

Selston High School

Chapel Road, Selston, Nottingham, NG16 6BW

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2012

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

- Progress in English is a weaker area.
- There is not enough emphasis on raising standards in reading, writing and communication skills in all subjects.
- The quality of teaching in a range of subjects is not good enough to accelerate progress.
- When teachers plan they do not always make sure work will be hard enough.
- Teachers do not always question students well enough to make them think hard.
- Marking does not always tell students how to improve.
- Improvements implemented by the headteacher have not had time to raise achievement.
- Judgements about the quality of teaching are sometimes over-generous because leaders do not yet check and assess performance in sufficient detail in their subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Good progress throughout the school in mathematics results in standards that are above average.
- There has been a three-year rise in the percentage of students achieving five good GCSE passes that include English and mathematics.
- It provides a safe, caring environment for students.
- Students' behaviour is usually good in lessons and around the site.
- The headteacher is providing very focused and determined leadership, backed-up by good planning, to promote improvements in the school's presentation.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 37 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher or senior leaders.
- They held meetings with a group of students, senior and middle leaders and with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors took into account the 32 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), in planning and carrying out the inspection.
- They observed the school’s work, and looked at a range of documentation, including data about the achievement of all groups of students, improvement planning and the impact of professional development on the school’s performance.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Beverley Mabey	Additional inspector
Michael Lafford	Additional inspector
Wendy Davies	Additional inspector

Information about this school

- This school changed its name in September 2012. It was previously the Selston Arts and Community College. Other aspects of the school remain unchanged.
- It is smaller than most others of its type.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium (extra money given to schools by the government) is below average.
- An average proportion of students, overall, is identified as disabled or with special educational needs. The proportion of students supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is well below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up his post in January 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring:
 - planning of learning gives sufficient focus to challenging students and providing work that meets their needs
 - questioning challenges students to think more widely and deeply
 - marking regularly tells students their achievements, tells them how to improve, and is consistent across the curriculum.
- Accelerate progress and raise standards throughout the school, particularly in English, by ensuring that the school's literacy programme is implemented fully in all year groups and subjects.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of middle leaders by making sure that they monitor and evaluate performance and practice in their subjects thoroughly and accurately in order to address under-achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards are average. The proportion of pupils achieving 5A* to C GCSE grades, including in English and mathematics, and the proportion achieving five or more GCSE passes at A* to C grades have risen for the last three years.
- However, achievement is variable between subjects. While attainment in mathematics is above average, it is average in English. Attainment in modern foreign languages and humanities are below average, although both subjects show signs of improvement.
- Students make good progress in BTEC vocational courses, and an above average proportion achieve merits and distinctions.
- Progress is variable between subjects throughout the school. It requires improvement, including in English, which is one of the subjects where not enough students make and exceed the progress expected of them. In mathematics though, progress is good because a greater proportion of teaching is matched accurately to students' needs.
- Teaching is not consistently good enough to quicken the pace of students' progress over time. Literacy skills are not regularly incorporated into the planning of learning in other subjects to enable students to improve their reading, writing and communication skills. Students' spelling and punctuation skills require improvement.
- There are no significant differences in the rate of progress of most different groups of students. The wide range of subjects which cater for the differing academic and vocational needs of the students promote satisfactory equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination across the school.
- However, the few students in Year 10 and 11 who were entitled to support through extra funding made better progress than those not receiving it, in a range of subjects including in English and mathematics.
- Students who are supported through school action are now making progress in line with similar groups nationally, towards specific goals. The improvement from a year ago is due to more timely intervention and reviewing of students' progress.
- A smaller proportion of students reach higher levels than nationally because more able students do not always make rapid enough progress. However, when tasks offer the right level of difficulty, their progress accelerates.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the on-line survey felt that progress was good, however, it requires improvement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is not enough consistently good teaching to result in good achievement over time across the subjects and year groups. Teaching varies from outstanding to a small proportion that is inadequate. However, there is some good practice in all subjects.

- In the good and outstanding lessons observed, introductory activities provided a good stimulus to learning and were followed up by tasks that demanded a range of learning styles. In an English lesson, the teacher constantly revisited the purpose of learning and the skill needed to achieve it so that students worked purposefully towards their goals. In many lessons, there is a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for students to learn independently.
- The main barrier to increasing the rate of progress is the quality of planning which often lacks the necessary focus on work that will cater accurately for the range of students' needs. Where work is too easy or too hard the pace of learning drops and students become disenchanted.
- In some lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and energises students. For example, the high expectations of a teacher in a mathematics lesson resulted in their good progress in measuring and drawing angles to the nearest whole degree. However, high expectations are not always reflected in teachers' questioning. Sometimes this does not challenge students to think more widely and deeply about their work.
- While some marking is excellent and promotes improved standards, practices and regularity vary between lessons. It does not always tell students how well they have done and how to improve. Sometimes, teachers' expectations of the quality, quantity and presentation of students' work are not high enough.
- Some teaching is very effective in encouraging students' to critically evaluate their own learning and to consider the strengths of other students. As a result, students' assessment of their own and their peers' learning is a stronger aspect.
- The help for students needing additional support, including those who have behaviour issues, is improving because it is more closely focused on their specific needs and its impact on the quality of learning is more regularly checked.
- Aspects of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are promoted regularly. In a drama lesson, students reflected to good effect on the social and emotional aspects of war as they analysed images. Cultural education is less evident.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Many students behave consistently well in lessons, when moving round the site and during break times. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school makes sure that students' behaviour is good.
 - Behaviour is not outstanding because in lessons which do not provide the right level of difficulty or maintain their interest, students lose focus. In a large majority of lessons, however, students display a business-like approach to learning and the good relationships between staff and students promote a positive climate for learning.
 - The school's expectations about students' attitudes to each other and to staff have risen and poor behaviour is not tolerated.
 - Most parents and carers agree that the school keeps students safe. It provides a secure and safe environment. During the inspection, safety was reinforced in several lessons, for example
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in food technology.

- Students display a comprehensive awareness of potential dangers and the importance of making informed choices. All groups of students know the dangers of cyber-bullying and how to avoid it. Many can empathise with those affected by racist and homophobic discrimination.
- Students say that bullying is uncommon and most feel confident in talking to a member of staff if they have any concerns.
- Attendance continues to be above average. Some students identified as having special educational needs have lower attendance, which is school is addressing. Most pupils arrive at school and lessons punctually.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher provides much focused leadership and has implemented numerous new strategies to improve the school. He has re-structured senior and middle leadership teams to reflect the school's major focus on raising achievement through the quality of teaching and to provide more rigour to school improvement. Detailed evaluation of students' progress has informed school development planning accurately.
- Many strategies are work in progress and there has not been time for them to show full impact. The development of consistency in the teaching of reading, writing and communication skills across the curriculum is in the early stages, though the literacy programme is well-conceived.
- The provision and support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has improved, due to more structured systems for identifying and meeting their needs.
- The systems for the regular monitoring of teaching and learning are appropriate, and observations take place regularly. However, the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching by middle leaders is not yet thorough or regular enough to provide a fully accurate, up-to-date picture of performance and practice in teaching across their subjects. Several inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly in planning and marking, have not been identified.
- The headteacher discusses regularly with teachers their performance and the progress they are making towards their targets. He takes prompt action to support any under-performance. Opportunities are given to all staff to develop their professional skills, through training and additional roles.
- The curriculum provides suitable breadth and balance throughout the school and a good range of academic and vocational courses at Key Stage 4 to suit the ability range. There is a wide variety of popular after-school clubs, adding to students' enjoyment of learning.
- The local authority is providing effective support. It is working with the school on the teaching of literacy. Other partnerships provide extra learning opportunities and specific support needed. The school's website is particularly helpful in keeping parents and carers informed about school issues and their children's learning.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- is good because governors have an accurate understanding of the school's needs and its performance
 - is challenging because governors question and probe the school robustly across all aspects of its work and follow-up issues
 - ensures most of the school's financial resources are managed efficiently and salary progression of staff is justified
 - has less focus on evaluating how additional funding to support specific groups of pupils is allocated, but governors plan to address this
 - makes sure that safeguarding procedures meet the current statutory requirements.
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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

Unique reference number	122857
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	406120

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	712
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Betty Dixon
Headteacher	Kevin Gaiderman
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2011
Telephone number	01773 810321
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