

Tong High School

Westgate Hill Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 6NR

Inspection dates 1–2 May 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		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Too much teaching still requires improvement and there is not enough good teaching to raise achievement to good.
- Students do not make consistently good progress because they are not given the tasks or asked the questions they need to improve their understanding and that will enable them to provide a clear explanation of complex ideas.
- Some teachers do not match the work set to students' abilities, therefore, some students do not make the progress they are capable of, particularly those of higher abilities and those who learn more slowly.
- A proportion of students find it difficult to record their ideas and leaders do not use written work well enough to judge whether students have made sufficient progress.
- Marking does not always tell students how to improve their work.
- In the weaker lessons students' attention wanes, low-level chatter develops and time is wasted. Some students still take too much time off school.
- Leaders' and managers' evaluation of teaching is too generous because not enough account is taken of the progress that students make in each lesson.
- Some school leaders, including a minority of governors, have not always paid enough attention to the evaluation of teaching by external partners and opportunities to further accelerate improvement have occasionally been lost.
- There are too many students absent from school, particularly those supported by the pupil premium and those with special educational needs

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour in most lessons and around school is good and students are polite and helpful to visitors and adults.
- The school's leaders provide extensive support for those teachers who need help to improve, and teaching and achievement has improved from a low base over time.
- Leaders have taken decisive steps to recruit good teachers so there is a growing proportion of high quality teaching.
- Many of the school governors are perceptive, and they have asked challenging questions of the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Teaching and the progress of students in the sixth form are good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons taught by 44 members of staff. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher, the two deputy headteachers and three senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, heads of subjects, The Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the Trust, groups of students and a representative of the Bradford Education Partnership.
- Inspectors took account of 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in conducting the inspection.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of school policies and documents, the school's data about students' achievement, and examined records related to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at reports made as result of visits of other education professionals to the school and looked at reports and plans produced by leaders as part of their monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.

Inspection team

Nell Banfield, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mark Colley	Additional Inspector
Mary Liptrot	Additional Inspector
Clive Hurren	Additional Inspector
Paul Rafferty	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Tong High School is larger than the average-sized secondary school with a sixth form.
- The proportion of students supported by pupil premium funding, which is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, students looked after by the local authority and students from service families, is more than double the national average.
- The proportion of students with disabilities or who have special educational needs supported through school action is double the proportion found nationally.
- The proportion of students with disabilities or who have special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is twice the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is high. Many students are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- More students than nationally join the school at times other than in Year 7.
- A small number of students in Year 10 and 11 and in the sixth form attend work experience placements and vocational courses at the local Fire Service, the West Bowling Youth Initiative, Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College, Emerge, James Motor Project and Get Set For.
- The school is a Trust school and the Minority Trust is made up of the local council, the Co-operative College, Bradford University and business, voluntary and parent representatives.
- The school has specialist status for sport and launched the Tong School Sports Enterprise in 2011.
- The school's recent GCSE results met 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?

- Improve teaching, particularly in English and mathematics in Key Stage 3 and 4 , by:
 - providing activities and asking questions which help students explain in more detail what they think, and to justify and support their views and opinions
 - planning structured activities to improve writing skills that require students to explain complex ideas clearly in sentences
 - developing resources and teaching approaches which are adapted to the learning needs of the most able and those who learn more slowly so that all students sustain their engagement in the lesson and low-level disruption is eliminated
 - improving the quality and consistency of marking and feedback on written work to explain more clearly and effectively what students need to do to improve their work.
- Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence by measuring the impact of the recently made plans to improve attendance to make sure they are effective, and adjusting the actions taken if necessary.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - robustly supporting the adoption of the good practice that exists in the school so that all actions taken by staff lead to increased progress and higher attainment
 - making certain that students' progress is fully taken into account when leaders and managers are checking the quality of teaching in lessons

- ensuring rigorous monitoring of progress in students' written work consistently across subjects
- ensuring leaders, including governors, take external partner reports fully into account when evaluating the quality of provision.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because attainment in English and mathematics is below the national average and there is significant variation in the rate of progress made by different groups of students. Additionally too many students find it difficult to get their ideas down on paper.
- Although attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 has risen steadily since 2010, it remains below that of most students nationally. In 2012, less than half of students achieved five or more GCSE passes at A* to C grades, including English and mathematics.
- The progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is not as good as the progress of students nationally with similar needs. The school has appointed a new leader who has already made sure that students' progress is checked closely and is also ensuring that students get extra support and tuition if they begin to fall behind. The new reading materials and sessions have been very successful in providing regular opportunities to read and one student spoke proudly of having increased her reading age by almost two years since September 2012.
- Literacy and mathematical skills are well supported in many lessons and the school has created groups where the teachers are made aware of the students' additional literacy and mathematical needs so they can teach them more effectively. Nevertheless, too many students still have difficulties recording their ideas using well-structured sentences
- A number of students take GCSE examinations in English and mathematics earlier than is usual. These students are carefully selected so they are able to improve their attainment still further in Year 11.
- Students who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding are making accelerated progress. They are now achieving grades which are, on average, only one third of a GCSE grade lower than other students in the school. This is because the school has used the extra funding to provide a wide range of activities to support students in improving their behaviour and their literacy levels. Resources and equipment have been used well to ensure that these students are ready to learn. Additional staff have provided extra support to help these students to complete work, and to practise and revise topics they find more difficult. As a result their progress is continuing to improve.
- Students who arrive at the school at other times than in Year 7 are well supported in improving their English and in learning to read. Those students who speak English as an additional language are also making good progress. This confirms that school supports the progress of all groups so all have an equal opportunity to do well.
- Achievement in the sixth form has improved since the last inspection and progress and attainment in psychology and the BTEC courses is particularly strong. It is not yet outstanding because achievement is not consistently good across all subjects. In subjects where progress is not as good, there are signs of improvement.
- A small number of students have extended experience in the work place and attend alternative courses and provision away from the school site. Their progress and attendance has improved and is now good, because they are closely monitored and supported and are following courses that interest and engage them.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching has improved from a very low base in the last two years but there remains too much teaching that requires improvement. A number of teachers are newly appointed to their posts and have not yet had time to see the results of their work. Some classes have experienced a change of teacher midway through their courses. As a result, some students do not yet make fast enough progress in lessons to overcome previous underachievement, although their

progress has improved over time.

- Students are not always clear about how to improve their work because marking does not always give helpful guidance about how they can make their work better. The marking of students' work is of good quality in humanities and English, and errors are corrected in mathematics, but more limited responses to written work are given in modern foreign languages.
- Not enough teachers break down the tasks so students can respond successfully, particularly in their writing. Students recognise technical words in subjects and can see how particular ways of writing have an effect on the reader or can be used to describe more complicated ideas. However, they cannot replicate this in their own writing and this limits their attainment.
- Teachers do not always provide work or resources that are well matched to the range of ability in the class, so all students are given the same task. Teachers give extra support to those who are more able and to those who learn more slowly but this means that students rely too much on the help they receive. The necessary adjustments are not made to the resources and tasks so all students can independently increase their understanding and learn effectively during the lesson.
- In the better lessons, the teachers do not accept the first answer when they ask students questions. They encourage students to expand on their answers by asking for more information or detail. In an effective physical education lesson, the teacher asked students to look at a technical word and, 'break it down to something you know and see what you think that means'. He also stopped students from giving their first answer to a question and said, 'Now think.....think carefully about it before you answer.' As a result, the students were able to explain what they knew more fully.
- In a number of lessons, the tasks were broken down very effectively so students knew the small steps needed to create a finished product, such as in one English lesson where the teacher placed the chosen adjectives on a 'washing line' and one group of students had to put them in order of effectiveness whilst a second group had sections of speech in a jigsaw structure so students had to piece it together to make the best meaning.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Students spoke positively about the opportunities to be more actively involved in their learning and to develop independence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because, although students are well behaved in lessons and around school, and know how to keep themselves safe, too many students are absent from school.
- The attendance of students improved following the previous inspection, but, since 2012, attendance has declined and the proportion of students who are persistently absent has risen. As a result, there is an increasing number of students who are not able to improve their progress because they are not in school often enough. This particularly affects students supported by the pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs.
- In the less effective lessons, behaviour deteriorates and low-level talking or calling out disturbs learning. This is because the work is too easy or too hard or is not presented in a way that interests students. Students then begin to chatter and take little part in the task.
- The rate of exclusions is well below the level nationally so that time in school is not missed due to unsuitable behaviour. The school has effectively introduced an area in school which students attend in place of exclusion so they can continue their learning while reflecting on how to improve their behaviour.
- The majority of students are helpful and polite and behave well in lessons. They move around the school with consideration for others and there is only a small amount of boisterousness when leaving school through the smaller entrances and exits. They are patient when waiting in the dining area and appreciate the quality of healthy food on offer.
- Students say they feel safe and are sure that any member of staff will help them if they are

worried or distressed. Students are clear about the different forms that bullying can take and how the internet and technology can be misused to bully and intimidate. They are given helpful information to keep themselves safe when out of school. Students spoken to agreed that bullying was rare but when it happened it was dealt with quickly and effectively. A small number of parents and some staff expressed a concern about poor behaviour but little was seen by inspectors and many instances of considerate behaviour were observed.

- Students in the sixth form contribute well to the school, for example, by listening to younger students reading, and to the wider community. They appreciate the extra experiences offered and say that the sixth form, 'provides opportunities to build individual skills'.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, although teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection, there remains too much teaching that is less than good. There have been frequent changes of staff and difficulties with recruitment and leaders and governors have taken steps to improve continuity by supporting new and less effective staff with specialist and more experienced teachers.
- Although the headteacher and all leaders monitor students' progress and evaluate the quality of the school's work, the rigour of evaluation is not yet consistent and is, at times, over generous. Some evidence of students' progress, for example, in written work is not used effectively to judge the impact of actions taken to raise attainment. The school's overall assessment of teaching is too generous at times and is not always based on the progress that students make.
- Leaders responsible for attendance have reviewed strategies which had been effective in improving attendance up to September 2012, and have established new approaches and actions to halt and reverse the decline. However, it is too early to identify their impact on reducing the proportion of students absent from school.
- The school's leadership team has increased the rigour of the performance management process, and, together with governors, have ensured that teachers who support good and better students' progress are rewarded and recognised by promotion and pay awards. Several leaders of subjects and some pastoral leaders have recently been given additional responsibility in the senior leadership team, in order to drive the necessary developments in teaching and learning, but it is too early to see the impact on students' improved progress and attainment.
- In the sixth form, leaders and manager have clear and perceptive structures and systems to support students and to develop the skills that students need to succeed in the future. This has enabled a very high proportion of students to progress on to higher and further education.
- The curriculum has been improved and involves a large number of students who previously attended provision off the school site. They are now well catered for in the vocational opportunities, such as hair and beauty and construction offered within the school, which supports good progression routes after Key Stage 4. Only a small number of students now attend provision off the school site. The school's Minority Trust has extensive links with local business and commerce and their networks successfully extend the curriculum experiences for students.
- The Bradford Education Partnership school improvement team has provided regular evaluative visits to the school and, in the most recent visit, described accurately both the strengths of the school and the areas that remained for development. The school values this support.
- The school's arrangements to safeguard students meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share the school's ambition to continue to improve students' attainment and progress. They are knowledgeable about how the pupil premium funding is used and scrutinise evidence of its impact. They know that students supported by this funding are improving their progress but also know that some of these students take too much time off school. The governors have challenged the headteacher and senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching more quickly but have not always used the evidence in external evaluation

reports to raise questions about the school's over positive view of teaching in some lessons. They understand clearly what the available data is telling them about students' progress and attainment and have agreed the headteacher's strategy to support new teachers in order to reduce the impact of the frequent staff changes on students' progress. The governing body is in full agreement with the headteacher that staff performance is to be recognised in direct proportion to students' rates of progress and levels of success.

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	107366
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	405100

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,581
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Johnson
Headteacher	Stephen Curran
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2011
Telephone number	01274 681455
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