students who do not go on to training, education or employment at age 16 is extremely low, compared to the national average. The school provides timely and effective support and high quality information, advice and guidance to ensure students have equal access to opportunities beyond their compulsory schooling.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching is leading to good overall progress and students' improving achievement. Outstanding teaching is evident in both key stages and across a range of subjects. A few inconsistencies remain so that a small proportion of lessons require improvement. None was

judged to be inadequate.

- The questioning used by teachers has improved strongly since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school. Teachers use a range of techniques, and carefully direct their questions according to the ability of the students, so that their understanding is developed well. Inspectors also found that teachers give students plenty of opportunities to talk at length about their learning, developing their communication skills very effectively.
- In the few lessons that require improvement the level of challenge is not high enough. For example, all students were given the same task so that the most able found the work too easy; some did not make the progress they were capable of. Teachers do not always use all the assessment information they have available to make sure students are challenged from the start of lessons.
- When teaching is strongest students are encouraged to think independently and reflect on their work. For example, in a Year 8 English lesson students were asked to interpret a poem, and understand its context, despite not having a full understanding of all the words used in the poem. This was a challenging task that the teacher prepared the students for very well. The lesson moved with great pace and purpose, with very good feedback, and opportunities for the students to think about their creative strengths.
- Students' work is, typically, marked regularly and given a National Curriculum level. Clear comments show students exactly what needs to be done to improve to the next level. This quality of marking was seen consistently in English and in science, as well as in a number of other subjects, but it is not consistent across the school. In some mathematics books, the teacher regularly set more challenging tasks in response to how well pupils progressed.
- There is a strong focus on literacy to improve reading and writing across all subjects. A relatively high number of students enter the school with poor reading skills. The school provides a range of programmes to improve their reading quickly, so that students can make the best progress they can in other subjects. The emphasis on literacy continues through the year groups. Teachers frequently provide reading opportunities and routinely correct students' work for spelling, punctuation and grammar in other subjects, as well as in English.
- Students who are disabled, or who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are supported very well by staff who work closely with teachers to meet their needs. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, for example, a vulnerable student was fully engrossed in his work but was not yet ready to move on at the very swift pace the teacher was setting for the class. A quick conversation between the teacher and teaching assistant led to the student completing his task with support and catching up rapidly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons is good. Students have very positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to succeed. Students say that lessons are interesting and teachers make learning fun. They report that it is only in a very small minority of lessons that the negative attitudes of a few students can lead to minor disruptions to their learning. During their time in the school, inspectors found no lessons were disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Students feel safe and secure in school and say that bullying is very rare. They are aware of the different types of bullying and know what to do if it occurs, but they say that the school deals with it so seriously that no-one would consider bullying. They are confident that staff will help

them resolve any difficulties.

- The school site is large and provides excellent spaces for students to use in unstructured time like break and lunchtime. Supervision levels are good and students respond well to the trust that the school gives them, behaving well and showing consideration to one another. Students move purposefully and politely between lessons.
- Students appreciate the 'Gold Standard' behaviour system the school uses and students of all ages wear their medals with pride. They understand the system very well and say that it is run fairly and provides a good incentive to behave well and attend school regularly. The school works very effectively with parents and carers and takes every possible action to reduce absence and overall attendance is improving year-on-year although it remains slightly below the national average.
- The number of exclusions has reduced over the last two years as a result of higher expectations of the whole school community, a range of learning experiences that is matched to students' interests and abilities and the strong relationships established between students and adults.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is passionate about providing the very best education for the students in the school. Together with senior leaders and the governing body, she sets high expectations for staff and students. Leaders have a strong focus on the priorities that will have the greatest impact on improving the life chances of their students and, as a result, students' achievement has improved since the last inspection.
- The school's accurate progress checking system provides good quality information to help leaders and teachers tackle any underachievement of individuals and groups of students. The school uses a range of innovative techniques to help students to catch up if they have fallen behind.
- Checks on students' progress and teaching are carried out systematically, and effectively, by senior and middle leaders. This information is used to hold staff to account for the progress of their groups. It is also used to make sure that staff are offered help if areas of their teaching are in need of improvement. As a result, teaching and students' outcomes are improving. It also helps senior leaders to gain an accurate picture of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
- The formal system to manage staff performance is well structured and ensures that rigorous checks on the quality of teaching are closely linked to progression on the pay scales and that good quality training opportunities are made available for all staff. The headteacher, supported by the governing body, has taken effective and robust action to improve the quality of teaching and leadership and management, in all areas of the school.
- The school's self evaluation and action planning process is well organised and uses all available information to identify the priorities the school needs to work on to improve achievement. However, these priorities are not always expressed in a way that is most helpful to stakeholders, and lack some clarity and sharpness of focus.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is well matched to students' needs. The range of subjects offered at both key stages is broad and well balanced, with good opportunities for students to develop vocational skills alongside academic study in the later years. Where students

follow courses away from the school the provision is well managed. Its quality is checked regularly. Attendance and behaviour are carefully monitored and students achieve well on these courses. The curriculum is adjusted sensitively for students' personal circumstances. A wide programme of sporting and cultural activities is available and students appreciate these and gain a great deal from them.

- Good attention is paid to promoting students' personal development through the Learning for Life programme. Excellent assemblies and vibrant displays in classrooms, also promote strongly students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and equal opportunity.
- The local authority provides good, useful, support. For example, it has helped to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics. It has also provided training in other areas, as well as guidance and challenge to school leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know how well the school is doing compared to the national and local picture because they have a good range of skills and a clear understanding of the performance data that the school presents. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching, and they know how teaching is improved through the performance management system. They monitor the school improvement priorities and this gives them a wide overview of whole school performance. They know the impact of pupil premium spending through regular updates on the progress of eligible students. They challenge school leaders on the allocation of these funds to ensure they are used most effectively. Governors bring a good range of skills and experience to their role and ensure that their skills are up to date through regular training. They ensure safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

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	120281
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	412871

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1044
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Waters
Headteacher	Liz Logie
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2010
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