

Werneth School

Harrytown, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3BX

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve well. Attainment has risen rapidly and securely since the previous inspection. So too has the progress students make given their starting points.
- Students achieve well because teaching is usually good with some that is outstanding. A minority of teaching requires improvement. Most teaching is well planned, lively and challenging.
- Students enjoy learning and have positive attitudes towards school. They behave well and are respectful and courteous. They feel safe and are cared for well. Attendance has improved significantly.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, drive the school strongly and purposefully forward. They are at the root of the rapid and sustained improvements that have taken place.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the proportion of students making expected and more than expected progress compare favourably with national figures, the proportion making more than expected progress given their starting points are not yet high enough.
- Teaching is usually good and some is outstanding. However, a minority of teaching requires improvement and there is not enough outstanding teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 36 lessons, including one joint observation with a deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, students, representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 67 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors listened to a group of Key Stage 3 students read and looked at students' workbooks to check the quality of students' progress over time and the quality of marking.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: data relating to attainment and achievement over time and currently; school records and policies relating to behaviour and safety; minutes of meetings of the governing body; records of performance management and the monitoring of teaching and learning; the school's self-evaluation; and the school development plan.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Pruchniewicz	Additional Inspector
Patrick Feerick	Additional Inspector
John Ashley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Werneth is slightly larger than the average secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported by school action is higher than average, as is the proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The school is a specialist college of visual and performing arts.
- The school meets the current government's floor standards for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by tackling the small amount of teaching that requires improvement so that it is all at least good, as well as increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that all teaching is lively enough to engage students fully in their learning
 - ensuring that the level of challenge and expectation is always high enough for different groups of learners according to their needs and abilities
 - giving students more opportunities to learn independently
 - making sure that students are more actively involved in their own learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of students is good

- In most lessons students are keen to learn and strive to give of their best. They contribute willingly and share their ideas maturely with others in pair and group work.
- Students join the school with attainment that is generally below average.
- Attainment and progress have improved significantly since the previous inspection because the quality of teaching and classroom behaviour have improved. Attainment has risen at a much faster rate than the national average.
- Students make good progress in Key Stages 3 and 4. By the end of Key Stage 4, attainment is average and the proportion of students making expected and more than expected progress from their starting point compares favourably with national figures.
- A dip in attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2011 to below average was the result of an influx of students into the school at other than normal times, many with records of severe attendance and behavioural problems. Nevertheless, the school exceeded its own aspirational targets for the cohort.
- The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, has risen sharply because leaders and managers have tackled inadequate teaching rigorously in mathematics and eradicated it.
- Students leave the school well prepared for their future education, employment and training pathways. The proportion of students leaving school not in education, employment or training has fallen sharply from nearly 8% at the time of the previous inspection to less than 1% currently.
- Students who are disabled or who have a statement of special educational needs also make good progress and achieve well because of the well targeted support they receive.
- Leaders and managers have used the pupil premium funding astutely to support the learning of students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after students. Their attainment is rising rapidly as a result and gaps between their performance and that of other students are closing securely.
- Attainment in reading is average across the school. Students read fluently and confidently. Many say they enjoy reading. Regular library lessons are appreciated by younger students. Students who struggle with reading are supported effectively and this enables them to make good progress.
- Students' attainment in subjects related to the school's specialism is above average because much teaching is outstanding in these subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching is the key to students' good progress and achievement.
- While most teaching is good, a small amount requires improvement and some is outstanding.
- Most teaching has a sharp focus on learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Questioning is used effectively to check on students' understanding and most teaching is adapted successfully when it becomes apparent that students do not understand.
- When teaching is outstanding, students really fly. For example, in one outstanding Year 11 English lesson taught to a group of 13 lower-ability boys, the level of challenge, the variety of activity and the quick pace kept the students on their toes at all times. They rose to the challenge with enthusiasm. The level of some of their verbal answers would not have been out of place in an A-level English class.
- However, not enough teaching is yet of this calibre. The pace of teaching is occasionally too slow and this slows progress. Sometimes, especially where teaching requires improvement, teaching does not have high enough expectations of what students are capable of achieving

and sometimes teachers take too long over explanations when students are ready and eager to get on with things independently and actively for themselves.

- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support individuals and small groups, especially lower-ability students, so that these students make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Strong relationships between teachers and students in most classes enable students to feel confident in asking and answering questions and in seeking help when necessary.
- Teachers use the wealth of assessment data to good effect to set appropriate activities for students in most classes.
- Marking is regular and of almost consistently good quality in showing students what they need to do to improve their work.
- Appropriate homework is set and marked regularly.
- The determined push to improve students' literacy skills is paying fine dividends. Writing, reading and speaking skills are taught effectively across subjects. Its impact is seen in how articulate students are and in their rising achievement across a range of subjects.

The behaviour and safety of students are good

- Students behave sensibly and maturely in lessons and around the school.
- Attitudes to learning are positive. 'The teaching has got much more interesting in the last three years or so. I'm enjoying lessons much more and there's much less messing about.'
- is a typical student comment.
- Parents and carers express few concerns about the quality of behaviour in the school. Most are very positive.
- The school has worked hard and successfully to improve attendance and punctuality. Attendance is now average and improving, whereas at the time of the previous inspection, it was below average. This reflects not only the effectiveness of the school's procedures but also students' much greater enjoyment of school and learning.
- Students say they feel safe in school. They know who to go to if they have a problem and trust the school to help them deal with it.
- Students say, and school records confirm, that behaviour over time has improved significantly.
- Permanent and fixed-term exclusions have fallen sharply.
- Students say that bullying of any sort is no longer a problem. They understand the need to respect those who are different because the school is, 'dead set against it and we can see why'.
- Students say they feel safe in school. Parents and carers have very few concerns about the safety of their children in school.
- Students have a secure understanding of the potential dangers of using internet sites.
- There are comprehensive and effective procedures to ensure the health and safety of the small number of older students who attend a local college for off-site provision. Their attendance is checked meticulously.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong, purposeful and ambitious leadership of the headteacher sets the tone of improvement for the school and provides a sharp focus for its work and success.
- The improvements that have taken place in students' achievement, the quality of teaching, attendance and behaviour all testify to strong capacity for the school to continue to improve.
- The headteacher is ably supported by a strong team of senior leaders who are also relentless in driving improvement.
- Middle leaders have been made much more accountable for the quality of teaching and students' progress. They welcome the extra responsibilities that they have been given and are

effective in monitoring the work in their areas of responsibility and raising expectations.

- Leaders and managers evaluate the effectiveness of the school accurately. They know what needs to be done to bring about further improvement and plan accordingly.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous. School monitoring files, supported by inspection evidence, show that the quality of teaching has improved significantly over time as a result.
- Leaders and managers use performance management astutely to provide staff with clear targets linked to the priorities in the school development plan with rigorous evaluation of success in meeting them.
- School policies are fully in place and a careful check is kept on their consistent application. The school's literacy policy, and its implementation in particular, has been effective in driving up standards in pupils' reading, writing and speaking skills.
- The curriculum is led and managed well. It is broad and balanced and meets students' differing needs and abilities. There is a wide range of extracurricular activities, especially in sports and the arts. Attendance at these activities is very high and students speak warmly of the opportunities the school provides.
- The school targets the pupil premium funding very effectively to promote inclusion of the targeted groups and support their learning. The progress of these students is monitored and evaluated accurately and shows secure improvement over time.
- Students' good behaviour, their respect for others, their deep involvement in the influential school council and their good awareness of other cultures and religions show that the school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.
- The school has fostered very good relationships with parents and carers through innovative approaches, such as holding parents' evenings in venues closer to targeted groups of parents and carers.
- Procedures for safeguarding students are embedded and give no cause for concern.
- The local authority provides effective support for leaders and managers in improving achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - the governing body is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. It uses its knowledge very effectively to support and challenge
 - governors ensure that financial resources and their allocation provide best value for money
 - the governing body carries out its duties with regard to performance management meticulously.

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	106136
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	400821

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,068
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Holt
Headteacher	Pamela Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2009
Telephone number	0161 4941222
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