

Ormskirk School

Wigan Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 2AT

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils, including the disadvantaged, and students in the sixth form, have not made the progress or achieved the examination results of which they are capable
- School leaders have not successfully addressed the underperformance of boys and middle-ability pupils, which was a key area for improvement identified in the inspection report of 2012.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. Some teaching fails to capture the attention and interest of pupils.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the presentation and accuracy of work or the completion of classwork and homework.
- The quality of leadership and management over time has been inconsistent and has led to variable outcomes across different aspects of the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has put in place sound plans to address areas which need to be improved. Staff are implementing actions which are beginning to have a positive impact.
- Some teaching in the school is inspirational and intellectually challenging.
- School leaders and staff have ensured that pupils have a well-developed respect for cultures, faiths and lifestyles different from their own.
- Staff provide very well for the personal development and well-being of all pupils. The pastoral care provided by the school is of high quality. Pupils behave well.
- All staff take great care to ensure that pupils remain safe.
- Staff provide a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities which promote strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that disadvantaged pupils make better progress by focusing more clearly on the barriers individual pupils face and targeting funding and actions to specific learning needs.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils, particularly boys and middle-ability pupils, make the progress of which they are capable by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of the presentation and accuracy of work and the completion of classwork and homework
 - making sure that all teaching captures pupils' attention and interest
 - ensuring that teachers and curriculum leaders use assessment data to plan work at an appropriate level.
- Improve the consistency of leadership and management by ensuring that all senior leaders and curriculum leaders have equally high expectations of standards and quality in their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching in the sixth form, especially in academic subjects, so that students achieve as well as they should.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- For some years, the actions of school leaders have not had sufficient impact on pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have not analysed sufficiently well the specific barriers to learning of disadvantaged pupils in the school. The pupil premium funding was spent on strategies which lacked precision, and disadvantaged pupils continued to underperform considerably in comparison with their peers nationally.
- The quality and impact of senior leadership and curriculum leadership has been variable over time and has resulted in inconsistencies in policy, practice and outcomes for pupils.
- The new headteacher has acted decisively to tackle weaknesses with drive and ambition. While openly valuing the strengths of the school, he has raised expectations and improved accountability.
- It is evident that recently implemented policies and procedures, a realignment of the responsibilities of senior leaders and some changes in curriculum leadership are beginning to improve the quality of leadership and management across the school.
- Recent external reviews of science, mathematics, the pastoral system, the use and impact of the pupil premium, and standards and quality in the sixth form have provided senior leaders with detailed and accurate information upon which to base actions for improvement.
- School leaders have a sound grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, particularly in terms of pupils' outcomes. However, their grading of teaching and leadership is too generous because they have not taken sufficient account of the impact on pupils' outcomes over time.
- Plans for improvement accurately reflect the developmental needs of the school. Specific criteria by which success can be measured now allow school leaders, including governors, to assess regularly the impact of their actions. Staff working groups contribute to strategies for improvement and the opinions of parents and pupils are also taken into account.
- The headteacher and governors now routinely ask senior and middle leaders to account for outcomes in their areas of responsibility. They use performance management and regular and wide-ranging continuing professional development well to challenge and support staff.
- There is evidence that new ways of managing the pupil premium strategy are beginning to address previous weaknesses. Staff now identify the very specific needs of individuals at 'Team around the College' meetings. Although it is too soon for them to have had a substantial measurable impact, the school uses a wider range of strategies to support disadvantaged pupils both inside and outside the classroom.
- The leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. The school targets funding well to provide support for individuals and groups. The school has clear evidence of the impact of spending on the progress, attendance and well-being of

individuals.

- Leaders have used literacy and numeracy catch-up funding to good effect. Pupils who began Year 7 with low literacy and numeracy skills are gradually improving to match the levels of their peers.
- The school arranges good transition activities for pupils transferring from local primary schools. These arrangements are very effective in providing pastoral care and settling pupils in but less effective in ensuring that schemes of work for Year 7 are pitched at an appropriate level.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and gives pupils the opportunity to study a very wide range of subjects.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum. The skills for life programme, religious education, themed days and assemblies provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Older pupils take on the responsibility of mentoring younger ones to help them with their work and behaviour.
- The school promotes fundamental British values. Staff give pupils opportunities to elect their representatives on the college and school councils and pupils are keen to undertake leadership activities. The curriculum encourages respect for people of differing faiths, cultures and lifestyles. The school has achieved Stonewall status, which celebrates the work of staff and pupils in promoting equality and diversity.
- The local authority school improvement adviser, who is the headteacher of Broughton High, an outstanding teaching school, has confidence in the new headteacher. He is under no illusions about what remains to be done before the school provides a good standard of education. In addition, the staff of Broughton High School and Bishop Rawstone High School have conducted useful subject department reviews to help curriculum leaders plan for improvement.

Governance of the school

- The governors of the school know that they have much to do to improve pupils' progress and they are working closely with the new headteacher to ensure that their actions have a more direct impact on aspects of the school which need to improve. They bring a wide range of educational, professional, personal and academic skills to their role and give of their time generously. They responded to very disappointing examination results in 2015 by revising school effectiveness groups to monitor more closely pupils' outcomes in key stages 3 and 4 and, separately, in the sixth form. They are now in a much better position to hold school leaders to account. They undertake all statutory duties rigorously and ensure that all pupils and staff are safe in school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders ensure that policies and procedures are in place so that pupils remain safe and feel safe. The checks that schools must make on the suitability of staff to work with children are all firmly in place. Staff training in all aspects of safeguarding is regular and up to date, and all understand that safeguarding pupils is a priority for

adults working in the school.

- Those with specific responsibility for safeguarding have undertaken more advanced training. They act quickly when informed of concerns and involve external expertise if needed. They keep meticulous records and are tenacious in following up the actions of school and external staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers and subject leaders do not always use pupils' prior attainment and recent assessment data well enough to plan schemes of work and activities at the right level. Sometimes the work is too easy for most-able pupils or too difficult for the least able. Middle-ability pupils, whether in ability sets or mixed-ability groups, are the most affected because the work set for them is quite frequently at the wrong level.
- Schemes of work for Year 7 science and mathematics do not take sufficient account of what pupils' have achieved by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers' expectations of the presentation and accuracy of pupils' work are variable, especially in relation to boys. Some teachers are not tenacious enough in challenging badly organised and careless work which is hard to read.
- Some teaching fails to capture the attention and interest of pupils. When this happens, pupils lose concentration and do not listen to teachers' explanations or complete work.
- The school's 'impact feedback' strategy is not consistently applied. When teachers follow this policy of giving pupils time to reflect on feedback and to redraft work, the improvement in standards is very evident.
- The implementation of literacy across the curriculum is at an early stage of development. Staff do not yet apply the school's literacy policy consistently across all subjects and most teaching does not develop subject-specific vocabulary to enable pupils to write and talk in a sophisticated way. Numeracy across the curriculum is not yet embedded and is evident in only a minority of subjects, such as science and geography.
- Most teachers generate very positive relationships with pupils and model respectful behaviour. They are calm and authoritative and create a positive atmosphere by frequent use of praise and humour.
- Some teaching is dynamic, energetic, intellectually challenging and inspires high endeavour. The work in books and discussions with pupils indicate that, where teaching in the school is of the highest quality, pupils make excellent progress.
- The school's online system enhances opportunities for pupils to do homework. Although not all teachers consistently apply the school's homework policy, most pupils make the most of opportunities to consolidate learning at home.
- Most parents feel that they receive regular and accurate information about how their child is progressing and what they need to do to help their child to improve.
- Discussions with pupils indicate that neither staff nor pupils tolerate the use of derogatory or discriminatory language.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Discussions with pupils and staff, as well as responses by pupils, staff and parents to Ofsted questionnaires, indicate that all have confidence in the school's systems to ensure that all pupils are safe and well cared for.
- The school provides a nurturing environment and high-quality pastoral care. The school's 'college' system provides clear roles and responsibilities for pupil's welfare and well-being. It ensures that staff know and understand every pupil well and that no pupil is left unsupported whatever his or her needs.
- The work of inclusion staff, mentors, counsellors and the school nurse contributes to the emotional well-being of pupils who need support. Staff are very careful to provide support to pupils with medical needs when they return to school after a long period of absence.
- Pastoral leaders and leaders of special educational needs and/or disabilities make good use of external agencies if the school does not have the specific expertise needed. Staff are tenacious in following up referrals and attending pupil review meetings.
- Pastoral leaders ensure that the curriculum, timetable and use of the school buildings are adapted to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.
- Teachers deliver a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum in lessons, form time, assemblies and themed days. This wide-ranging programme of activities ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm, how to avoid extremism and how to keep themselves safe online.
- The curriculum promotes healthy lifestyles and addresses how to maintain positive physical and emotional relationships.
- The school has strong systems to deal with bullying and uses a restorative approach so that the perpetrators of bullying fully understand how their actions have affected the victim. School records, and discussions with staff and pupils, indicate that bullying is rare and that when it occurs staff deal with it well so that it does not happen again.
- Teachers ensure that pupils listen to, respect and value the views of others even if they differ from their own.
- The school provides very good careers education, information, advice and guidance so that pupils can make informed decisions about which subjects to study within and beyond school. Pupils have access to substantial independent advice from an external careers service and the school prioritises disadvantaged pupils for this support.
- Staff regularly analyse pupils' responses to questionnaires to ensure that teaching and the curriculum cater for individual aspirations. Parents welcome the opportunity to attend careers events to support their children.
- An Ofsted survey visit in 2015 identified that the personal development and welfare of pupils attending alternative provision needed improvement. Leaders have addressed all the issues identified. The school now has clear and effective arrangements in place to ensure the safety, attendance and well-being of pupils who access part-time or full-

time alternative provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff, pupils and parents report that the school's 'college' system has a very positive impact on behaviour. It provides many opportunities for staff to reward positive behaviour while ensuring that systems are in place to enable a speedy response to improve the behaviour of the small number of pupils who occasionally misbehave.
- Pupils conduct themselves well between lessons and during social times. They are sensible, courteous and calm. Even when the canteen becomes extremely crowded during break and lunchtime, pupils are careful and considerate.
- In lessons, pupils confidently deliver presentations and talk about their work. The least able pupils enjoy reading aloud to the rest of the class.
- Punctuality to lessons is good and most pupils are well organised with all the equipment needed for each subject.
- Overall attendance is above national averages and the percentage of pupils with low attendance is in line with national figures. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has been low in comparison with that of other pupils nationally but has gradually increased over the last three years.
- This year, the school has begun to use 'Team around the College' meetings to identify strategies to improve the attendance of specific individuals and can show evidence of considerable improvement in the attendance of some pupils who previously only attended school sporadically.
- Pupils, particularly boys, do not always take enough pride in the way they present written work and do not check carefully enough to avoid careless mistakes.
- When teaching does not engage their interest, some pupils allow their attention to wander and do not apply themselves well enough to the tasks they have been given.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although school results compare well with national averages, the achievement of pupils is low because, taking into account their starting points and abilities, a significant number do not make enough progress in English and mathematics or across the range of academic subjects which make up the English Baccalaureate.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils and boys in English and mathematics has been improving gradually but still too few achieve outcomes comparable with other pupils nationally. In mathematics, the slow progress of disadvantaged pupils and boys is particularly evident.
- This year, school assessments indicate that pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 are on track to achieve better results. The accuracy of the school's predictions in previous years, some improvement in the quality of teaching and curriculum leadership, and scrutiny of work in books, indicates that the school has good reason to expect better results.
- Scrutiny of school assessments and pupils' work show that, at both key stages 3 and 4,

achievement in some subjects, such as performing arts, physical education (PE) and languages, remains very strong.

- As a consequence of higher expectations of work and behaviour, the progress of pupils in key stage 3 is generally better than in key stage 4 but is still too slow in mathematics and science. In these subjects, the planning of learning is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' abilities and prior attainment. This is particularly true in relation to the schemes of work for Year 7.
- Taking into account their abilities and starting points, middle-ability pupils underachieve across a range of subjects in comparison to the most able pupils and the least able. In key stage 3, a range of improvement strategies, including the introduction of mixed-ability teaching in more subject areas, have been introduced this year. School assessments and scrutiny of work by inspectors do not yet provide a convincing picture of substantial improvement.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities learn and progress well.
- Strategies to improve reading have borne fruit. All pupils read extensively in school and those who read aloud to inspectors did so with accuracy, confidence and enjoyment.
- The proportion of pupils who go on to education, employment or training at the end of Year 11 is higher than the national average.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The progress of students studying for A levels has been below average for some time. For learners studying AS levels and BTEC qualifications progress has been above, or close to, national averages.
- In some subjects, as a result of inconsistency in the quality of teaching, including inaccurate predictions and weak targeting of academic support, the progress made by students in a variety of academic subjects has been too variable.
- In the sixth form, disadvantaged students have made better progress than their peers.
- Staff give the small number of students entering the sixth form without GCSE grades A* to C in English and/or mathematics the opportunity to re-sit, and most improve their grades.
- Retention rates are very good. Almost all students on two-year courses remain in the sixth form until the end of Year 13.
- Leadership of the sixth form is now more clearly focused on improving students' performance in external examinations. Since September, leaders have made considerable changes in many aspects of the sixth form and there is evidence that these changes are beginning to have a positive impact.
- Students now have more lessons in each subject and more supported study sessions.
- Higher expectations have resulted in better attendance and punctuality.
- There have been some changes in the staffing of sixth-form teaching and the quality of teaching, including teachers' subject knowledge, has improved.
- There are appropriately high entry requirements for the study of A levels so that no students undertake courses which are unsuitable for them. ICT is now offered as a

BTEC course rather than A level, and Business Studies is offered as a BTEC course as well as an A level course to better match students' prior attainment and aspirations.

- Predictions for students currently in Year 12 and Year 13 show a more positive picture and, if achieved, will represent good progress.
- The school provides good-quality independent careers education, information, advice and guidance to support students so that their study programmes meet statutory requirements and build on prior attainment.
- Discussions with students indicate that guidance has made them ambitious and has opened their eyes to opportunities in the wider world. Students are enthusiastic and aspirational and articulate very clearly what they need to do if their plans are to be realistic.
- Relationships between students in the sixth form are good, as are their relationships with teachers and younger pupils. Most sixth-formers listen carefully, make confident contributions to lessons and are keen to do well. A minority lose concentration and waste some learning time.
- The high-quality safeguarding, pastoral care and provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education seen in the rest of the school continues into the sixth form.

School details

Unique reference number	132834
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10024273

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,406
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Slawinski
Headteacher	Martin Kerridge
Telephone number	01695 583 040
Website	www.ormskirk.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	manager@ormskirk.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 October 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Ormskirk School is a larger-than-average mixed 11 to 18 secondary comprehensive school.
- The number of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups and for whom English is not the first language is much lower than national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or

disabilities is very small in comparison to the national figure. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is similar to national averages.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Results in the sixth form also met the government's minimum standards.
- For a small number of pupils, the school uses alternative provision at West Lancashire Training and Learning Centre, BDS Training Limited and West Lancashire College Construction Academy.
- Staff from Broughton High School and Bishop Rawstorne High School have supported the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms to observe teaching and pupils' learning. Some of these lesson observations and learning walks were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors met formally with seven groups of pupils. An inspector heard a range of pupils read. Inspectors also considered 258 responses to the Ofsted pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, middle and senior leaders, members of the governing body and the school improvement adviser from Lancashire Local Authority, who is a serving headteacher.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding. They took account of the school's information about pupils' outcomes and scrutinised pupils' books and assessment information.
- Inspectors considered 73 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire), including 56 free-text comments. In addition, inspectors considered information which the school had gathered from its own parental questionnaires and an email sent directly to Ofsted by a parent.
- Inspectors considered 93 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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