

Welling School

Elsa Road, Welling, DA16 1LB

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2015

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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have ensured that the school has made significant improvements since the last inspection. As a result, students' achievement and the quality of teaching are now good.
- Students now achieve well in most subjects. The rate of progress students make in English and mathematics has speeded up significantly.
- Disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs are well supported. As a result, they now make good progress.
- Sixth form provision is good. Sixth form students' achievement is now in line with national figures.
- The quality of teaching is good. Relationships in the classroom and around the school are strong. Students are eager to learn and respond well to challenging and stimulating teaching.
- Governors provide strong leadership. They support and challenge very effectively. This has a positive impact on students' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Students' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. They are courteous and arrive to lessons on time, ready to learn.
- Students confirm that the school is a safe place. They are confident that all staff will act quickly to resolve any concerns they may have.
- The range of subjects studied is broad and balanced between academic and vocational courses.
- School staff effectively monitor the provision for students who attend off-site education.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Achievement is not yet outstanding. Learning activities planned by staff do not always provide sufficient stretch and challenge to enable all students to make the best possible progress.
- Learning activities, including personal development opportunities do not always engage students fully to develop their love of learning and thirst for knowledge.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. The quality of marking and feedback does not consistently show students how to improve their learning.
- Students are not always given enough time to respond to feedback. As a result, they do not always show clearly that they know how to improve their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made 39 visits to classrooms to observe students' learning. Members of the senior leadership team accompanied them on seven of these visits. Inspectors observed an assembly and tutor time.
- Inspectors held meetings with several groups of students, members of the senior leadership team, and leaders in charge of subjects and other aspects of the school's work. Inspectors also met with recently qualified teachers new to the school.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the regional director of the Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT).
- Inspectors had a number of discussions with teaching staff. They examined a range of documents, including the school's review of its own performance, its plans for improvement, and students' progress information.
- Inspectors evaluated the school's information about exclusions, attendance and behaviour. They considered evidence of how effectively the school staff monitor the progress of those of their students who are receiving their education in other settings.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students' work in lessons.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a parent or carer following receipt of a letter.
- The inspection team took into account 63 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, and considered questionnaires completed by 74 members of staff.

Inspection team

Jackie Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paula Sargent	Additional Inspector
Nick Cross	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Wanda Golinska	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Welling School is an 11 to 18 academy. It is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The academy is part of the Kennal Academies Trust (TKAT).
- The school has a visual arts specialism.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. About one quarter of students come from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is below the national average. A very small proportion of students at the school speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is just above the national average.
- There are 62 students for whom the school receives Year 7 Catch-up funding. This is funding for students who did not achieve Level 4 (the nationally expected level) at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is 28% of the school's population, which is a little above the national average.
- A very small number of students receive their education from three outside providers. They attend Pathways and The Link, both of which are part of the New Horizons Behaviour Federation in Bexley, and New Haven in Greenwich.
- The Berwick Centre is an on-site unit, managed by the school, which supports students who may otherwise be at risk of permanent exclusion.
- The school's sixth form is in a partnership with two other local sixth forms, known as Partnership 6th.
- The school is being supported by the regional director from TKAT and external consultants whose work is supported through the federation.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement and the quality of teaching further by ensuring that:
 - all staff develop their use of class information to plan learning so that all students are challenged and always fully engaged
 - there is consistency in the use of the school's marking practice so that students are clear how they can improve their learning and respond effectively
 - there is consistency in the way tutors deliver the planned whole-school personal development programme.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The very strong leadership of the headteacher and her senior leadership team has been fundamental in bringing about rapid improvements since the last inspection. As a result, students' academic achievement, the quality of teaching, attendance and students' behaviour and safety continue to improve.
 - Staff are ambitious for the students and as a result students' aspirations are rising so that they leave the school well prepared to continue their education, training or employment.
 - The school's view about its own performance is robust and accurate. It informs a realistic plan to bring about improvement. Consequently, provision for all students has improved since the last inspection. Accurate judgements about the quality of teaching are verified through a quality assurance programme involving senior staff in the school, staff from the Trust and external consultants.
 - Middle leaders, many of whom are new to the school, understand what students need to learn and ensure the courses they follow are appropriate. They understand what is needed to monitor the work of their departments and are doing so with increasing effectiveness.
 - Training for staff is based on an accurate analysis of need. Staff spoke highly of the quality of training provided by the school. This is addressing the needs of individuals as well as the school's improvement.
 - Systems for the management of staff performance are rigorous. Salary progression only occurs when merited by good performance. School leaders have taken robust action to challenge underperformance.
 - The curriculum is broad and balanced with a wide range of academic and extra-curricular activities. The school is preparing students well for life in modern Britain through assemblies as well as individual subjects. During the inspection, in a religious studies lesson, Year 7 students discussed the idea of minorities using a variety of different examples from faith to politics, while a Year 13 media lesson explored the way women are portrayed in the media.
 - Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength of the school. The school's visual arts specialist status is clearly embedded throughout the school with displays of students' work. During the inspection, for example, an assembly took the theme of the ways people can stand up for the education of girls in other countries.
 - Students take on leadership roles very effectively, for example, the student council were consulted on the effectiveness of the behaviour policy. Students are also involved in supporting younger students in subjects such as mathematics.
 - Leaders effectively ensure that there is no discrimination. All students can participate in all the activities provided by the school. The school uses additional funding for disadvantaged students to ensure they can participate equally in lessons. For example, funds are used to provide additional texts to support courses or provide instrumental tuition for students who would not otherwise be able to learn an instrument. As a result, these students develop their learning in a wide range of knowledge and skills.
 - The school effectively monitors the performance and well-being of students who receive their education in other settings.
 - Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Leaders make good use of outside agencies to provide support for students.
 - The advice given to students about the next stage of their education, training or employment is good. As a result, the vast majority of students progress to education, employment or training when they leave school.
 - The school works well with parents and carers. Parents and carers who responded to Parent View confirmed that they were confident their concerns are dealt with well by the school.
 - The Trust is supporting the school effectively in improving the provision for all students.
 - The recently appointed leaders of the sixth form have quickly identified strengths and areas needed for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governance of the school is a real strength. Governors support and challenge the school very effectively.
 - Governors are fully involved in reviewing students' performance and setting the school's priorities through discussion of the school's views about how well it is doing, and its plans for improvement.
 - They are very well equipped to carry out their statutory duties, including ensuring the safeguarding of students, which they do very effectively.
 - They are fully involved in reviewing students' performance and setting the school's priorities. Governors

meet to discuss the school's view about how well it is doing, scrutinise relevant performance data and contribute effectively to plans for improvement.

- Governors manage the school's finances well and ensure that spending is linked to students' learning. They are very knowledgeable about how additional funding is used to support disadvantaged students and those who have special educational needs.
- Governors are very knowledgeable about the quality of teaching. They are keenly aware of what is being done to reward good and outstanding performance and address any underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well around the site, socialising well at break and lunchtimes.
- In a very few lessons, they are not as engaged in their learning as they might be, which means their learning slows. However, in the majority of lessons they show a hunger to learn and are keen to contribute to their learning.
- Students arrive to lessons on time, with the correct equipment and ready to learn. They take pride in their school, wearing their uniform well. There was no graffiti and very little litter around the school.
- Students are very polite to visitors and make them feel very welcome to the school. They engage well in conversation with visitors in both informal and formal occasions.
- The school closely monitors the behaviour of students attending off-site schooling. As a result, students continue to make good progress.
- Staff and parents and carers commented favourably on students' behaviour and the consistency with which it is managed.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe, which is confirmed by staff and parents and carers.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For example, they have a good understanding of the risks associated with using the internet.
- Students are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and firmly. Records show virtually no racist or homophobic bullying.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now similar to the national average for secondary schools. The school has effective systems to monitor the attendance of students who receive their education at other settings.
- The rate of exclusions has reduced as the result of effective systems being put in place. The Berwick Centre plays an important role offering an alternative setting to the main part of the school for the few students whose behaviour can prevent the learning of others in a classroom.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. It is not outstanding because not all teachers plan learning activities that stretch and challenge all students to make the best possible progress.
- There is a positive climate for learning, which is characterised by strong relationships in the classroom. Students are generally keen and eager to learn.
- In an art lesson observed during the inspection, students were encouraged to explore the different ways light levels can affect photographs taken of the same object. The teacher used questioning very effectively to develop students' knowledge and skills.
- At times, teaching does not fully engage their interest. When this happens a few students tend to become distracted from their learning.
- In some lessons, able students were challenged to extend their learning. However, this is not consistent across the school. This means that although the achievement of able students is improving, it is not yet outstanding. Students told inspectors that they wanted to be challenged more by their teachers.

- Support for disabled students and those with special educational needs in lessons is good. Intervention assistants are used well in lessons to support students in their learning. This ensures they make good progress.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively. Reading programmes are in place to support those students whose reading is weaker. As a result their progress is improving rapidly.
- The quality of assessment and feedback has improved since the last inspection. Students spoke positively about this saying that 'teachers tell you the truth' about how to improve. However, although in the best practice students were given time to respond to the guidance given by staff, this was not consistent practice across the school. This means that learning does not improve as rapidly as it could do.
- The school has introduced a planned personal development programme, which is delivered during tutor time. However, during the inspection, inspectors did not see this being delivered consistently well by tutors.
- Students and their parents and carers commented favourably on the quality of the work set as a result of the new homework system.
- The majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View felt that their child is taught well.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are significantly below the national average. The proportion of Year 11 students who attain five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is above the government's current minimum standards when their best results are included.
- The proportion of students making at least expected progress in English is above the national average, but in mathematics it is just below the national average.
- Students from different ethnic backgrounds achieved similar results to other students. Students from a White British background have previously achieved less well than others. However, in 2014 their attainment in English was better than the national average, but just below the national average in mathematics.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make better progress than other students in the school in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress as the result of the support they receive.
- Disadvantaged students have previously achieved less well than others. The gap between the proportions of disadvantaged students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, and others is closing rapidly. In 2014, the gap in students' attainment in English had closed and in mathematics it was a quarter of a grade behind. Compared to other students nationally, the gap in English and mathematics attainment had closed.
- The school uses Year 7 Catch-up funding effectively to improve students' achievement in English and mathematics. This is funding for students who did not achieve Level 4 (the nationally expected level) at the end of Key Stage 2. Additional funding is used to fund specialised literacy and numeracy programmes. As a result, students are now making good progress in both English and mathematics.
- The most able students' rates of progress are now improving and are better than the expected rate nationally in English and mathematics.
- The achievement of students who receive their education at other settings is monitored well by the school. As a result, they are placed on appropriate courses that enable them to make good progress.
- The school enters students early for English and mathematics. This has been a carefully thought-out action by senior and middle leaders. The school's decision has not been taken to bank results or to limit the ambition or aspiration of students. As a result, students' best results show their attainment is above national averages.

The sixth form provision is good

- Students enter the sixth form with below average attainment. However, achievement has now improved at the end of Key Stage 4 and so the attainment of students entering the sixth form is rising. Attainment at the end of Year 12 and Year 13 has risen consistently so that it now matches national averages for academic and vocational qualifications.
- Gaps in the attainment of students needing additional help are closing rapidly. In 2014, there was no gap in average points scores between disadvantaged students and others. This is the result of better teaching

and higher expectations from teachers. However, the progress of able students is not as good as that of those nationally.

- Teaching in the sixth form is good. It has improved considerably since the last inspection. During the inspection, inspectors observed students being challenged in their lessons. For example, in a government and politics lesson, Year 13 students were able to reflect upon the differences between the political systems in the United States of America and those of the United Kingdom through reference to past events.
- The numbers of students completing their chosen courses is now improving. This is the result of more careful advice and guidance given to students when selecting their choice of subjects.
- Students welcome the opportunities for leadership within the school. They lead assemblies, citizenship lessons for younger year groups as well as playing a leading role in charity collections within the school.
- The behaviour and safety of students in the sixth form are very good. They have no concerns about poor behaviour affecting their learning. They are fully aware of how to keep themselves and others safe in a variety of situations.
- The curriculum in the sixth form has a good balance of academic and work-related courses. Students welcome the opportunity to study subjects which the school does not offer at other schools.
- The curriculum and good careers advice and guidance prepares students well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. An increasing number of students leave school and go into higher education. Many of these students are the first of their families to go into higher education. Students are aspiring to study at the top universities in Britain. This is a realistic prospect and illustrates the work the school has done in raising their aspirations.
- All students follow the 16 to 19 study programme and benefit from work experience. Students who did not achieve a GCSE grade C in English or mathematics follow a course of study to achieve this alongside their other subjects. Previously, attainment for these students had been good, but it is now improving even more as the result of carefully planned support from the school.
- Attendance in the sixth form is good.
- The leadership of the sixth form is good. There is a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and how it can improve further.

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	136720
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	453770

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,443
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Robins
Headteacher	Diane Khanna
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 February 2013
Telephone number	020 8304 8531
Fax number	020 8301 6414
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