

Shipston High School

Darlingscote Road, Shipston-on-Stour, CV36 4DY

Inspection dates 21–22 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders and governors have created a strong ethos and powerful community spirit in which students' achievement and personal development thrive.
- Leaders have successfully brought about improvements in teaching and students' achievement, and sustained very high standards of behaviour.
- Students achieve well across a wide range of subjects.
- Most groups of students make good progress, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs, and the most able.
- A carefully planned curriculum and structured information, advice and guidance prepare students well for their next stage in learning. The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is excellent.
- Teaching is good. Lessons feature a variety of activities to stimulate students' interests so that they learn well.
- Students' excellent attitudes to learning ensure that they make good progress when working across a range of tasks, whether together or on their own.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. Students' conduct around the site is exemplary. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and attendance is high.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders do not always evaluate the impact of their actions precisely enough, so that they can gauge how successful they have been and what actions work best.
- The proportion of lower-ability students and disadvantaged students making good or better progress is rising, but is not yet high enough, particularly in mathematics.
- Policies and procedures to reinforce students' numeracy skills outside of mathematics are not well developed.
- In a small number of lessons, the pace of learning is too slow for some students to make the progress they are capable of; or too fast, with teachers moving to the next task too quickly without checking that students' learning is secure.
- New practices in marking are not yet applied consistently across subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 27 lessons. They carried out some joint observations with senior leaders. Observations of other aspects of the academy’s work were also made, such as tutor time and assemblies.
- Inspectors also looked at students’ books and folders during lessons and as a separate activity.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, governors and academy staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- There were 46 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire that provided evidence for the inspection.
- The views of 18 members of staff were analysed in response to Ofsted’s questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the academy’s self-evaluation and improvement plans, academy policies, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Information about students’ progress, attainment, attendance and exclusions were also examined as were the school’s records of safeguarding, and of teachers’ performance linked to salary scales.

Inspection team

Chris Chapman, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Michael Marks

Additional Inspector

Dorothy Bond

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Shipston High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school. It converted to an academy on 1 September 2012.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students who are those eligible for support from the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for students known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after in public care), at approximately 16%, is below average.
- A quarter of students receive support because they are disabled or have special educational needs. This proportion is above average.
- The vast majority of students are White British. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 attend Stratford-upon-Avon College and Warwickshire College on a part-time basis to study vocational courses.
- In 2014, the academy met the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A new teaching block is currently under construction and will be completed in summer 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate the achievement of lower-ability and disadvantaged students, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - sharpening the tracking of these students so that systematic and coordinated interventions ensure that students make rapid progress
 - increasing the effectiveness of the monitoring of these interventions so that leaders can be sure that they have the desired impact on raising individual students' achievement
 - reinforcing students' numeracy skills in subjects outside of mathematics.
- Improve teaching so that students make outstanding progress by:
 - ensuring that lessons are well paced so that students learn at the rate they are capable of
 - ensuring that learning is secured before students move on to other tasks
 - making sure that new practices in marking are consistently applied across the academy.
- Strengthen leadership and management by evaluating more precisely the impact of actions taken to improve teaching and students' achievement, including that of different groups of students.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have created a culture in which the achievement of students, both academic and personal, is placed at the very heart of academy life. The impact of what the headteacher calls the 'Shipston Spirit' is reflected tangibly in academy practices and the outstanding attitudes of the students who attend the academy.
- Highly valued and extensive training for teachers has led to good improvements in the quality of teaching. Leaders make regular and accurate checks on the quality of teaching by observing lessons, speaking to students and looking at students' work. However, leaders do not draw together and analyse the full range of information that is available to them.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders have made well thought out changes in response to students' needs and national priorities. For example, the most-able students now study separate sciences and a wider range of academic qualifications. More time has been allocated to the teaching of English and mathematics so that improvements in achievement in these subjects may be sustained over time.
- Personal, social and health education, religious education lessons and assemblies provide students with many opportunities to develop their understanding of life in modern democratic Britain. Students explore other cultures and faiths, and are taught to tackle discrimination. Students also learn how to be good citizens through leadership opportunities, involvement in fundraising activities and the academy's 'Shipston Award' scheme. This allows students to demonstrate actively their positive contribution to society and 'service to others'. The successful promotion of these values, and an effective system of pastoral support, has resulted in a highly cohesive school community, which fosters equality of opportunity and positive relationships.
- The academy further develops students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social understanding through an outstanding programme of well-attended extra-curricular activities and visits through which students experience a wide range of academic, artistic and sporting pursuits.
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance are carefully planned. Students undertake a work-experience placement in Year 10, engage with employers, sixth forms, colleges and universities through visits and careers fairs, and receive advice on how to prepare for their next stage of education. The success of this work is evident in that all students secured a place in further education, employment or training by the end of Year 11.
- The role of subject leaders has been developed through collaborative working, training and the sharing of practice. They check the work of their teams, including the quality of teaching and marking. Improved systems to review information about students' progress in their subject areas and tackle underachievement have resulted in rising achievement in many subjects. Leadership of English and mathematics is a strength. These subject leaders are well focused on reducing variations and narrowing the gaps between the achievement of different groups of students, including disadvantaged students.
- Leaders' plans for improvement identify the right areas that need to be tackled. Success in raising achievement in identified subject areas and for many groups of students demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement. However, these plans are not linked to precise enough outcomes so that leaders are able to gauge thoroughly how successful their actions have been.
- Teachers are held to account for improving the quality of their teaching and for ensuring that students make good progress through targets that are linked to their salary progression. They are given targets that are set against academy priorities and address the 'Teachers Standards'.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged students is used to provide increased pastoral support, extra tuition and to ensure that these students have access to opportunities that they otherwise may not have. The impact of this work is seen in students' improving progress rates in English and, to a lesser degree, in mathematics, and in better attendance. Leaders' tracking of how this funding meets the needs of

individual students, so that they can be sure that each student makes rapid progress, is less well developed.

- Leaders rigorously check the attendance and progress of students who attend courses away from the academy site through good communication and the effective relationships that have been established with providers.
- Parents, staff and students are positive about the quality of education provided at the academy. They particularly value the levels of care, guidance and support offered.
- Statutory arrangements for safeguarding are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have high aspirations for students and have shaped a culture in which 'success is the norm'.
 - The governing body has been restructured to ensure that governors are better focused to drive forward improvements in the academy. As a result, they have undertaken 'health checks' to audit their skills base and held 'vision' meetings to ensure that they can meet the changing needs of the academy.
 - Governors understand the strengths and areas for improvement in the academy. They ask pertinent questions so that they are clear about the quality of teaching and understand information about students' achievement in comparison to students nationally. They oversee the headteacher's performance management and ensure that good teaching is rewarded and underperformance tackled through decisions about teachers' pay progression.
 - Governors have skilfully increased their capacity through co-opting four additional governors who offer expertise and skills to oversee such areas as the current building programme, and oversight of the budget.
 - Governors are aware of the pupil premium funding and how it is spent, and know that while gaps are closing between disadvantaged students and other students nationally, there is still more to do.
 - Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively, including that of safeguarding. They regularly visit the academy and have attended staff training sessions, including child protection training.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding.
- Students' excellent attitudes are reflected in their high levels of engagement in lessons and impressively high rates of participation in extra-curricular activities.
- Students are encouraged to undertake a range of leadership opportunities and responsibilities. Older students, for example, approach with maturity their duties as prefects, and supervise and look after others. The many students who complete the Shipston Award programme have proved that they are committed learners and responsible citizens.
- Students' conduct around the academy site is exemplary. Students are polite, courteous, respectful and articulate. They wear their uniform with pride. Students actively approached inspectors and helpfully escorted them around the academy.
- Students say that incidents of poor behaviour and low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- Effective behaviour management systems, built around high expectations of students' conduct, have led to low and reducing rates of exclusion.
- Students are punctual. They arrive to school on time and move efficiently and sensibly around the academy site so that they are prompt to lessons.
- A very large majority of parents who responded to the Parent View survey said that students are well-

behaved.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students attend well. Leaders have taken effective action to improve the attendance of students whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Students say that they feel safe. Warm relationships with staff, and between students, and a strong pastoral system have created an exceptionally caring environment. Students described to inspectors how the academy feels like a 'family'. Students also say that bullying is extremely rare and academy records confirm this.
- Students are highly aware of risks. The academy's personal, social and health education programme and assemblies teach them about the dangers of bullying, drugs, discrimination, and e-safety. The dangers of radicalisation and extremism have been raised in assemblies.
- Leaders consider students' safety through thorough risk assessments. This was clearly evident in their skilful management of the current construction work being undertaken on the academy site.
- Appropriate checks are made to ensure that students attending education off-site are safe and behave well.
- A detailed safeguarding policy, robust training and clear procedures ensure that staff are vigilant to the signs of students who may be at risk or vulnerable to harm, and know how to report concerns.
- An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the Parent View survey say that their child is safe and well looked after.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because, across a range of subjects, students learn well and make good progress over time.
- Teachers are increasingly focused on the needs of different students. Teachers offer additional support to disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants are deployed efficiently and know the needs of students. They were frequently observed guiding learning so that students were encouraged to think about, as opposed to being told, what they needed to do. This enabled students to understand tasks and make good gains in their learning.
- Positive relationships between teachers and students, built on high expectations, foster excellent attitudes to learning. Students are self-motivated; they work hard in lessons both collaboratively and independently. For example, in a Year 9 history lesson, students made good progress because they shared ideas, discussed their learning and challenged each other to justify their views. As a result this helped to develop their knowledge and understanding of the causes of the First World War.
- Teachers plan lessons that feature a variety of tasks to engage students. In a Year 8 music lesson, for example, the combination of a stimulating video clip, clear teacher demonstration and practical activities captured students' interests so that they enjoyed the challenge of learning new musical skills.
- In many lessons, teachers skilfully use questioning to check students' understanding and challenge and extend their learning. In the best lessons, teachers regularly checked students' learning in order to reshape tasks, tackle misconceptions and offer additional explanations so that students' progress increased.

- Training on marking has resulted in some excellent practice. For example, in a number of English lessons, teachers' use of 'triple impact' marking provided students with clear guidance on what they needed to do to improve their work; students were then given opportunities to redraft parts of their work in response to this guidance, so bringing about immediate improvement. Although these approaches to marking are increasingly evident across subject areas, they are not yet applied to the same consistently high standards.
- Students' literacy skills are reinforced through teachers' marking, the sharing of key words and through opportunities to produce extended writing in subjects other than English. However, some teachers are not as skilled as others in ensuring that students produce writing of the highest quality. Students develop their oracy skills through discussion and debate, and are encouraged to formulate their verbal contributions to class articulately and clearly. Strategies to develop students' numeracy skills across the curriculum are less well established than those for literacy.
- In a small number of lessons, students' progress is hindered because the pace of learning is either too quick or too slow. For example, during the inspection, some tasks or parts of lessons went on for too long when students had already grasped the skills, or teachers moved too quickly between activities without giving students time to secure their learning.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The academy entered a group of students who were identified as at risk of underachievement in mathematics for examination early in 2014. This was a sensible strategy. Published data does not reflect the final achievements of these students. The academy's analysis of all examination results shows that the proportion of students gaining 5 or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics rose in 2014 to above that of previous years and above the national average. This demonstrates that students' achievement is improving and good overall.
- Achievement in English is good, with all groups of students making quick progress from their starting points on joining the school. This is shown in the 2013 and 2014 examination results and is also the case for students currently in the school.
- Achievement in mathematics rose in 2014. The academy's analysis of results shows that students' overall progress in mathematics was significantly above average and was as good as in English.
- Students achieve well in the majority of subjects. In languages and the humanities for example, students make outstanding progress. Attainment is well above average in art, graphics and drama.
- The progress of disadvantaged students is improving. In English, these students make better progress than other students nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged students are now making better progress than they have done in the past and are approaching that made by other students nationally.
- The attainment of disadvantaged students is also improving in relation to that of other students nationally and gaps are narrowing. In 2014, these gaps closed to half a grade in English and half a grade in mathematics. In-school gaps for that year group remained too wide at one grade in mathematics and approximately three quarters of a grade in English. However, inspection evidence showed that disadvantaged students are currently making quicker progress.
- The achievement of the most-able students is good. This is reflected in their good progress in English, outstanding progress in mathematics and the above average proportion of A-A* grades secured in many subjects.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs benefit from targeted support and intervention both within and outside of the classroom. As a result, these students progress well in relation

to all students nationally, particularly in English. Their progress in mathematics is improving.

- The small proportion of students who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress across subjects.
- Students read widely and often. Time is built into the curriculum so that all students read at Key Stage 3 and effective programmes are in place to accelerate the progress of students who struggle with reading. Many students use the library outside of lessons. Students also enjoy some excellent opportunities to develop their oracy skills through public speaking competitions.
- Students who join the school with below average attainment in Year 7 receive good support to help them to catch up in English and mathematics. As a result, they make rapid progress, and receive on-going support until they do so.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 attend part-time provision away from the school. They follow work-related courses that are well-matched to their needs and interests, and this has helped to motivate them in their wider studies.
- Lower-ability students do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English. However, the academy has strategies in place that are improving the achievement of these students and the impact of these is evident in the quicker progress these students are making at Key Stage 3.

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	138767
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	453822

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	463
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Chapman
Headteacher	Jonathan Baker
Date of previous school inspection	17 April 2013
Telephone number	01608 661833
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