

Pedmore Technology College and Community School

Grange Lane, Pedmore, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 7HS

Inspection dates	26–27 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils' outcomes at GCSE in 2015 were below the national average. Aspirations of what pupils can achieve have not always been high enough. Outcomes, therefore, require improvement.
- Actions taken by school leaders since the last inspection have had a positive impact on behaviour, the quality of teaching and outcomes for current pupils. This represents good progress.
- Given their low starting points, all groups of pupils in school now are making good progress in English and mathematics. Their progress in other subjects is also improving on that of previous years.
- Teachers know their pupils well, plan interesting activities that encourage them to develop good attitudes to learning and make good progress.
- Teachers are confident, have good subject knowledge and high expectations.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developing securely at Key Stage 3 because of well-planned provision across subjects.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite, courteous and speak to visitors with confidence. Most enjoy school, work hard in lessons, want to learn and care for each other well.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They know how to keep themselves safe when using computers.
- Governors monitor the school's work very closely. They are well informed and provide a rigorous challenge to school leaders. They know the school well and make sure that the school serves the local community effectively.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Disadvantaged pupils do not consistently make the same progress as their peers as, in the past, they have not been sufficiently challenged by the work set.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is still too high.
- Timely actions to secure the good progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not identified swiftly enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in Years 7 to 11 and raise achievement for all pupils, but particularly for disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, by making sure that all members of the school community raise their aspirations of what every pupil is capable of achieving.
- Improve rates of attendance by strengthening those strategies that are proving to be successful, so that attendance levels reach at least the national averages.
- Reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions further by supporting pupils at risk earlier.
- Further strengthen leadership and management, by:
 - enabling subject leaders to check their judgements about pupils' work against those of other schools
 - implementing fully the school's plans to use the best teachers' skills to develop the effectiveness of their colleagues.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and managers in school are raising standards and are determined to improve further the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. Information about pupils' progress is analysed thoroughly, so that pupils at risk of falling behind can be supported.
- The school's own records show that teaching has become increasingly effective, particularly in the teaching of English and mathematics. However, the improvements in teaching have yet to be reflected in the outcomes for all pupils.
- Leaders carry out rigorous checks on the quality of teaching. They use strong skills to offer advice and training to raise standards further. Best practices are shared between colleagues and are used in classrooms to improve the effectiveness of teaching.
- Information from reviews on the quality of teaching is used to decide on any salary increases and opportunities for further professional development. Training is also supported by outside professional groups and this has contributed to the improved skills of teaching staff. The school has not found it easy to recruit high quality staff in the past, but has recently made some strong appointments.
- Subject leaders are clear about their roles in improving the quality of teaching and how they are raising standards. They know how to monitor pupils' progress information to improve learning. They also develop the skills and confidence of their departmental colleagues.
- The school has drawn on support from partner secondary schools to nurture specific leadership expertise. The positive impact from this is evident in the good teaching pupils now enjoy.
- Senior leaders check regularly on the attendance, behaviour and work of pupils to see if any are falling behind and need additional support. The school's work on this, including teachers' assessments has been reviewed and validated by outside agencies and the local authority.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and includes a good range of subjects at Key Stage 4. A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities are available during the school day and after school. This includes additional study support and sport, enterprise, creative and recreational activities.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through taught lessons in religious education, personal, social health and economic education, and other subjects across the curriculum. Key topics are studied through 'drop down' days for which the timetable is suspended.
- Displays and photographs of pupils around the school reflect the rich cultural diversity of the school community. Staff make pupils aware of the importance of British values and ensure they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils told inspectors how tolerance and respect were key features of their life at school and how they enriched their experience of cultural diversity.
- The pupil premium funding has not been used to full effect in the past to enable disadvantaged pupils to catch up with others. However, following a review in school and the school's own records of progress now being made by current disadvantaged pupils, there is evidence that the funding is being used more effectively than before through additional in-class interventions to support eligible pupils.
- New systems of supporting the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those of disadvantaged pupils, are having a better impact on the progress of both groups of pupils than they did in the past.
- Staff and pupils work well together to promote strong relationships and to prevent any kind of discriminatory behaviour. The school's behaviour policy has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and conduct.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority's support for the school has focused on teaching and learning and this has been well received.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors provide effective oversight. Governors are well trained, informed and visit the school regularly. They bring a good range of experience and skills to strengthen the leadership of the school.
 - Governors ensure that outcomes for pupils are a central focus for their work and inform their decision making. Link governors report frequently on the school's progress.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and make sure that improvement priorities are acted on quickly.
 - Governors take their statutory duties seriously and put in place rigorous processes to review the headteacher's performance.

- Governors know how the pupil premium funding is spent and have rightly challenged leaders on the impact it has had on eligible pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures for checking visitors to school and staff recruitment are robust. School leaders quickly identify any pupil at risk of harm. Training to keep pupils safe, including safer recruitment and the 'Prevent' duty, has been received by staff and governors. The school engages appropriately with partners and parents as necessary within school and the local community.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Evidence gained from the school's own checks on teaching, and information on the progress being made by current pupils show that teaching has improved and is now good. The quality of work in pupils' books shows good attitudes towards learning and good progress being made by pupils.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use their knowledge to ask searching questions to check that pupils understand new learning. Teachers use the answers that pupils offer to either re-shape the lesson to make sure pupils have understood fully, or to challenge them further. By doing this, they make sure that pupils have mastered the knowledge they need to help them make good progress.
- Pupils learn well because teachers use various strategies to make lessons enjoyable and fun. The enthusiasm teachers have for their subject motivates pupils and prevents them becoming distracted. In a physical education lesson, pupils made rapid progress because the learning environment created by the teacher encouraged pupils to keep on trying hard. This improved their confidence as well as ability.
- Teachers plan well to ensure that the work given is matched to pupils' abilities and that it is not too easy. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were given work at three levels of difficulty. It was interesting to see how they all chose to tackle the most difficult task because they wanted to take up the challenge and demonstrate how well they had understood the lesson.
- Learning is effective in school when pupils know how well they have done and what they have to do make their work even better. It is enriched when pupils respond to the teacher's verbal or written comments because it shows that learning is a partnership between teacher and learner, and this helps them to improve further.
- Teaching assistants are particularly effective as they challenge and support disadvantaged pupils and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, without doing the work for them.
- In lessons, teachers and other adults manage pupils' behaviour effectively and supportively. Together, they make sure that each pupil's needs are met and do not disrupt the calm and orderly atmosphere that is a feature of lessons. This has a big influence on good learning.
- The school's programme of training for teachers and teaching assistants has resulted in good teaching, and this improved consistency is having a positive impact on improving the progress of pupils.
- The revised curriculum for Year 7 and Year 8, creating additional curriculum time for English and mathematics to support literacy and numeracy development, has had a positive impact on those who need to catch up. Staff involved in the foundation learning groups understand the particular needs of this group of pupils, and their work is improving reading ages and numeracy levels, ensuring access to the full curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and their parents agree. The school teaches pupils how to stay safe in many respects, including online safety, the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of sexual health.
- Displays around the school on e-safety and bullying promote the harmonious expectations the school has of its pupils, as well as promoting the need to be safe.
- The school is pro-active at anticipating and managing any risk that pupils may be exposed to, including radicalisation, and is diligent in monitoring this.
- Pupils could identify an appropriate adult in school they could turn to if they had a particular worry or need.
- Year 7 pupils were overwhelmingly positive about the school's transition arrangements with primary schools, so that they were well prepared to begin their courses at school.

- Pupils are confident learners and are keen to discuss the many opportunities they have to enrich their experience in school. Pupils say that displays of pupils' high achievements in the corridors inspire them to want to do well.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and pupils are keen to demonstrate their capacity for leadership. For example, literacy and numeracy ambassadors and trained peer mediators work alongside pupils who need help. Pupil voice evaluations are very positive about the success of these initiatives.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently positive and they approach their work with commitment and enthusiasm.
- Pupils arrive to lessons on time, bring the right equipment with them, look smart and the presentation of their work in books is neat and tidy.
- Pupils know how to behave safely in science, technology and physical education lessons.
- Pupils are very aware of the needs of others. The school population is a rich mixture of cultures and the working atmosphere in school is one of tolerance, respect and a celebration of its diversity.
- Around the school, pupils are polite, friendly and courteous and they move sensibly around the buildings.
- The school has strategies in place to make sure that everyone understands the importance of regular attendance and its link with good progress. Attendance is, however, too low.
- The numbers of pupils who are repeatedly excluded from school for short periods of time because of poor behaviour is improving because numbers are now fewer.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils who left the school in 2015 started with attainment that was average, and left with attainment that was below average overall. This was a legacy of poor attitudes to learning and progress made by that group of pupils. These outcomes were lower than those achieved in 2014.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who made expected progress in English, science and humanities subjects were broadly in line with national averages, whilst progress for pupils in languages continued to be above. However, progress in mathematics was below the national average.
- The gap in the performance of disadvantaged pupils and others in school had been closing; however, this progress was not sustained in 2015. This meant that they were not catching up with their classmates quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs did not do as well as they could have in 2015. In the past, expectations have not always been high enough to ensure good outcomes for this group of learners, although the school's own information shows current pupils make better progress.
- Historically, the progress of the most-able pupils has been similar to that of other pupils in the school and slightly below that of pupils nationally. However, during the inspection, inspectors saw most-able pupils responding well where activities encouraged them to think deeply.
- Pupils currently in school entered with attainment significantly below the national average, but are now attaining standards at least in line with, and often better than, those expected for their age. This is strongly supported by evidence in their books which shows that pupils are progressing well.
- During the inspection, inspectors saw pupils making good progress in all subjects. This was particularly true in English, science, geography, music, languages and physical education. Standards in mathematics are now better.
- Information provided by the school indicates that disadvantaged pupils in the current Year 11 are making more rapid progress than before in both English and mathematics. The gap between their attainment and that of others in the school and nationally is expected to reduce. Disadvantaged pupils in other year groups also make better progress.
- Some pupils join the school with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are well below that expected for their age. These pupils receive extra help through the Year 7 catch-up funding and this is helping them to build up those skills and improve their progress.

- Pupils receive good information, careers advice and guidance to help them make the right choices to move forward with their learning. Activities to help pupils to develop personal skills and extend their learning, including visits to and from local colleges and universities, raise their aspirations and ambitions to proceed to the next stage of their education.
- The school does not use any external provision for educating pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	103859
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10002509

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

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	584
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Evans
Headteacher	Gareth Lloyd
Telephone number	01384 816660
Website	http://www.pedmoretc.dudley.sch.uk
Email address	data@pedmoretc.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2013

Information about this school

- Pedmore Technology College and Community School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is extra funding given to schools to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The school uses no external alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a wide range of lessons, of which six were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in lessons.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own information on the progress of current pupils, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to keeping pupils safe.
- Meetings were held with pupils across Years 7 to 11, as well as informal meetings at break and lunchtime, and with members of the local authority and governing body. Discussions also took place with senior leaders, subject leaders and staff with pastoral care responsibilities.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in lessons and an inspector listened to pupils reading in Years 7 and 8.
- Inspectors evaluated the responses of 22 parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors also took account of the views of members of the school's staff through the online inspection questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

Huw Bishop, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Mallett	Ofsted Inspector
Sukhbir Farar	Ofsted Inspector

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