

North Bromsgrove High School

School Drive, Stratford Road, Bromsgrove, B60 1BA

Inspection dates 2–3 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- As a result of strong leadership, and a clear drive from the headteacher to improve teaching, achievement in school is good. Students are now making good progress from their starting points on joining the school in Year 9.
- Since the last inspection governors have taken effective action. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and needs of the school. They provide both good support and challenge to the headteacher.
- A clear focus on improving the progress of disadvantaged students supported by additional government funding has had a positive impact. These students make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving strongly.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good. Good support from additional staff and the work of the school's additional specialist resource provision has ensured that these students make good progress.
- Students say they feel safe, and well cared for. Good relationships exist between students and with staff which create a calm, welcoming school.
- Students' behaviour is good and this has improved since the last inspection. They behave well in lessons, enjoy class discussions and take pride in their work.
- Subject leadership in many subjects is good and has made a considerable contribution to students' achievement. Leadership in the sixth form is also good and has halted a decline in standards and ensured that students are now making quicker progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet making sure that all groups of students make outstanding progress. Teaching is now accelerating the progress of students in the sixth form.
- In some lessons tasks do not sufficiently match the different abilities of the students, particularly the most able.
- Expertise is not shared well enough so that teachers and leaders are learning from the best in school.
- Students are less confident with using numbers in lessons other than mathematics.
- The sixth form requires improvement as students have not made good progress in both A and AS level in a range of subjects. However, this is improving quickly.
- Although improving quickly, there continues to be gaps between the achievement and attendance of disadvantaged students and their classmates.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students’ learning in 36 lessons, some jointly with members of the senior leadership team, and also observed students in assembly, tutor time and around school during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with students from each year group, including the sixth form, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team analysed a range of information about examination results, attendance, curriculum plans, minutes of governing body meetings, students’ work, information about students’ progress, performance management documents, and the school’s own self review documents.
- Inspectors considered the views of 78 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted’s on line questionnaire, and 46 responses from Ofsted’s staff questionnaire

Inspection team

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Full report

Information about this school

- Students join the school in Year 9 from a number of middle schools in the local area.
- North Bromsgrove High School is a smaller than average secondary school with a sixth form.
- The large majority of students in the school are of White British heritage.
- Just under a fifth of students in the school are supported by the pupil premium funding (additional government funding that provides support to disadvantaged students known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority). This is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below the national average. This represents just under a fifth of students in the school.
- A small number of students attend course away from the school at Heart of Worcestershire College.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for students with autistic spectrum disorder. Ten students are currently supported by this provision but are taught with their classmates for the majority of the time.
- Based on the unvalidated 2014 results, the school meets the government's 2013 floor standards. These are the minimum standards expected for students' learning and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the achievement of all students and groups of students to outstanding, and in particular those supported by the pupil premium and the most able by:
 - ensuring that all teaches plan tasks that precisely match the students' abilities, in particular the most able
 - insisting that all students act on the variety of feedback they receive so that this leads to improvement in their knowledge, skills and understanding
 - developing regular opportunities for all students in all subjects beyond mathematics to explore the application of numbers and develop problem solving skills
 - leaders consolidating the successful strategies already in place to narrow the gap between the achievement and attendance of disadvantaged students and their peers in school and nationally
 - enabling all teachers and leaders to have regular opportunities to learn from the best practice in school.
- Improve the effectiveness of the sixth form by ensuring that students' progress accelerates further by enhancing the improvements already made to the quality of teaching and the tracking of students' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has taken decisive action to improve the quality of leadership, teaching and behaviour in school. A new leadership structure across the school has enabled the key areas for improvement to be quickly addressed. All leaders in school are very clear of the school's priorities and their responsibilities. This has made a difference as groups of students now make good progress and is one example of how leaders make sure that all students have the same opportunities to succeed.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of the current strengths and areas for development in teaching and ensure that a detailed programme of training and coaching is provided. As a result teaching in school is good and improving. However, not all the expertise is fully shared.
- Leadership in English and mathematics is strong. As a consequence, achievement in English and mathematics has improved considerably since the last inspection. Students are now taught these subjects every day and this has contributed to increasing students' confidence and skills. There is a clear strategy for improving students who are weaker at reading in school. Students following the school's reading scheme are making good progress. Improving students' reading and writing skills in lessons other than English is good. Developing confidence with numbers is not consistently explored in lessons other than mathematics.
- Staff are successfully focused on improving the achievement of disadvantaged students. This focus is driven highly effectively by the deputy headteacher and a skilful team of staff who track student achievement and attendance. They ensure that extra support through the pupil premium funding is provided quickly and students are supported to do well in their learning. This fund is allocated to extra revision classes, work with parents and students to raise attendance and to improving the quality of teaching. Leaders are very aware that despite improvements, the gaps in students' achievement compared to other students nationally are still wide.
- Subject leaders are held to account for the work of their team, and the progress all students make. The tracking of students' progress is regular and thorough. Leaders of English, mathematics and science track student progress very effectively so ensure that no student falls behind by providing a range of support to small groups and individuals who are in need of more help. There are many examples of strong leadership in school that is not always shared so that leaders learn from each other, to accelerate students' progress.
- Leadership of the specialist resource provision is good. Students make good progress and achieve well as a result of good levels of support in lessons by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Leadership of the sixth form is now more effective than at the time of the last inspection. A good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the sixth form, improvements to the quality of teaching, high expectations of students and more regular checks on how quickly students are learning, are all contributing to students making better progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced offering a range of academic and skills based subjects across the school, including in the sixth form. There is good planning now taking place to review the curriculum to respond to recent national changes. Leaders guide and advise students well in their subject choices so that they have clear routes for further study beyond their time at school.
- Leaders and teachers work well in partnership with local middle schools to develop accurate assessment and curriculum expertise. This ensures that students have as smooth a transition as possible into high school and allows leaders to be increasingly secure about the attainment of students on entry to the school in Year 9.
- Students' personal development is well catered for throughout their time at school. They experience a wide range of creative, social, cultural and sporting activities during and out of school hours. The introduction of personal, social and health education days each half term has provided excellent opportunities to explore demanding issues such as domestic violence, drugs education as well as time to

reflect on the impact of the centenary of the First World War and future career choices. There are a number of very attractive and thought provoking murals around school that capture these important experiences.

- The curriculum, including religious education and assemblies, promotes tolerance and respect for diversity through a carefully considered programme of themes across the school.
- All safeguarding requirements are met and the school works well to keep students safe.
- Students studying courses away from school attend regularly and make good progress as a result of good systems in place to support these students and providing extra help when needed.
- The school benefits from a good level of support from the local authority which includes regular checking of the school's progress and training subject leaders in assessing the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Following a full review of governance, the governing body acted quickly to change its structure and increase the contact that they have with leaders, staff, students and parents. The governors have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development, they have structured their roles and responsibilities to oversee and provide challenge in these areas of school. The governors are regularly provided with information about the progress of students and groups of students in school and how they compare nationally, and they keep under review the impact of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged students. The governing body provide both good support and challenge to the headteacher. Performance management of the headteacher and all staff is rigorous and linked to the quality of teaching, which governors know well. Governors carry out their statutory duty with regards to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students, including those supported by the school's specialist resource provision respond well to the school's high expectations and feel valued. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and as a result during breaks and lunchtimes the school is calm and orderly.
- Leaders manage behaviour and attendance very effectively; few incidents of low level disruption in lessons were observed during the inspection. Students get on with their work quickly and can manage themselves well in class discussions, although on occasions some students lack enthusiasm for their learning.
- Careful analysis of information by dedicated teams that support each year group, ensure that appropriate support is provided for those students who need it with managing their own behaviour. These teams work closely with parents to build good relationships with school, this is evidence in the increased attendance at parents evening.
- Behaviour is good in the sixth form and students enjoy good relationships with their classmates and they feel safe.
- Attendance is above average. Disadvantaged students attend less regularly than their classmates but this is improving as a result of carefully planned support and interventions.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, and those supported by the specialist resources provision, say they feel safe and well cared for. They understand about different

types of bullying, and how to keep themselves safe on the internet, if there are any incidents of bullying they are dealt with swiftly. One student commented during the inspection 'best thing about this school is how respectful students are of each other'.

- The school's work to keep those who are vulnerable safe from harm is good. Leaders are quick to involve a range of different agencies to provide the appropriate support needed.
- Clear procedures are in place to ensure that students who study courses away from school are safe and behave well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and improving strongly as a result of decisive action taken by senior leaders following the last inspection. There are also good improvements to the quality of teaching in the sixth form. Leaders have skilfully provided teachers with a range of training and coaching opportunities to improve students' progress, and address school priorities. As a result, students and groups of students make good progress from their starting points.
- Where students learn well teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan activities that inspire and engage students in their learning. Questioning in geography, English and history is very effective in deepening students' understanding so that they make good progress in their work.
- In practical subjects resources are carefully selected and well prepared, students demonstrate a real passion for expressing themselves through their drawings and designs. The standard of work displayed in art, and other practical areas around school shows the many excellent opportunities for students to be creative and reflective about the world in which they live. In art, practical work is both moving and thought provoking. One piece of A level art work based around the twin towers in New York was exceptional because of the depth of thought and understanding explored in the image.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs also experience good teaching. Students supported by the school's specialist resource provision are taught with their classmates. Teachers plan well to meet these students' needs and teaching assistants provide good support to help students develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching is improving the progress students make because students' work is assessed in more detail. In examination classes, students' learning is being enhanced by gaining an understanding of how to be successful and teachers use their questions to find out what students understand in order to deepen their learning.
- Teachers plan for the different abilities in their classes better than at the time of the last inspection. However, this is still not good enough to accelerate progress to outstanding and in particular for the most able.
- The marking of students' work has improved considerably since the last inspection. For example, in English, mathematics, geography and art examples of very thorough feedback to students about their work, clearly helps students understand exactly what they need to do to improve, this is improving across all other subjects. Students' are not consistently acting well on the variety of feedback they receive and as a result are not developing their knowledge, skills and understanding across all subjects.
- Developing reading and writing skills in subjects other than English is good. Teachers in subjects other than mathematics, do not include enough opportunities in lessons to explore using numbers to increase students' confidence and skill.
- Good relationships between students and teachers make a considerable contribution to students' improved achievement.

- Teacher research projects are a strong contributing feature of the school's plan for developing teaching and accelerating students' progress. This year all teachers are taking part in individual research projects to improve their practice, linked to their performance management. For example, some projects are exploring how to further develop students' thinking skills and independence to improve students' understanding and responses to questions.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join the school in Year 9 with slightly below average levels in English and mathematics. They make good progress and the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics in 2013 and 2014, have been well above the national average.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students has improved significantly since the last inspection. From when they joined the school at different levels of abilities they are now making good progress in relation to other students in school and other students nationally. Gaps in the achievement of these students and their peers remain but they are narrowing.
- The published data on progress does not accurately reflect the progress that students at all levels of abilities make. This is because published data tracks progress from Year 7 to Year 11 and students arrive to this school in Year 9. From their slightly below average starting points in Year 9 students make good progress as is confirmed by the school's records and analysis of the quality of students' learning over time.
- At the time of the last inspection disadvantaged students attained about a grade and half lower than their classmates in English and mathematics. This year's results show the gap has reduced to a grade difference in English compared to other students in school and less than a grade compared to other students nationally. In mathematics the gap has widened slightly compared to other students in school, but narrowed very slightly when compared to other students nationally to under a grade and a half. Information in school shows that students currently in school are making quicker progress than those in previous years.
- Students supported by the specialist resource provision make good progress, as a result of regular checking of their work so that all students achieve their targets.
- Inspectors' observations of the quality of different groups of students' learning, the school's records and the work seen in students' books show that disadvantaged students are making good progress from their starting points in Year 9.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, including students supported by the specialist resource provision, make good progress. This is the result of the good support they receive in lessons.
- More able students make good progress and this has improved since the previous inspection. However, like their classmates their progress is not yet outstanding.
- Results in 2014 show that more students achieved A and A* grades in their GCSEs than previously. The proportion of A and A* grades achieved in English language, English literature, science, art and design, and geography were all above the national average.
- The school no longer enters students for GCSE examinations early. When it was used it did not have a negative impact on the achievement of the most able.
- Leaders have put in place a number of strategies to help improve students' literacy and numeracy skills. Actions taken to accelerate students' reading skills are generally having a good impact. The strategy for developing confidence with numbers is less developed in subjects other than mathematics.
- Achievement in the sixth form improved in 2014 and these improvements are continuing for students

currently in the school. However, the progress they make in all subjects is not yet good.

- Students who follow courses studied away from school, gain appropriate qualifications and make similar progress to that of their classmates.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- Students' achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. However, this is improving quickly as a result of effective leadership that has tackled previous weaknesses.
- Students do not achieve in line with other students nationally, shown by the below average proportions of students who attain A* to B and A* to E grades at both AS and A level across a range of subjects. This is however, improving quickly.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of the current strengths and weaknesses of the sixth form and a good improvement plan in place that has already made a positive difference. Leaders took swift action to ensure students are on the right courses and introduced regular checks on the quality of students' work, so that staff are able to intervene quickly and provide support where there are concerns.
- The quality of teaching is improving. Historically, teaching has not enabled students to make sufficient progress. However, there is now much more teaching that is having a good impact and these improvements have accelerated as a result of skilful leadership in the sixth form.
- Leaders ensure that students who joined the sixth form without a C grade in GCSE English or mathematics are supported to achieve both.
- Students talk positively about the experience of the sixth form, feel safe, and value the relationship they have with their teachers. The school's personal development programme provides for a range of enrichment opportunities, for example, working in the community and supporting younger students in the main school. Students' behaviour is good as are their attendance rates.
- All students who left the sixth form in 2014 have progressed either to university or onto an apprenticeship programme. This provides good evidence of the increasingly successful impact of the sixth form.
- Students have good opportunities to be involved in work experience related to their interests and courses of study.

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	116928
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	454724

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	13–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	810
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebekah Nash
Headteacher	David Hadley-Pryce
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2013
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