

Matravers School

Springfield Road, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 3QH

Inspection dates

9–10 October 2018

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

- Leaders and governors do not have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness.
- External support has not enabled the school to improve swiftly since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Feedback provided to pupils to help them improve their work has a variable impact.
- A minority of parents and carers are not satisfied with how leaders respond to their concerns.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not achieved well over time.
- Leaders have been slow to reverse the decline in pupils' achievement in mathematics over time.
- Leaders and governors do not have a sufficiently precise grasp of the school's key priorities.
- The quality of teaching is variable across the curriculum. Some teaching does not challenge pupils sufficiently, which leads to less positive attitudes to learning.
- Provision in the sixth form requires improvement. It does not enable students studying A-level courses to make the progress of which they are capable.

The school has the following strengths

- Attendance has improved in the main school and is now in line with the national average.
- Pupils are well cared for and benefit from a range of support to meet their social, emotional and behavioural needs.
- Pupils benefit from a comprehensive range of careers information to help guide their next steps.
- Behaviour has improved and exclusions have fallen because of consistent application of the behaviour policy.
- Improving monitoring of teaching and use of assessment information are helping pupils to make more rapid progress.
- Pupils are polite, respectful and personable. They wear their uniform proudly and represent their school well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders evaluate the quality of provision with accuracy and objectivity
 - leaders develop sharper strategic plans that focus more effectively on the key issues for improvement
 - governors are provided with the information they need to form a detailed understanding of the achievement of different groups of pupils
 - governors hold leaders to account fully, using external sources of information to challenge and verify leaders' assertions
 - leaders draw on external support that assists them in raising pupils' achievement.
- Improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and including in the sixth form, by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan work that challenges pupils of different abilities, particularly the most able boys
 - pupils act on the feedback they receive from teachers to help them improve their work
 - pupils develop more positive attitudes to learning beyond compliance and cooperation
 - the best teaching practice is shared across the school.
- Improve provision and outcomes in the sixth form, particularly for students on A-level courses, by ensuring that leaders:
 - are clear about the most urgent priorities for improvement
 - monitor the quality of teaching closely and link this to students' outcomes
 - improve attendance in the sixth form, so that it matches attendance in the main school.

A review of governance is recommended to see how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have been slow to improve the achievement of pupils in certain areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics. Leaders have not confronted key weaknesses with sufficient rigour and urgency.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the quality of provision is over-generous. They are too willing to use contextual factors, such as the school's location, to excuse underachievement. Consequently, leaders believe that pupils are making better progress than they are. This view has hampered efforts to raise pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. It also means that leaders' expectations of what some pupils can achieve are too low.
- Leaders have not identified or tackled some priorities for improvement with sufficient rigour because their strategic thinking lacks precision. Combined with overly positive self-evaluation, this has obscured their understanding of what needs fixing most urgently.
- Over time, external support has not enabled the school to improve rapidly since the previous inspection. It has not helped to ensure that pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, make the progress of which they are capable in some areas of the curriculum. Furthermore, external support has not helped students studying A levels to make better progress.
- Signs of improvement have become evident over the course of the last year in terms of pupils' overall achievement. More rigorous monitoring of teaching and closer monitoring of the progress of individual pupils are helping to raise achievement.
- Leaders have taken a principled approach to curriculum design. They have sought to provide a more challenging curriculum that encompasses arts and vocational subjects, which meets the interests of pupils. Nevertheless, recruitment issues and low take-up in French are having a negative effect on the proportion of pupils attaining the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).
- Middle leaders are positive and upbeat about their work and their role in the school. They know that their contribution towards meeting the school's aims is valued and they work with common purpose. They feel well supported by senior leaders. More rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and individual pupils' progress is helping to raise pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, this work has only begun to have a positive impact in the last year in some areas of the curriculum.
- The staff survey, issued during the inspection, shows that staff morale is generally very positive. Nearly all staff are proud to work at the school and feel well supported. However, a minority of respondents commented that the workload can be unmanageably heavy.
- The majority of parents who responded to the online Parent View survey are satisfied with the work of the school. However, a minority of parents are not satisfied with the way their concerns are dealt with.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational

needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is helping these pupils to engage more effectively with their school experience. Consequently, the attendance and achievement of current pupils are rising. Over time, additional funding has not had a demonstrable impact on pupils' achievement, but this is changing. Funding for pupils in Year 7 who need to catch up in English or mathematics has a very positive impact. Leaders evaluate it accurately, so that they know where it is needed and where it has most impact. Consequently, these pupils catch up quickly.

Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, governors have failed to ensure that leaders rapidly improve the achievement of pupils who are not reaching their potential, for example disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors have not held leaders robustly to account because they have been too willing to accept the overly positive information provided by leaders. They have also been too willing to accept excuses for low achievement. This has helped to create 'ceilings' and lower expectations of what is possible for some pupils.
- Governors care deeply about their school and are highly committed to it. They visit regularly, are involved in the wider life of the school and are helping leaders to manage complex projects, such as the new build currently taking shape. Governors have shared their experience with other organisations outside of the school, such as The Wiltshire Design and Task group.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Designated safeguarding leads take their roles seriously, understand their responsibilities well and have effective oversight of safeguarding matters across the school. They liaise closely with pastoral teams and the wider staff to ensure that there is regular, close communication about general issues or specific pupils. Governors also have effective oversight of safeguarding practice and keep abreast of key issues and trends.
- Designated leads have ensured that all staff are appropriately trained in child protection. Staff are clear about how to make referrals if they are concerned about a pupil; they know to record information on the newly introduced online system. This system records information in a clear, chronological order that enables leaders to track cases closely and take appropriate action to keep pupils safe.
- Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils are complete, thorough and up to date. Staff and governors involved in appointing new staff have had training to ensure that they recruit appropriate staff.
- Pupils who spoke with the lead inspector reported that they feel safe in school and that there are members of staff they would speak to if they had any worries.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across the curriculum. Where teaching is weaker, expectations of pupils are not high enough. Teachers set work that does not challenge pupils sufficiently and deepen their thinking.
- Pupils do not consistently engage with learning in some subjects because tasks lack challenge. This is most evident in subjects such as mathematics and science. Although pupils are compliant and cooperative in their lessons, and follow instructions, they lack an eagerness to learn. Too often, pupils do not choose to take their learning forward. This is because they are not spurred on by intellectual curiosity and a desire to explore concepts and ideas further.
- Pupils do not consistently act on the feedback they receive from teachers to improve their work. Across subjects, in accordance with the school's policy, teachers work hard to provide pupils with guidance to improve their work. However, this does not result routinely in pupils using this expertise to move forward in their learning.
- In subjects such as English, drama and geography, questioning is used effectively to engage pupils' interest and provoke deeper thinking. Teachers in these subjects ask questions that require pupils to reflect, analyse and imagine. Consequently, pupils take more of an interest and learn more readily.
- Pupils benefit from positive and rewarding relationships with their teachers and teaching assistants. Staff know pupils well and they promote safe, supportive learning environments where pupils feel secure in speaking up and answering questions. Teachers' strong subject knowledge helps them to teach with confidence. This also helps pupils to feel secure, so they can ask for help if they need it.
- The assessment system has been revised to meet the demands of the revised national curriculum. This is helping pupils to have a better understanding of the target grades they have been set and to know how well they are achieving.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has well-developed systems for ensuring that pupils are well cared for. These reflect the values and inclusive ethos of the school. As a 'Thrive Hub' lead school, it provides different support packages to pupils who have different social, emotional and social needs. For example, specialist staff run workshops to help pupils manage anxiety and anger. Counselling sessions are also provided to pupils. Staff also run well-attended parenting classes, which are open to parents at other local schools as well.
- Increasingly, pupils are becoming more confident and self-assured. This is apparent in their demeanour around the school. However, these qualities are not yet evident in their learning.
- Although pupils who spoke to inspectors were not particularly critical of their school experience, neither were they particularly enthusiastic. Nevertheless, pupils value their school experience for the range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer. For example, pupils can take advantage of many different sports clubs and participate in the annual

drama production. There is also a thriving Combined Cadet Force, which is popular with pupils. Pupils who spoke with the lead inspector talked enthusiastically about the trips and visits provided by different subject departments.

- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that bullying is not an issue in the school. When it does occur, bullying is generally dealt with effectively by staff. One in five parents who responded to Parent View do not agree that bullying is dealt with effectively, but this is not supported by other inspection evidence.
- The school's personal, social and health (PSH) education programme supports, among other strategies, different aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' considerate, tolerant and respectful treatment of others around the school shows the effectiveness of this work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and personable. They take pride in their uniform and wear it smartly. They treat their school respectfully, evidenced by the lack of litter and graffiti. Pupils move around the site in an orderly and calm fashion, supported by high levels of staff supervision.
- Over the previous two years, rates of absence and persistent absence have fallen overall and for different groups of pupils. Attendance is now in line with the national average because of the success of concerted efforts to tackle absence.
- The school's behaviour system successfully uses a combination of rewards and sanctions to manage pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils understand where the boundaries are and know what is expected of them. Although some pupils and parents consider the behaviour system to be too strict, it has undoubtedly helped to create a calmer, safer, more orderly school. Better behaviour has also helped to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions, which is now in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The most recent published, and validated, information shows that pupils' overall progress was in line with the national average. However, pupils' progress in mathematics and the progress of disadvantaged pupils across subjects have been below average over time.
- The progress of current pupils, although improving, is still variable for certain groups. Leaders acknowledge that the progress being made by boys with high prior attainment is not good enough. This is evident in pupils' work, which points to a lack of challenge. Consequently, these pupils do not commit to their work as much as other pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities currently in the school are making better progress than those who have since left. The work in disadvantaged pupils' books and those of their peers shows that there is little difference in quality and presentation.
- Provisional information regarding the achievement of pupils who left the school in 2018

indicates that attainment rose for different groups of pupils across subjects. This information shows that attainment for these pupils in English and mathematics was broadly in line with the national average.

- Pupils make stronger progress in subjects such as English, drama, photography and geography. In part, this is because of a culture of high expectations, and the desire to challenge, interest and engage pupils.
- Pupils are provided with comprehensive careers guidance from different sources. This is a strength of the school and has been recognised by an external company responsible for promoting high-quality careers guidance. The school's work, both in Year 11 and in the sixth form, helps to ensure that pupils and students are well prepared for their next steps.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Leaders have failed to ensure, since the previous inspection, that students following academic courses make good progress. In part, this is because leaders do not have sufficient clarity about the most urgent priorities for improvement. It is also because the quality of teaching has not been monitored closely enough.
- Over time, the progress made by students on A-level courses, particularly girls and pupils with middle prior attainment, has been below average. The school's progress information for current students in Year 13 indicates that this picture is not improving. However, students' progress in applied, vocational courses has been strong over time.
- Leaders recognise that variability in the quality of teaching and assessment is having a negative effect on students' progress. Although staff across the curriculum possess strong subject knowledge and form beneficial relationships with students, these are not enough to compensate for other weaknesses in teaching.
- Leaders have prioritised securing positive destinations for students when they leave the sixth form. As a result, the proportion of students going on to further education, training or employment is above average and has been so over time.
- Students benefit from a comprehensive range of mandatory and voluntary non-qualification activities. These complement their study commitments. For example, students participate in work experience and enrichment activities. They are also able to pursue extended project qualifications.
- Attendance in the sixth form is lower than attendance in the main school.
- Students who responded to the pupil survey issued during the inspection commented that they value the pastoral and academic support they receive from staff. They feel that staff help to safeguard their physical, mental and emotional health.
- As in the main school, students appreciate the range of careers guidance on offer, especially with regard to higher education. However, some students commented that they would like more individualised, one-to-one support and further advice on apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	126510
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10048029

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	832
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs	Guy Davies and Brian Ralph
Headteacher	Dr Simon Riding
Telephone number	01373 822666
Website	www.matravers.wilts.sch.uk
Email address	head@matravers.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 February and 14 April 2015

Information about this school

- Matravers School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and receive support is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is significantly above the national average.
- No pupils attend alternative provision outside the school. A small number of pupils attend the Link Centre within school, which supports pupils who have additional social,

emotional, behavioural and learning needs. One pupil receives off-site medical tuition provided by the local authority.

- The school is a member of a group of schools which work together to improve teaching
- The school is monitored by a Wiltshire local authority challenge and support partner.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and behaviour in lessons jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, designated safeguarding leads, governors, middle leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and coordinators for pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the challenge and support partner. He also spoke to two parents by telephone.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation, progress information, minutes of governing body meetings, and the challenge and support partner's notes of visits. Inspectors also scrutinised curriculum documents, information pertaining to the monitoring of teaching, attendance and exclusion records, and information relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and observed pupils' conduct around the school, during assembly, registration and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils.
- The lead inspector took account of 97 responses to the online Parent View survey with associated free-text comments, 25 responses to the pupil survey, completed by sixth-form students, and 63 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Steve Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Duncan Millard	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Benjamin Antell	Ofsted Inspector

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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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