

The Deanery Church of England High School and Sixth Form College

Frog Lane, Wigan, Lancashire, WN1 1HQ

Inspection dates 16–17 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students make expected, rather than good, progress throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Achievement is variable, especially in Key Stage 3, because the quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- Assessment of students' progress is not always accurate. Planning of work does not consistently take into account the levels at which students work and progress slows.
- The gap between the progress of disadvantaged students and other students has widened at Key Stage 3 because their provision is not planned carefully enough.
- Marking does not regularly tell students what they need to do next to make further progress nor do teachers check that advice has been taken.
- Students are not fully informed about future careers. Teachers' performance targets are not always measureable or sufficiently focused on ensuring that teaching improves as quickly as possible.
- Systems to organise, check and assess the learning and progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs, and to ensure that learning support assistants know their roles and how to support the students, are not fully established to support good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher provides strong, inspirational leadership which is driving improvement rapidly.
- Progress in English at Key Stage 4 is good.
- Students in the sixth form receive a good all-round standard of education and achieve well.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning and to each other are good. They feel safe in school.
- Students' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted very well.
- New assessment procedures are being developed timely to link with the curriculum.
- The governors challenge the school's work comprehensively and ask probing questions about how achievement and teaching are improving.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 36 lessons, of which eight were observed jointly with individual members of the senior leadership team. One inspector carried out a learning walk with the Key Stage 4 learning mentor.
- The inspectors talked with many students during the two days and spoke formally with five groups of students. They observed the students at break and lunch times and during registration periods and an assembly, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior and subject leaders, members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation including information about the achievement of the different groups of students represented in the school. They checked the school's improvement plan, looked at samples of the students' work and policies designed to help to keep them safe, and checked records of their behaviour and attendance.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took into account the 58 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 39 responses given by staff to the questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Thompson	Additional Inspector
Janet Peckett	Additional Inspector
Steven Baker	Additional Inspector
John Leigh	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most others of its type. The number on roll is increasing, following a dip for the last two years.
- Most students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is average. (The pupil premium funding is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- No students are educated off-site.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2013, having previously been the head of the sixth form. Since becoming headteacher she has made several appointments to senior and middle leadership and the senior leadership team has been restructured.
- The school works in partnership with four other local secondary schools as part of the Wigan consortium, in order to mutually support leaders and managers. It has close links with many local primary schools to provide specialist teaching and to prepare students for secondary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good, accelerates students' progress and raises standards, by making sure that:
 - teachers use the information that they have about students' achievement to plan teaching and work that matches accurately the levels at which students work and offers them good challenge
 - the learning support assistants know their roles and have the capacity to support students' needs well
 - marking always tells students how they can improve their work, as well as the quality of their learning, and teachers ensure their advice has been taken.
- Increase the impact of leaders and managers in raising students' achievement and preparing them for the future by ensuring that:
 - assessments of students' learning are accurate in all subjects
 - performance management targets are measurable and focus on driving improvements in teaching
 - there is a comprehensive programme of careers information and guidance from Year 8 to Year 11
 - good systems are established to organise and monitor and evaluate the learning, progress and support of disabled students and those who have special educational needs
 - the provision for disadvantaged students from Year 7 onwards is carefully planned and supported so that they progress at the same rates as other students in the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Although improvements have been made, the school still has a lot to do. Leaders know this. Achievement, particularly at Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching and the provision for, and achievement of different groups of students, are too variable and require improvement.
- This should not detract from the strong leadership of the headteacher and the difference she is making to students' academic and personal development through the strategies she is implementing. She has hit the ground running, based on an accurate understanding of the school's needs and a greater emphasis on students' progress. She is supported ably by the deputy headteachers, and senior leaders have established some good systems to help the school improve. Staff and governors say that the headteacher has transformed the school's ethos. She has made good, and sometimes hard, staffing decisions in order to improve the school.
- Since the previous inspection, thorough systems have been established to check the quality of teaching and students' progress more vigorously. This has been significant in improving the effectiveness of the sixth form. The school has doubts about the accuracy of some assessments, which may explain why the school, although achieving its best results this year at Key Stage 4, did not meet the targets it had set. The leaders of teaching organise regular observations of teaching and learning throughout the school year. Inspection evidence showed that the school's judgement about the proportion of good and better teaching is over-generous in some cases. However, in joint observations, inspectors and leaders found exactly the same strengths and areas for improvement.
- Teachers' performance targets have variable impact on improving teaching at a quick rate. Some targets are measureable and very helpful in promoting better-quality teaching. They do not all focus sufficiently robustly on driving teaching and progress forward.
- Middle leaders show real commitment to driving improvement. They are developing their skills in accurately evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their areas accurately and taking effective actions.
- However, planning and provision for disadvantaged students is not a sufficient focus from Year 7 to give the students the best chance of catching up with other students. Similarly, the systems in place to organise, check and assess the quality of learning and support are not fully in place.
- Leaders are considering carefully how to best assess students' learning, and to link it in to the curriculum. Learning is planned to a greater extent on students' individual needs, including extra literacy and numeracy. For example, a unit for students who speak English as an additional language has been set up this academic year.
- The curriculum offers an appropriate range of courses to suit the students' needs and aspirations, both academically and in their personal development. However, the students do not have the same chances of success in all of their subjects because work does not match the needs of all abilities and groups of students equally well.
- The careers information and guidance programme is not offering Year 8 to Year 11 students the full knowledge and support that they need to make informed choices about their futures. Interesting visits make learning more interesting, and after-school activities, which include the choir and lots of sporting activities, encourage the students to develop more skills.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well in learning and assemblies. An assembly to promote fundraising provided an excellent example of our roles and responsibilities as citizens. British values, such as tolerance for others, mutual respect, accepting others' views and supporting others, ran through the presentation.
- The school uses its partnerships with four local secondary schools for mutual support in strengthening leadership and management. The staff attend a range of meetings to strengthen teaching and learning. The school works closely with primary schools so that students feel comfortable when they join the school. The staff also visit primary schools and invite the pupils to The Deanery for specialist teaching and a range of activities.
- The parents, most of whom are very supportive of the school, are kept well-informed about their children's progress and attendance. The website and newsletters provide helpful information. Reports give parents wide ranging information about their children's achievement and their targets.
- The local authority has commissioned a wide range of high-quality support from very experienced consultants, to strengthen, for example, the science and modern foreign languages departments and to build-up the skills of middle leaders. The school is also receiving support from an outstanding school to

develop its provision for special educational needs.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors support and challenge the school comprehensively in both its promotion of students' academic and spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding through Year 7 to Year 13.
- They make sure that safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements. Systems to help ensure the students' safety are good. Governors have the appropriate training to oversee safeguarding.
- The governing body is delighted that the aspirations of the school are much higher than previously.
- The governors have a very good knowledge and understanding of what the school is doing well and its priorities for improvement. Governors have a range of skills which strengthen their effectiveness in overseeing the school's work. Although they receive comprehensive information from the headteacher, they find out much for themselves. The governors meet with leaders on an individual basis to question their work and impact. They take part in learning walks, attend staff briefings and have links with faculties.
- The governors have discussed with a senior leader the uses of pupil premium funding and the importance of narrowing the gap in achievement between those entitled to the funding and those who are not.
- The governors know that progress at Key Stage 3 requires improvement and that there are inconsistencies in achievement in mathematics and in the degree of accuracy of assessment of some learning. They are aware of the changes in assessment and the five-year plan.
- They understand the importance of performance management and that all targets must be met before pay rises are awarded.
- Finances are sound and the budget managed carefully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The behaviour of students is good.
- They show positive attitudes, both to school and learning, in lessons and round the school, through their smart appearance, punctuality to lessons and the tidiness of the classrooms and outdoor areas. They settle quickly to learning. This is mirrored in the sixth form.
- Almost all students want to learn. A few become restless when teaching does not interest or challenge them. When teaching is good, they get really involved in discussions and in sharing their opinions.
- The students get on well together, in what they consider to be a friendly school. Older students help the younger students, including in their reading.
- The school's work to keep the students safe and secure is good. The students say that the very large site is secure. They are confident that the staff will help them with any academic or personal concerns.
- The students are very aware of potential dangers, through teaching. They know the dangers of using the internet and through the school they learn different ways of keeping themselves safe and healthy.
- The school's ethos promotes fairness and equality to all, whatever their differences. The students seem to take this on board. The very low number of bullying incidents supports this.
- Attendance continues to improve and is slightly above average for all groups. The number of students who are persistently absent has fallen. This is due to prompt checking of attendance and good procedures to improve it, including involving parents.
- The proportion of students excluded from school has also fallen significantly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is of variable quality, between subjects, year groups and groups of students, including in English and mathematics. Over time it slows some students' progress. This is in contrast to teaching in the sixth form.
- Teaching does not consistently factor-in the particular needs of the students, such as those who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants are not always clear about their role or how to support specific students effectively.
- Planning does not consistently consider carefully the range of abilities represented in the class, so that work is too easy for some and presents too much challenge for others. A scrutiny of students' work provided further evidence of this and showed that the most able and the least able were similarly

disadvantaged in some learning.

- Marking is also variable, in its regularity and in its helpfulness in helping the students to make further progress. When advice is given it is not generally apparent that it has been acted on. Marking, at its best, is very helpful to the students in guiding their next steps and in making them think more deeply. Checks during lessons ensure any misconceptions are addressed.
- Students learn well, and sometimes very well, in lessons which interest and involve them. In these lessons, expectations of students' work and effort are high.
- The teachers use questioning skilfully to make students think more carefully and deeply.
- Students enjoy problem-solving. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson, the students were engrossed in ensuring accurate calculations of angles in a circle theorem. A real strength was that they took responsibility for their learning, including assessing their performance and how it could be bettered.
- Most students present and lay out their work very neatly, taking pride in what they do.
- Literacy and numeracy are increasingly practised in other subjects, with, for example, good practice in food technology.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement, particularly at Key Stage 3, and especially in mathematics and science in Years 8 and 9 and in English in Year 9. Teaching is too variable to support good achievement in all subjects and at both key stages. This starts in Year 7, where not enough attention is always paid to what students already know or can do.
- Although students now join Year 7 with average levels of attainment, older students joined Year 7 with well-above average levels of attainment. Last year, due to significant variations in performance between subjects, the students' GCSE results showed that they had not made the progress expected of them overall. This year, there has been an improvement in the school's GCSE results. However, the school knows that progress rates still need to quicken and are working to improve them.
- Not enough students make better than expected progress in English and particularly in mathematics across the school because of the inconsistency in teaching and expectations.
- However, standards have risen steadily over recent years in the proportion of students who achieve five A* to C grades, including in English and mathematics. They are now above average. There have also been good improvements in subjects where achievement was well-below average last year, including business studies and psychology. Performance is strong in some subjects, such as physical education.
- Students' progress in English at Key Stage 4 has risen further this year and is good. Lower-ability students achieved particularly well. Higher-ability students made good progress in English at Key Stage 4. Progress in mathematics has fallen and is in line with what is expected nationally.
- Overall, middle-ability students continue to achieve less well than other ability groups because the work they are given does not cater well for their needs.
- Not enough of the most able students achieve A* and A grades, which has stuck at 20% for three years, again because they are not always challenged accurately or have opportunities to develop higher-order skills. Not enough make better than expected progress across subjects, although it did improve this year.
- Those students who join Year 7 without having reached the expected standards in English and mathematics receive individual and small group support to build-up their skills, through the government's catch-up funding. Last year, two-thirds of students reached the standards expected for their age in English, with half reaching the mathematics' standards. Support for those who did not reach the standard continues.
- The school has focused much of its efforts on raising standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3 there is some inconsistency in progress between different groups of students and across year groups. The school is now monitoring much more thoroughly how well these students are learning.
- Most groups make expected progress, including disabled students and those with special educational needs. As with other groups, progress is generally quicker at Key Stage 4 than Key Stage 3. Students who speak English as an additional language achieve well because the staff know their needs well and deliver specific support for their needs.
- Disadvantaged students receive additional help, including one-to-one support in literacy and numeracy. More vocational courses and a programme of counselling have been introduced. Free breakfast is provided. In Year 11 in 2013, the attainment of disadvantaged students was a grade behind other non-disadvantaged students in the school in English and two thirds of a grade behind in mathematics. Their

attainment was similar to disadvantaged students nationally. In 2014, this gap narrowed in English but widened in mathematics. In Key Stage 3, gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other non-disadvantaged students have widened.

- Almost all students sat GCSE mathematics earlier than the summer of Year 11 last year, achieving an above average proportion of A* to C grades. This year, one third of students entered early. Students were also entered early, for example, in music and an above average proportion gained A* to C passes.
- After Year 11, all students join the sixth form or go into further education or training.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Students join the sixth form with below average standards. 90% of the students join from Year 11. The number on roll is increasing and most students stay on to Year 13.
- There is a good transition programme at the end of Year 11 as a bridge from Year 11 to Year 12.
- Students achieve well in Years 12 and 13, due to good leadership and management, which has resulted in improvements to the curriculum, effective teaching and regular guidance and support. The curriculum has been updated and meets the needs and aspirations of the students well. The minimum standards are met.
- The staff know their students well and their rates of progress. Progress in all types of courses improved in 2014 and was either in line or above national averages. There is a three-year upward trend in attainment and markedly so for AS and vocational courses.
- Students' attainment at A level has also improved well, but less so than at AS level.
- Those who have not achieved a minimum of a 'C' grade in English and mathematics in Year 11 resit these subjects. An above-average proportion of students, compared to nationally, reach the required standard in English. In mathematics, results match the national average.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning and good skills in note taking and learning for themselves. They organise their time well.
- The sixth form helps to develop the students' personal, social and employability skills through an enhancement programme which students value for its breadth and its help in preparing them for the future. They enjoyed a soldering activity during the inspection and recognised its relevance.
- Advice and guidance is good. Students visit higher-education establishments, industry, and attend conferences. Progress tutors and the study support manager provide effective support so that the students make good progress.
- Students' progress is reviewed regularly, through a well-developed tracking system and students and their parents meet with the tutor to identify any support that is needed.
- The students are involved in the life of the school, including supporting the younger students with reading. They are good role models in their mature attitude to learning and the example they set to younger students.

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	106534
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	444699

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
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	1,283
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	158
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Hutchinson
Headteacher	Janice Rowlands
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2013
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