

# Clifton: A Community Arts School

Middle Lane, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S65 2SN

**Inspection dates** 18-19 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' achievement requires improvement. Students do not make as much progress in mathematics as they should and less than they do in their other subjects.
- Teaching requires improvement. While the quality of teaching is improving, it is still too variable across the school and within subjects. This means that the progress students make varies.
- Behaviour and safety require improvement. Students are safe in school and generally behave well. However, some disruptive behaviour occurs in lessons depending on how well students are challenged and involved in their own learning.
- Leadership and management do not at present evaluate the success of their actions sufficiently rigorously. While achievement is rising generally and the quality of teaching is improving, school leaders have not yet secured good achievement and good teaching.
- The governing body does not yet challenge school leaders strongly enough on teachers' performance and whether funding from the pupil premium is providing good value for money.

### The school has the following strengths

- The programme that has recently been put in place to help teachers improve their skills is of high quality. While the overall quality of teaching is not yet good, there is evidence of individual teachers improving their practice significantly.
- Pupils from different backgrounds and who speak different languages get on well with each other in a harmonious atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect.
- The support provided for students whose circumstances potentially make them vulnerable is of the highest quality. This means that students who arrive from other countries quickly settle into their new surroundings and those at risk of being excluded are kept in school with programmes tailored to meet their individual needs.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. Many students take part in a range of sports and arts extra-curricular activities.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 37 lessons taught by 36 teachers. Three lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a member of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, staff and students from the school.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including information relating to teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring and evaluation records and the tracking of students' progress.
- Inspectors analysed the 18 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, completed by parents and carers.

## Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jane Alexander

Additional inspector

Christine Birchall

Additional inspector

Pankaj Gulab

Additional inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average as is the proportion of students supported at school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs.
- An above average proportion of students speak English as an additional language.
- More pupils are from minority ethnic groups than is normally found. The majority of these students are of Pakistani heritage.
- A growing proportion of students enter or leave the school other than at the normal times. The majority of these students arrive from Eastern European countries, many of whom are at the early stages of speaking English.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is more than double the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum standards for progress and attainment.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching so it becomes at least good by:
  - increasing the challenge in lessons and using assessment information with more precision to match work to students' abilities
  - customising the quality of feedback to students so that they are very clear what steps they need to take to improve
  - using success criteria more widely so that students are aware of what they must do to ensure their work is of the highest quality and enable them to assess each other's work with more insight
  - ensuring students' behaviour is always good by fully involving them in their own learning through group work, motivating activities and discussions
  - developing students' reading, writing and speaking skills across the curriculum.
- Improve students' progress in mathematics by:
  - using every opportunity throughout the curriculum for students to use and apply their mathematics skills
  - ensuring mathematics teachers share more widely the expertise that exists within the department.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring development plans contain measurable targets from which the governing body and local authority can hold school leaders closely to account
  - increasing the rigour with which the governing body challenges school leaders on matters relating to the pupil premium and performance management.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is improving steadily as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching. However, this is still inconsistent between groups of students and between subjects. This is because the quality of teaching across the school is too variable.
- Attainment is rising steadily, although in 2012, the numbers of students reaching five or more A\* to C grades including English and mathematics fell from the previous year. The number of students obtaining five or more GCSE passes is significantly above the national average, however, and this prepares students satisfactorily for further education, training or employment.
- The progress students make in mathematics lags behind that in English. In some mathematics lessons, students make rapid progress and are aware of precisely what is needed to improve their work. In other mathematics lessons, the work is repetitive, mundane and lacks the necessary challenge for students to make good progress. The good practice that exists in the mathematics department, therefore, is not yet shared effectively enough.
- Across the curriculum, there are missed opportunities for students to use and apply and develop further their mathematics skills.
- A large proportion of students who are supported by school action or statements of special educational needs have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Their achievement is below national expectations overall. This is because some have a history of poor or non-attendance from other schools.
- A range of interventions is in place to address the low rates of literacy on entry to the school in Year 7. Inspection evidence indicates that these interventions are, on the whole, effective in accelerating their progress in reading. However, reading, writing and speaking skills are not developed well enough across all areas of the curriculum.
- The progress of students supported at school action is accelerating due to some improvements in teaching and targeted support for their literacy needs, although their achievement over time is below expectations.
- The school has, in recent years, been successful in gradually closing the gap in attainment between those who are and are not supported by the school premium. However, the gap in progress with other groups varies between subjects.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make progress that is commensurate with their starting points. Their language skills are developed effectively as a result of support from native-speaking language assistants. However, some who arrive halfway through a key stage, often with an erratic history of attendance, make slow gains in their progress.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress in English, although their progress in mathematics, specifically problem solving and basic numerical calculations, requires improvement.

### The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are examples of good and outstanding teaching in the school. However, the inconsistencies in its overall quality mean that it is not yet good.
- Where teaching is most effective, students are well challenged, fully involved in their own learning and are well aware of what they should do to improve. Where such conditions exist, students are always well behaved and show excellent attitudes to learning.
- In one highly effective mathematics lesson, the teacher carefully analysed why her students were experiencing difficulties with basic calculations. This highly reflective practice led her to structure success criteria for her students and give personalised support and feedback to them on their learning.

- Some teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to model skills and inspire students. In one Judo lesson, students practised an advanced armlock, the teacher anticipating common misconceptions with great skill and constantly encouraging students to do their best.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress frequently. However, this assessment information is not always used precisely enough to ensure work is matched to students' abilities or that they are sufficiently challenged. Too often a 'one size fits all' model is adopted or students are expected to fit into one of three ability groups planned by the teacher.
- The oral and written feedback students receive on their work varies in quality. Where it is most effective, teachers give students simple-to-understand steps to improve their work. Students are then given the time to review and reflect on this feedback to improve their work. Where it is least effective, work is simply ticked or contains only comments such as 'well done'.
- Students made most progress when they were provided with very precise success criteria that informed them what steps they needed to take to ensure their work was of a high quality. Where such success criteria or checklists were absent, students often produced work of a mediocre quality or were unsure of what constituted good quality work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

requires improvement

- Students' behaviour in lessons is directly related to the quality of teaching. Where teaching is good or better, students are often impeccably behaved, concentrate hard and show good relationships to each other and to the teacher. This applies to all abilities of students.
- Students behave best when they are kept busy, challenged well and given specific responsibilities. In one physical education lesson, students known to have behavioural difficulties were given very specific roles, such as timekeepers and referees. This led to these students rising to the challenge and high expectations of the teacher, resulting in their behaviour being excellent.
- The support from pastoral staff for those students who have behavioural and social needs is first-rate. This has resulted in very few students leaving the school without progressing into further education, employment or training.
- Where teaching fails to capture students' interests or contains mundane, repetitive tasks which are simply to be completed without sufficient challenge, behaviour is often not good. In such lessons, students chat to each other, are slow to get on with their work or use avoidance strategies, such as asking irrelevant questions or requesting to go to the toilet.
- Sometimes teachers are slow to make a prompt start or students are late to the lesson after break and lunchtimes.
- While students say bullying does go on from time to time, they are generally happy that it is dealt with effectively by staff. They are well aware of the safety issues associated with electronic devices and the internet.
- Students in Year 7, who at the time of the inspection had been at the school for a matter of weeks, said they had settled in very well and felt safe in school.
- Around the school, in the playgrounds and in the corridors, most students behave well, get on well with each other and there is only occasionally boisterous behaviour.
- The majority of parents who responded to Parent View were happy with how the school deals with incidents of bullying and behaviour in the school.

### **The leadership and management**

requires improvement

- The leadership of teaching has been strengthened by a more rigorous and supportive framework to help teachers of all abilities to improve their practice. This has enabled some teachers to gain additional qualifications and share their expertise. It is showing early signs of success, although much remains to be done to ensure the overall quality of teaching

rises to good.

- The curriculum in Key Stage 4 is well conceived and the school works well in partnership with a range of outside providers to ensure students' diverse needs are met well.
  - There have been recent changes to the curriculum in Key Stage 3 to address the needs of those who arrive at the school in Year 7 with the lowest rates of literacy. While it is yet too early to fully measure its impact, these initiatives are showing early signs of success.
  - Development plans are adequate, since they address the main areas of weakness to ensure the school becomes good. However, they do not identify clear, measurable milestones to enable the local authority or the governing body to hold school leaders to account.
  - The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View were happy with the school and how they are kept informed of their children's progress.
  - The local authority provides an appropriate level of support for the school and have helped to broker links between other schools in the local authority and wider afield. This support has been effective in improving the quality of teaching in recent years.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - governance requires improvement, since it does not at present monitor the quality of teaching, performance management and the allocation of the pupil premium with sufficient rigour
    - governors are a frequent presence in the school and observe the school's work at first hand. They regularly monitor the achievement of students through regular updates provided by senior leaders.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106947
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	405069

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1061
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sandra Tills
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patrick Daley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29-30 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 515005
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