

Westfield School

Eckington Road, Sothall, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S20 1HQ

Inspection dates 9–10 December 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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students do not achieve well over time from their starting points. Attainment is not as high as it should be. In the past, students' progress in English and mathematics has been too slow.
- Too few of the school's most able students make good progress. As a result, the proportion of students gaining the top A* to A grades at GCSE is well below average.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make too little progress.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. Teachers do not always make sure that students act on the advice in marking on how to improve their work.
- Senior leaders do not always help teachers in charge of subjects and other areas of the school's work to make accurate checks on the quality of teaching and on students' progress.
- The school's plans for improvement contain measures of success that are not precise enough to check that the plans are working. These measures are not closely linked to students' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Many aspects of the school's performance are improving under the committed leadership of the headteacher, his senior team and the governing body. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and students' achievement.
- Attainment in science, modern foreign languages and humanities' subjects continues to rise. School data indicate that students' achievement in all subjects is on course to rise in 2015.
- Students who attend alternative provision achieve well. School leaders check their performance and well-being carefully.
- Any underperformance in teaching is tackled robustly.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. They work hard and enjoy learning.
- The school takes good care to keep students safe and secure. Students say they feel safe in school.
- Parents are supportive of the school and its leaders. The very large majority would recommend the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered and reviewed a range of evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching over time. This included three observations of teaching conducted jointly with school leaders. They also carried out a number of shorter observations with school leaders, looking at various aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors met with five groups of students. They also held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, a group of governors, the school's improvement partner and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a selection of work in students' books. They spoke to students informally and observed them around school at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of parental communications with them and 62 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered responses from 19 staff to the inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including information about students' achievement, records of their attendance and behaviour, documents related to safeguarding, and school plans for improvement.

Inspection team

Michael Phipps, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector
Tudor Griffiths	Additional Inspector
Judith Tolley	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Westfield School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for students who are in the care of the local authority or who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is slightly lower than average.
- The very large majority of students are of White British heritage, and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The school holds specialist status in sport. It is a nationally accredited Healthy School, and holds Gold Partner Status with the Youth Sport Trust.
- The school uses two alternative providers. Ten students in Year 11 attend off-site alternative provision at Com.Unity on the Westfield estate. Some students in Key Stage 4 also study work-related courses at The Sheffield College.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection including the appointment of two deputy headteachers and a number of new leaders in charge of subjects.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so it is consistently at least good and leads to good achievement for all groups of students, by teachers always:
 - making sure that students act on advice in marking on how to improve their work
 - planning more difficult work for their most able students.
- Make sure that disabled students and those who have special educational needs make more rapid progress by:
 - teaching them effectively the early skills needed for reading, writing and mathematics
 - training the school's teaching assistants so they can support effectively the learning of these students
 - checking carefully the progress of these students, so extra help can be given when it is needed.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that:
 - senior leaders support more effectively those teachers in charge of subjects in making accurate checks on the quality of teaching and on students' progress
 - plans for improvement contain measures of success which are checked easily, and which link to students' progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although leaders have improved successfully the quality of teaching in a number of subjects, they have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better and so leads to at least good achievement for all students.
- Despite leaders' regular checks on teaching and students' progress, they did not anticipate fully the decline in results in English and mathematics in 2014. Teachers in charge of subjects carry out many of these checks. Senior leaders have not in the past supported middle leaders effectively in making sure their checks are accurate.
- The leadership and management of the provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs require improvement. Although leaders make sure the social skills of these students develop well, their checks on the quality of support for these students and on their academic progress lack sufficient rigour. As a result, these students make less progress in English and mathematics than they should.
- The judgements made by school leaders on the quality of students' achievement are sometimes too generous. For instance, leaders were slow to realise the implications of students' lower levels of achievement last year. When they did, they took decisive action in summer 2014.
- The school's plans for improvement, although they focus on the right areas, contain measures of success that are not specific enough to check the plans are working. Many measures of success relate to actions the school will take, rather than the impact of these actions on students' achievement.
- School leaders spend additional funds from the pupil premium on extra staff in the English and mathematics departments to provide focused teaching and support programmes, and on providing mentor support. This spending is used appropriately, and has closed gaps in disadvantaged students' attainment compared with other students, but has not done so quickly enough.
- The school does not tolerate discrimination, and is committed to making sure all students have an equal chance to succeed. Slow progress by disabled students, those who have special educational needs and by disadvantaged students means this ambition is not yet fully realised.
- The local authority has commissioned some external independent reviews of the school. It did not, however, alert school leaders to the implications of students' low levels of achievement.
- Parents have confidence in the school and its leaders. The large majority of parents feel that their child is taught well and that the school is led and managed well. They would recommend the school to others.
- Leaders make sure that staff are vigilant about safeguarding. Leaders make good use of partnerships with other organisations to make sure that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met.
- The curriculum offers a good range of subjects to all students. Leaders adapt the curriculum to meet the interests and abilities of individual students. As a result, students are positive about the courses they choose, and the advice they receive. A range of extra-curricular clubs and activities enriches the curriculum. Good quality careers guidance is available for students from Year 7 onwards.
- A series of planned assemblies, special events and leadership opportunities promotes well students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students are prepared for life in modern Britain by learning about other cultures and current affairs.
- Leaders check effectively the progress, behaviour and attendance of students who study in alternative provision away from the school. There is a good working partnership with these providers which means these students achieve well.
- School leaders manage teachers' performance well. Teachers are set targets based on how well students achieve. Underperformance by teachers is now tackled robustly. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving much more rapidly.
- School leaders are successfully creating a culture in which effective teaching and good behaviour can flourish. Many aspects of the school continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about the school's performance. They are frequent visitors to the school and each governor is linked to a specific subject area. This means that they see the quality of students' learning at first hand. Governors understand how the school rewards good teaching and how it tackles any underperformance by teachers.
 - Governors understand what data on students' performance tell them about how well the school is doing. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well but, in common with other school leaders, they did not fully anticipate the drop in students' attainment in English and mathematics in

2014.

- Governors make sure the school's finances are managed well. They know how additional funding such as the pupil premium is spent, and its impact on the achievement of disadvantaged students. They are aware of the need to challenge school leaders more rigorously to make sure that gaps in achievement are reduced more rapidly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Relationships between teachers and students are warm and respectful. Students enjoy learning and work hard. They are punctual to lessons, listen attentively, respond quickly to instructions and enjoy taking part. They told inspectors that learning is rarely interrupted by poor behaviour.
- Students behave well around the school site at break and lunchtimes and when they learn with alternative providers away from the school. There is no graffiti and very little litter around the school site. Students are proud of their school and wear their uniform with pride.
- The large majority of parents feel the school makes sure its students behave well.
- The school's specialism in sport provides students with good opportunities to take on responsibilities and develop their leadership skills. Sports leaders, for example, organise sports events for local primary schools and teach sports skills to younger pupils. Other leadership opportunities include students teaching modern languages to primary-aged pupils.
- Students' behaviour is not outstanding because sometimes when they are not sure what to do next in lessons they seek help immediately from the teacher rather than working out their next steps for themselves.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Entry into the school is secure and visitors are checked carefully. All necessary checks are made on staff before they are appointed. The school's procedures for keeping students safe are of high quality, including when they study at alternative provision.
- Students are organised into mixed-age tutor groups. This allows younger students to become more confident in their relationships with older students. Students told inspectors they feel safe in school.
- Students know about different types of bullying, such as name-calling or cyber-bullying. They say bullying is rare, and racism is almost unknown. School records confirm this. One student told inspectors: 'We all get on well together.' Students are taught effectively how to stay safe and understand, for example, the potential dangers of using the internet.
- The very large majority of parents say their child feels safe in school and is well looked after, and that the school deals well with any bullying.
- Students' attendance overall is at national average levels. Students' safety is not outstanding because the proportion of students who are persistently absent is above average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching remains variable and is not consistently good. It has not been good enough over a period of time to bring about a good level of student achievement in literacy, reading and mathematics, where standards are not as high as they should be.
- Some teachers are much more effective than others in encouraging students to respond promptly to the advice in their marking on how they can improve their work.
- Teachers do not always plan work for their most able students which is difficult enough to make them think hard, and which will enable them to reach the highest levels of attainment.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are supported by teaching assistants in lessons. This support is sometimes limited to writing out a sentence for students to copy into their books. This does not promote effectively these students' learning or their independence.
- The positive relationships established between teachers and students make a clear contribution to the learning that takes place. Little time is wasted in dealing with low-level disruption, and students work well together in group tasks.

- Students in Key Stage 4 are prepared appropriately for public examinations. They are clear about the learning objectives in lessons which often reflect the requirements of these examinations. Students in Key Stage 3 are similarly clear on what they are learning and for what reason. The work in current students' books indicates that the quality of teaching is now better than it has been in the past and students are making more rapid progress.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school with broadly average levels of attainment in English and in mathematics; levels are lower in some year groups. Their attainment by the end of Year 11 was broadly average in 2012 and 2013, but declined in 2014, partly due to the much lower starting points of that year group. The proportions of students who make or exceed the progress expected in both English and mathematics are below average. Inspectors saw evidence and reviewed data and students' work that show current students are on track to achieve more highly in 2015 and that this improvement is sustained in all current year groups.
- Too many of the school's most able students do not make the good progress expected of them. The proportions of students gaining the top A*-A grades at GCSE is well-below average in most subjects.
- Gaps between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged students and their peers are closing, but slowly. Their rates of progress in English and mathematics are slower than other students in the school and other students nationally. In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged students in English and mathematics fell, in line with the attainment of other students in school. The attainment of the school's disadvantaged students in 2014 was almost one GCSE grade behind their peers in school in English, and slightly more than a grade behind in mathematics. Compared to other students nationally, the school's disadvantaged students were slightly more than one GCSE grade behind in English, and almost two GCSE grades behind in mathematics. School data and inspectors' checks both confirm that disadvantaged students are now making faster progress, mirroring that of other students in the school.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special education needs requires improvement. They are looked after carefully, and their social skills and their speaking and listening skills develop well. However, a much smaller proportion of these students than their peers makes the progress expected of them in English and in mathematics. This is because they are not taught well the skills they need to make progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and because the support they receive in lessons does not help them effectively.
- In 2014, the school entered some students early for GCSE examinations in English and mathematics. This did not have a negative impact on the achievement of students, including the most able. Even so, the school no longer plans to enter students early for any examinations.
- Students who attend alternative provision achieve well in recognised qualifications because the courses they study are matched well to their interests and abilities. Students in Key Stage 4 make good progress and achieve well on the range of work-related courses that are available to them.
- Leaders make successful use of the additional funding for students who join the school in Year 7 with the lowest starting points. Targeted spending ensures these students catch up well in English and mathematics.
- Standards are improving in a number of subjects. Students' results in 2014 in science, modern foreign languages and humanities' subjects rose substantially from those in previous years. Results in subjects linked to the school's specialist status in sport, especially in GCSE physical education, are also improving.
- School leaders reacted decisively after students' attainment fell in 2014. Their 'Back on Track' strategy is making sure that checks on students' progress are accurate, and that students' progress is subsequently more rapid. The school's own data on current students indicate that their achievement in all subjects is on course to rise in 2015 and for more rapid progress and higher attainment to continue. Checks made by inspectors confirm that rates of progress are now faster than in the past.

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	107135
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	442211

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Stewart
Headteacher	Andy Ireland
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2013
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