

# St Dunstan's School

Wells Road, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9BY

**Inspection dates** 10–11 September 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching is too uneven to secure good progress for all students.
- Not all teachers are constantly checking students' progress and adapting their lessons to provide the right levels of challenge, including for the least and most able students.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of work that the students can produce in lessons are too often not high enough.
- Teachers are not all making the best use of time in order to sustain students' good progress throughout the lesson.
- Some vulnerable students are not attending school regularly and this prevents them from achieving well.

### The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and headteacher are successfully developing the skills of governors and other leaders and managers to bring about more rapid improvements in the school.
- They are eradicating weak teaching through staff training and managing changes in staffing. They have established systems that are helping to bring about improvements in all areas of the school's work.
- Students' behaviour and safety have improved and are now good, and attendance overall is improving.
- Teaching and learning are improving. As a result, gaps in the achievement of students benefiting from the pupil premium, disabled students, those with special educational needs and the most able are beginning to close.
- GCSE results have improved over time and are now broadly average.
- There is a positive climate for learning in the school and staff morale is high.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 28 lessons taught by 27 teachers, some of which were observed jointly with senior staff. They also heard a small group of students reading.
- The inspectors held meetings with groups of students, teachers, senior and middle leaders, and members of the governing body. They held a telephone discussion with the local authority's Director of Learning and Achievement.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They examined a range of documents, including information on the monitoring of the quality of teaching and students' progress, attendance and behaviour, and also documents relating to improvement planning and the safeguarding of students.
- The inspectors examined students' work, with a particular focus on the impact of teachers' marking on students' progress.
- They took account of 24 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and questionnaires completed by 33 members of staff.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement for children looked after, on free school meals and the most able students. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of support services.

## Inspection team

Sue Frater, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Whitcombe

Additional Inspector

Malcolm Davison

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school converted to academy status in September 2011. This is the academy's second inspection. Since the previous section 5 inspection, in 2013, the headteacher has retired and Crispin School Academy in Street is providing an executive headteacher and a headteacher.
- The academy is much smaller than most secondary schools.
- The proportion of students eligible for support through the pupil premium is about average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents or carers in the armed forces, and students known to be eligible for free school meals. At this school, there are currently no children in the care of the local authority and very few whose parents are in the armed forces.
- The large majority of students are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. Needs relate mainly to social, emotional and mental difficulties.
- A very small number of students attend alternative provision at The Link Education Centre (Mendip), a centre for students with medical needs. The centre is on the same site as the school, but is not managed by it.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that all students make consistently good progress, by:
  - ensuring all teachers constantly check students' progress and adapt their lessons to provide the right levels of challenge, including for the most and least able students
  - making sure that all teachers have high expectations of the quality and quantity of work that the students can produce in lessons
  - helping teachers to make the best use of time, in order to sustain students' good progress throughout the lesson.
- Work with parents to improve the attendance of vulnerable students.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers are effective in bringing about improvements in all aspects of the school's work.
- The executive headteacher and headteacher are committed to improving students' achievement. To this end, they have inspired the staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to teachers visiting other schools to see and share good practice. They have also shared training with other schools. As a result, students' achievement is beginning to improve.
- To quicken the pace of improvements, the executive headteacher and headteacher are making sure that senior and middle leaders are developing effective skills in checking the quality of teaching and learning. This involves analysing information on students' progress, observing lessons, and examining students' work. This self-evaluation is becoming increasingly accurate.
- The self-evaluation is enabling the senior and middle leaders to hold their teams to account for the progress students make, and to challenge them to help any underachieving students, especially those benefiting from the pupil premium and students with special educational needs, to make as much progress as others. Consequently, previous gaps in students' learning are beginning to close.
- All leaders and managers model professional standards and contribute to school improvement planning. The improvements are supported by effective systems established by the executive headteacher and headteacher. These include systems for managing the performance and training of staff, and for helping staff to assess the progress of all students. The systems are leading to better teaching and learning, although inconsistencies remain.
- Procedures for marking students' work and for developing their literacy skills are applied consistently by all teachers. The procedures help students to know what to do to improve their work. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Students with weaker reading skills are supported well by reading programmes provided through the pupil premium and the Year 7 catch-up funding. The funding is also used to provide learning mentors who are effective in engaging underachieving students in their work.
- The headteacher manages resources in this small school efficiently and effectively to ensure that students can study a broad and balanced range of academic and vocational subjects to GCSE. He is rightly extending careers guidance to all year groups to support students in making informed choices about their next steps in education, employment and training.
- Lessons are longer than in many schools, but teachers do not always make effective use of the time to ensure all students make good progress.
- The curriculum is enhanced well by a variety of sporting and other activities. Visits, for example to the Houses of Parliament, and consideration of different faiths and beliefs make a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, in particular their understanding of life in modern Britain.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students, including those attending alternative provision, meet statutory requirements. Staff are well trained in identifying students at risk of harm and responding appropriately.
- The parents who responded to Parent View and who wrote to the inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school. The school regularly surveys its parents and acts on their responses. It recognises that more needs to be done to help some parents of vulnerable students to improve their children's attendance.
- Staff were also positive about the changes being made. They value the support provided by senior leaders for their professional development and in managing students' behaviour.
- The local authority rightly monitors the achievements of all students in the academy, including students eligible for support from the pupil premium, disabled students, those with special educational needs and the most able. When standards declined in the school to below the government's floor standards two years ago, it reported its concerns appropriately to the Department for Education (DfE). This prompted the governors to make the current successful leadership arrangements. Whilst it continues to monitor students' achievements, the local authority no longer provides any challenge and its support to schools is diminished. A greater role has been taken on by the Somerset Association of Secondary Headteachers under the title of the Somerset Challenge. The Somerset Challenge is at an early stage of development. The governing body continues to use the local authority's governor support services, which it finds invaluable.

### ■ The governance of the school:

- is developing expertise in holding senior leaders to account for the standards students reach
- is gaining an in-depth knowledge of the school through regular visits and scrutiny of information, including information about students' achievement, behaviour and attendance, and of the quality of teaching
- has challenged senior leaders to raise attendance to good effect as it is beginning to improve
- accurately compares the school's performance with other schools by using Ofsted's data dashboard and Raise online information
- monitors the impact of pupil premium spending on the students' achievement, which is improving
- understands the school's system for managing the staff's performance and how good teaching is rewarded and underperformance tackled
- manages the school's budget, which has lessened as the numbers on roll have decreased, effectively and efficiently, ensuring action plans and the deployment of staff and resources benefit all students
- makes sure that all statutory requirements, especially those relating to safeguarding students, are in place.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. It has improved since the last inspection. This is due to staff managing behaviour more consistently, and regular patrols of the school by the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Effective support for individual students with particular behavioural needs has led to marked improvements in their behaviour over time.
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive. Good working relationships with their teachers encourage students to contribute to lessons confidently, for example in reading aloud or answering questions.
- Students respond very quickly to the staff's instructions and requests, allowing lessons to flow smoothly. Low-level disruption in lessons has decreased significantly.
- There are no concerns expressed by parents, staff and students about behaviour and safety. Students understand the importance of good attitudes and manners in school life, adult life and work. They come well prepared for lessons and take more pride in the presentation of their work than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Staff have created a positive ethos in and around the school. Students conduct themselves well at different times of the day, including at lunchtime. They are tolerant of each other's differences.
- Students are punctual to lessons and, for most of them, their attendance is improving. However, attendance remains below average overall due to the persistent absence of a small minority of vulnerable students, including some who benefit from the pupil premium.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Absence is followed up rigorously.
- Through lessons such as information and communication technology, students gain a good awareness of different forms of bullying, including through social networking, and how to keep themselves safe from risks. There are few instances of bullying in the school and any concerns are dealt with effectively by the staff.
- Students say they feel safe at school and at the alternative provision because they know everyone and teachers know them well. The school's risk assessments, including for off-site provision, are appropriate. The parents who responded to Parent View all agree that their children feel safe in school.

### The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is uneven and has not led to consistently good progress and achievement over time for all students, including those benefiting from the pupil premium, disabled students, those with special educational needs, and the most able.
- This is because teachers are not all skilled in using their assessments to plan lessons at the right levels of challenge for the students' different starting points. In addition, they are not all checking students' progress during the lesson and adapting the activities, questions and pace of learning enough to sustain good progress for all.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality and amount of work that students can produce in the lesson are often not high enough. This leads to teachers not making the best use of time, and slows the rate of

learning and progress over time for the students. This was seen to be the case in some science lessons, for example, and contributes to underachievement in GCSE results in this subject.

- Nevertheless, teaching is improving because more teachers are getting better at using assessment to inform lessons. For example, in a Year 7 art lesson, the teacher checked that the students understood the techniques for shading, such as cross-hatching, by asking them to demonstrate this on mini-whiteboards. Seeing that not all students understood fully, she then adapted the lesson by modelling the techniques on a large whiteboard.
- All teachers mark students' work regularly and accurately. Their consistent use of the school's new marking policy across subjects is helping students to know what to do to improve their work. Students respond well to the teachers' comments, and this is beginning to raise standards.
- Staff training in the use of effective methods, particularly the use of questioning, is promoting better learning. Most teachers ask questions that extend the prior understanding of individual students. They also make a good contribution to developing students' skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants create a positive climate for learning in their lessons. Effective use of resources such as film and technology engage the students, and homework enhances their learning. In addition, senior and middle leaders now challenge the staff to identify appropriate support for underachieving groups. This is beginning to close the gaps in learning for these students.

### The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The school's information indicates that progress across year groups in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, is inconsistent. This is evident in students' work and it is because of the uneven quality of teaching.
- From each different starting point, the proportions of students making expected progress and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics are below national figures, except for the most able students in English. For disadvantaged students who benefit from the pupil premium, the proportions are below those for other students nationally and in the school.
- The attainment and progress of these disadvantaged students are also below those of other students nationally and in the school. In 2013, the students' results were just over a GCSE grade below that of others in the school in English and one and a half grades below in mathematics. However, the school's information on current students indicates that the gap is beginning to close. This is due to effective support from learning mentors and improvements in teaching.
- Due to the introduction of reading programmes, students are beginning to read widely and often.
- Students acquire knowledge and develop understanding, although not always quickly or securely, in a wide range of subjects. They are developing and applying a wide range of skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. This ensures that they are reasonably well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- The learning of groups of students, particularly those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs, and disadvantaged students, is beginning to improve. This is because of effective support from the special educational needs coordinator and teaching assistants.
- The learning and progress of the most able students are also beginning to improve. The school has recently appointed a coordinator to raise standards for gifted and talented students, but this work is at an early stage.
- Attainment at GCSE has improved over time and is broadly average. No students are entered early for GCSE examinations.
- Students in the medical unit make the same rates of progress as their peers in the school.

## 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>	137202
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	449066

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	372
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ray Tillbrook
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul James (Executive headteacher), Kevin Griffiths (Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 January 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01458 832943
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