

# Newton Abbot College

Old Exeter Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12 2NF

## Inspection dates

27–28 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	<b>Not previously inspected</b>	
	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.

- The drive for excellence shown by leaders and managers has strongly improved teaching and accelerated students' progress.
- Students achieve well. They make good progress and reach above-average standards by the end of Year 11.
- Teachers have high expectations and, as a result, students have good attitudes to learning.
- The sixth form is good. The school makes sure that students get the individual high-quality guidance they need to decide upon their future education, training or employment when they leave school.
- Additional government funding is used well to provide extra support and challenge for the groups who are entitled to the funding, who make excellent progress, especially in English.
- The behaviour of students and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Students are polite and well mannered and say they feel safe in school.
- The governing body is highly effective. It is fully aware of its leadership and management role. Governors have been closely involved in the school and have a very good understanding of its priorities.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. This enhances the harmonious atmosphere and ethos of mutual respect in school.
- Attendance in both the main school and sixth form is above average.
- The range of subjects caters well for the needs of all students.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of marking and feedback is not consistent across the school in providing advice to students about exactly what they need to do to improve their work.
- There is not enough high-quality teaching to make sure all students make rapid progress.
- Achievement in history and modern foreign languages is not as high as it should be.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 42 lessons, of which 12 were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of visits to assemblies and tutorial sessions and carried out short visits to classrooms across a range of subjects.
- Discussions were held with the deputy principal, senior and middle leaders, pastoral leaders and the Chair and other members of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors spoke to students in lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes. They also met with various groups of students.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation, including the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, and statistical information about students’ progress, achievement, behaviour and exclusions. They looked at the work of a wide range of students.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s documentation relating to the management of the work of staff, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, lesson observations, and arrangements for the safeguarding of students and for governance.
- Inspectors took into account the 88 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 45 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Christine Young, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Justine Hocking	Additional inspector
Sean Thornton	Additional inspector
Richard Steward	Additional inspector
David Nebesnuick	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Newton Abbot College converted to become an academy in July 2011. When its predecessor school, also called Newton Abbot College, was previously inspected by Ofsted in March 2011, it was judged to be good.
- Newton Abbot College is a larger-than-average-sized, mixed, 11 to 19 comprehensive school.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (This is additional money allocated by the government for looked-after children and those eligible for free school meals and students with a parent in the armed services.)
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below the national average, as is the proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is part of the Greater Newton Abbot Partnership with Teign School and Coombeshead Academy providing post-16 education and training.
- A small number of sixth form students attend off-site vocational training provision at the Brunel Centre.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress for secondary schools.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.

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

- Improve students' achievement in history and modern foreign languages.
- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that students make rapid progress in all classes by:
  - sharing the existing good and outstanding practice effectively across the school to enable teachers to learn from each other
  - ensuring that the quality of marking and feedback is consistently high across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students' achievement is good because they make good progress from their starting points. It is not yet outstanding because students' attainment in humanities and modern foreign languages is not yet in line with national averages.
- In 2013 the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was above the national average. Evidence from the school's own records about the current Year 11 students shows that attainment is rapidly improving.
- Three quarters of students achieved A\* to C grades English in 2013, which was above the national average. The school's accurate assessment of current students' performance shows that students' progress is equally rapid in mathematics. In both subjects, more students make and exceed the expected progress than in schools nationally.
- Students achieve well in the sixth form in the broad range of subjects offered through the consortium of three sixth form colleges providing post-16 education. Progress is good, especially in vocational subjects. The school's most recent tracking indicates that students are making better progress at A level.
- The progress of sixth form students is effectively monitored and focused support is put in place quickly for any individual underachieving. As a result, they do well in English literature, drama, physics, religious studies, art and photography as a result of high expectations and successful teaching.
- Students for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium make equally good progress as other students in English, which is above the national average. In mathematics the gap in progress is approximately one half of a GCSE grade behind their classmates; the school is meeting the needs of individual students and through carefully guided support, this gap in progress is rapidly narrowing.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively because the school provides good support for Year 7 students who find reading difficult. As a result, they are making good progress in improving their literacy skills.
- Year 7 students find the support they receive each week from sixth form students both enjoyable and very helpful.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve particularly well. The progress of individual students is very well tracked and staff make sure that they receive highly effective support.
- Students who attend alternative provision off site achieve as well as others. Their welfare and progress are carefully monitored.
- The college has a policy of not entering students early for GCSE examinations.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good, with some that is outstanding. The majority of teachers have high expectations of students and use assessment well to ensure that work is carefully matched to the different abilities in the majority of lessons.
- Teaching is especially good in English. Teachers' passion and excellent subject knowledge result in students' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for the subject. The quality of discussions between the teacher and Year 13 students in an English lesson about *Wuthering Heights* was very impressive in enabling students to explore characterisation and relationships in detail, and then apply this knowledge directly to the examination question.
- In more effective teaching, teachers are very skilled in improving learning and in developing an in-depth understanding of the topic being taught; teachers also help students understand how they learn best.

- Students entitled to free school meals for whom the school receives the pupil premium support are currently making better progress in English than their classmates. Previous underachievement by these students is being tackled and the gap is closing rapidly between their achievement and that of other students.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive well-targeted additional support from teachers and teaching assistants, including small-group and one-to-one teaching. Students speak highly of the extra help they receive.
- The school's learning and enrichment days add to students' engagement in their learning by offering different and challenging ways to learn.
- The school has correctly identified improving the quality of marking and feedback as an area for development. Some work, in different subjects, was marked regularly and students were provided with helpful comments outlining what they needed to do to improve.
- However, other work was marked infrequently or received no more than a tick. As a consequence, some students were unable to fully develop their learning effectively and make good progress, and this is why teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Sixth form students were particularly appreciative of the considerable extra help and support they receive.

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

- The behaviour of students is good; they have highly positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do their best in class. The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about behaviour and agree that their children are safe and happy in school. Behaviour is not yet outstanding because a small minority of teachers do not always display skilled and highly consistent behaviour management.
- Students' enjoyment of school is reflected in their excellent attendance, which is above average. Their excellent punctuality to lessons reflects their enthusiasm for their school and their learning.
- Students are good ambassadors for their school; they are calm, polite and courteous both in the classroom and around the school. They are well meaning, inquisitive and fun to talk to. They show a respect for each other and are proud of their school. The atmosphere in school is one of tolerance, sharing and learning together.
- The school has good systems for managing students' behaviour and also provide good-quality pastoral support. There are established and effective procedures for ensuring the good behaviour and safety of those students who attend off-site provision.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe. They understand risk and have a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that there is very little bullying in school and express great confidence that should any occur it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- All students, including those in the sixth form, take great pride in their school and demonstrate that they have a very clear and moral sense of what is right and wrong. They take part in fundraising activities for charities such as Cancer Research.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and well supported by the nurturing ethos of the school. Sixth form students take on extra roles of responsibility such as house captains and prefects and make a very positive contribution to the life of the school by supporting younger students, especially with their reading.
- Students' achievement is celebrated regularly. This promotes self-belief and encourages students to achieve the best they can. The school's focus on developing students' leadership capabilities, through core skills, enables all students to experience many opportunities to lead their own learning.

## The leadership and management are good

- The principal has a strong vision for inclusion for the school, and has been quick to implement the changes needed to address weaknesses in the quality of teaching in some departments. His aspirations for raising achievement for all students are reflected through the effective actions of his senior leadership team, and subject and pastoral managers.
- The school has introduced a more robust performance management system for teachers, which is accurate and clearly identifies the skills that need to improve. The quality of teachers' work and student progress is linked to pay progression and to the national Teachers' Standards. The College has a detailed programme of sharing best practice; there is a need to ensure that this training results in a further increase in the quality of teaching across the College..
- Students benefit from a wide range of additional enrichment activities; these include sports, arts and academic opportunities which greatly enhance leadership and learning. There are strong links with the local business community which provide excellent opportunities for work-related learning and mentoring for sixth form students.
- All students are well prepared for the next stage of their education training and employment.
- The school makes detailed and accurate analysis of its performance at every level. Students are set challenging targets. Leaders make very good use of this information in order to identify where extra help and support is needed to improve the progress of particular students.
- Newton Abbot Academy's collaboration with Teign School and Coombeshead Academy provides post-16 students with a wide-ranging sixth form curriculum that provides a wealth of opportunities for them to follow either academic or vocational courses.
- The school also offers sixth form students special programmes and individual guidance, which prepares students extremely well for higher education.
- Staff fully understand what is expected in the school. Students are given a grounding which develops their confidence, and skills to help them learn effectively and prepare them for their future. They receive strong careers advice to help them to plan routes into their chosen career paths.
- The school uses an independent school improvement partner to help with school assessment of how well it is doing.
- All safeguarding requirements are fully met. All staff are appropriately trained and are aware of child protection and risk-assessment procedures.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because the systems to effectively monitor achievement and progress have not yet resulted in students making outstanding progress.
- The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is demonstrated by its determination to give all students the chance to excel and achieve their potential.

### ■ The governance of the school:

Members of the governing body play a strong role in driving the school forward.

- Governors offer high-quality support to the school. They know how well the school is doing, and its strengths and areas for improvement.
- Regular meetings and visits are planned to help them maintain a robust and balanced overview of the effectiveness of the school and its management, and in particular, the quality of teaching. They have a sound understanding of performance data and how it compares with other schools nationally, and regularly update their training needs.
- The governing body is aware of how the school spends the pupil premium funding and works with the school to monitor the progress of students who are eligible for the additional support.
- The governing body is fully aware of the school's performance management system, and this helps governors to accurately assess teachers' performance against the pay they receive.
- The governors ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding.

## 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>	137124
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	441122

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,140
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	239
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marina North
<b>Principal</b>	Gareth Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2-3 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01626 367335
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