

Wilnecote High School

Tinkers Green Road, Wilnecote, Tamworth, B77 5LF

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Inadequate 4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils	Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Students enter the academy with broadly average prior attainment but leave with attainment that is well below national average.
- This year the number of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at A* to C including English and mathematics, fell sharply to well below average.
- Students underachieve in English and mathematics, particularly middle ability students. Attainment and progress has been particularly weak in mathematics over time.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students is well below that of others in the academy.
- Weaknesses in teaching over time have led to a lack of challenge and low expectations of what students can achieve in many subjects including English and mathematics.
- Work in students' books often shows a lack of pride in their learning. Although marking is improving, written comments do not always help students to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Attitudes to learning are variable across subjects and students report that in some lessons frequent low level disruption interferes with their learning.
- Behaviour and safety are inadequate overall. In some areas, a lack of adequate supervision and poor maintenance of the building mean that students are not always safe. Behaviour around the academy and at break times requires improvement.
- In English and mathematics, subject leaders have not had enough impact on improving teaching and learning for all groups of students.
- Senior leaders and governors do not have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. They do not adequately address the link between poor rates of progress and poor teaching.
- Governors have been too dependent on the views of senior leaders and have not sufficiently held them to account for the poor progress of many students.

The school has the following strengths

- Students with disabilities or special educational needs make better progress than other students in the school.
- Most students say they feel safe in school and that teachers care for them well.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place with no notice given to the school.
- Inspectors observed 32 lessons of which six were joint observations with academy leaders. A number of shorter visits were also made to lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, groups of students and with governors.
- A range of academy documentation was scrutinised, including self evaluation information, assessment and student progress records, school improvement documents, policy documents, including those for safeguarding, and case studies for vulnerable students.
- Inspectors specifically evaluated work from students in Year 7 to Year 10 in English and mathematics.
- Inspectors took account of 56 responses to Parent View, the on-line questionnaire, and the views of 53 members of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Keith Brown	Additional Inspector
Joseph Skivington	Additional Inspector
Neil Morris	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Wilnecote High School is an average sized 11-16 secondary academy. It converted to become an academy in November 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- Most students are of white British origin.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of students eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, which is additional funding for those students known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average.
- Some Key Stage 4 students follow vocational courses at Torc Vocational Centre and two students attend Kettlebrook Short Stay School.
- The academy provides a resource base for students diagnosed with autism.
- The academy meets 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 to at least good, particularly in English and mathematics, so that achievement improves significantly by:
 - eradicating inadequate teaching and reducing the amount that requires improvement through rigorous and accurate monitoring and prompt action that is evaluated carefully for impact
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations and are supported to use assessment information effectively to plan lessons that build rapidly on students' achievements from their starting points and provide increased challenge, particularly for middle ability students and disadvantaged students
 - sharing more effectively existing good practice to improve teachers' questioning so that students are challenged to develop their oral responses, using subject-related language where appropriate
 - improve the quality of marking so that there are higher expectations of both the quality and quantity of work set and students know exactly what to do to make progress.
- Improve the management of behaviour so that it is good in all lessons and at all times of the day around the academy by:
 - ensuring that all teachers deal with low level disruption in lessons effectively and promptly
 - increasing supervision at break and lunch times, particularly in those areas where students are at some distance from academy buildings.
- As a matter of urgency, improve safety around the building by:
 - carrying out an audit of repairs and safe storage needed, acting rapidly on this information.
- Take rapid action to improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders rapidly and rigorously address weaknesses in teaching and learning, taking all appropriate evidence into account, so that judgements made are accurate and lead to effective action
 - ensuring that senior and middle leaders have a clear understanding of what constitutes good achievement and therefore an accurate view of the academy's performance in comparison to other schools nationally
 - improving leadership of English and mathematics, so that those responsible have a clearer view of what needs to be done to improve students' progress and take an active role in raising achievement in

their subjects

- evaluating the way in which pupil premium can be more effectively used so that it has a significantly greater impact on closing the gap between these students and others in the school
- ensuring that the governing body more rigorously holds academy leaders to account for the quality of teaching and achievement.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders do not make a clear link between poor rates of progress and the quality of teaching. Actions taken to improve teaching have not been targeted closely enough to tackle underperformance in key areas.
- Leaders do not have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching in the academy because they put too much emphasis on observation of individual lessons, rather than taking into account the impact of teaching on achievement, to inform their judgements.
- Those responsible for monitoring students' achievement place too much emphasis on students who do make progress and not enough on those who do not. This means that interventions are not rapid enough to close the gaps between some groups of pupils, including for those students in receipt of the pupil premium funding.
- Poor leadership has led to achievement fluctuating between subjects year on year. For instance, this year the gap between disadvantaged students and others narrowed in mathematics but increased in English. Consequently, while there have been some improvements since the academy opened, this is inconsistent.
- The pupil premium funding has not been used well enough to improve the progress of this group of students.
- Some subject leaders have not received clear guidance and good support to help them develop the necessary skills to make the significant contribution that is required to improve achievement.
- Subject leaders in English and mathematics lack a clear view of what needs to be done to improve students' progress in their subjects and therefore they do not take a sufficiently active role in raising achievement.
- Students are not always safe around the academy because some sections of the building are in poor repair and because broken and potentially hazardous equipment is stored in places that are used by students during break and lunchtimes.
- Since becoming an academy, leaders have reviewed the policy and systems for performance management in the light of national changes. The 2013-2014 cycle had not been completed at the time of the inspection. This year it is intended that targets will be linked more closely to student achievement and be set in accordance with the career stages of teachers.
- Inadequate achievement overall and significant gaps between groups of students mean that equality of opportunity is not effectively provided. Discrimination is dealt with effectively in the school and pupils say that any bullying on the grounds of difference is dealt with quickly.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements and all necessary systems are in place.
- The curriculum (the subjects taught) meets the needs of students. A range of GCSE and vocational options are offered. Those students who attend alternative provision for vocational qualifications make expected progress in their chosen courses.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is delivered well through tutor time, assemblies, religious education and citizenship lessons and is well supported by visiting speakers and companies. As a result, students feel that they have many opportunities to learn about other beliefs, values and cultures. There is a good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities.
- Year 7 catch up funding has been spent effectively so that students in this year group are making substantial gains in their reading skills since the introduction of the new reading programme.

- The academy keeps parents informed of their children’s progress and most of those who responded to Parent View were positive about the work of the school.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to employ newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body does not have sufficient expertise to hold academy leaders to account. Members are overly reliant on information provided by leaders. Governors do not have a clear understanding of the standards in the school and are not involved enough in improvement planning to know what needs to be done to secure rapid improvement. They do not have a good knowledge of how pupil premium has been spent or its impact on improving progress. They have recently embarked on a recruitment drive to secure the expertise they need and have established links between governors and subject areas to facilitate regular reports on student progress.
 - Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and fulfil their statutory duties. However, they have not ensured that the school building is safe. They are informed about the performance management of staff but do not currently have a good enough understanding of the quality of teaching to provide the necessary challenge to academy leaders.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The academy’s work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate. There are too many hazards around the building that have not been addressed and supervision in these areas is not good enough.
- The behaviour of students requires improvement. In some lessons low level disruption prevents others from learning. This is particularly the case where teaching is not good enough so that students become bored and look for distractions.
- Where teaching is good, students show positive attitudes to learning and high levels of engagement because they are challenged to think hard and make contributions to their own learning, which they enjoy.
- Behaviour around the academy during the school day, including between lessons, at breaks and at lunchtime is variable. Many students are polite and behave well, but a significant minority are overly boisterous and some gravitate towards areas of the building that are not well supervised in order to behave unacceptably. These areas are characterised by offensive graffiti.
- The academy has introduced a new behaviour system which students say is beginning to have an impact. They say that it is easy to understand and that it is fair to all.
- The academy works well with students at risk of exclusion through the use of its social inclusion room so that exclusions are low.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe, including online. They are aware of all forms of bullying and say that the academy deals rapidly with incidents of bullying when they occur. Detailed records of bullying are kept well and show that such incidents are low.
- Most students say that they feel safe at the academy. However, some say that there are areas in the school where they will not go because, they say, they might be bullied.
- Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Teaching, in too many subjects, does not sufficiently improve students' progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Where improvement has been achieved in a subject in one year, often standards have dropped again in the next.
- Most teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan lessons that set high expectations and challenge students in order for them to make good progress from their starting points.
- Weak, undemanding teaching, evident in some subjects, has led to students' poor attitudes to learning and low level disruption.
- Some teachers do not actively help students to develop good attitudes to learning and they accept compliance as engagement. Consequently, many students take little pride in their written work so that work books are characterised by graffiti and scruffy writing. Students have little notion of the benefits of presenting their work well.
- There is little evidence that the literacy policy, introduced last year, is having an impact. This is because spellings and grammatical errors are left uncorrected in too many subjects and students often do not apply their literacy skills in subjects other than in English.
- A new marking policy has been introduced and the vast majority of teachers are putting this into practice so that there has been some improvement. However, the quality of advice given varies considerably across subjects and teachers. Too often comments do not help students to understand precisely what they need to do to reach their targets and few teachers routinely check that students have responded to advice given. Some students do not know what their targets are.
- Training to improve teachers' use of questioning has not improved teaching across all subjects. Too much questioning requires only short answers and teachers do not routinely require students to develop and extend their responses through further, probing questions.
- In the past, the quality of teaching in mathematics has been undermined by shortages of specialist teachers and frequent staff changes. This has improved since September 2013, but there is still not enough good teaching to make the rapid improvement that is required.
- Where teaching is good, particularly in ICT, history and geography, questioning is effective, engaging students in their learning and providing high levels of challenge that students strive to meet. In these subjects, teachers use assessment well to guide their planning and have high expectations of what students can achieve. Consequently, students make good progress.
- Teaching assistants work effectively to support students who are disabled or who have special educational needs. They often have a positive impact on the progress of these students because they know them well and understand their needs, including when to encourage students to work alone. However, teachers do not routinely involve teaching assistants in planning lessons, so that sometimes their skills are not adequately used. For instance, in an English lesson most of the time was spent in reading a class novel aloud so that the teaching assistant was unable to contribute.

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Students enter the academy with broadly average skills. When they leave, attainment and progress are significantly below national averages.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above, including English and mathematics is likely to be well below average in 2014 and significantly lower than the previous year.

- The proportion of students making progress in line with their starting points in English and mathematics is well below national expectations. Rates of progress in English have dropped substantially from an already low base and they have only slightly increased in mathematics, from a similarly low base. In some cases, the level of students' skills declined over their time in the academy rather than improved.
- In 2013, the most able students made progress that was significantly below the average for their group nationally. This resulted in standards for this group that were significantly below average. As for most other groups of students, this represents inadequate achievement from their starting points, although the academy's own data indicate that achievement for this group has improved this year.'
- Standards across subjects are variable and fluctuate from year to year, other than ICT where achievement has been at least good since the academy opened. This year standards in history, geography and French showed a marked improvement.
- The academy's assessment records show that middle ability students make the least progress. However, the academy's outline for school development makes no mention of specific actions to address the needs of this group.
- The academy is not currently entering students early for GCSE.
- Students who are supported through pupil premium funding make substantially less progress than other students in both English and mathematics. Although the gap has narrowed this year in mathematics, it has increased in English. This means that these students are over one GCSE grade behind their peers in both subjects.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs, including those who attend the resource base, make better progress over time from their starting points than other students in the school. Those with statements of special educational needs, or with education, health and care plans, often make good progress both in comparison with their peers in school and in relation to national standards.
- Students who attend alternative provision make at least expected progress and usually complete their courses successfully. Their attendance and progress are monitored carefully by the school and these students say they enjoy their learning.

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	138936
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	449127

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	804
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Dix
Headteacher	Stuart Tonks
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01827 831300
Email address	headteacher@wilnecote-high.staffs.sch.uk

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