

# Wales High School

Storth Lane, Kiveton Park, Sheffield, S26 5QQ

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Too many teachers plan activities which are pitched at one level. The challenge provided for some students is not high enough. This means that overall students make adequate rather than good progress.
- Progress made in mathematics is weaker than in other subjects. This is because of weaker teaching in mathematics.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Students are not always guided to start the right courses. Some of them study courses they will not succeed at. Students make adequate progress.
- Middle leaders have not been held to account enough for the progress students make in their subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- The newly appointed headteacher has a very clear view of how successful the school can be. He has, in a short space of time, raised expectations and improved teaching.
- Relationships between students, and between staff and students, are very strong. Students are courteous, well mannered and respectful.
- Governors are aware of what needs to improve. They are holding the headteacher to account about changes being made.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team spent most of their time observing 44 lessons. They also completed a learning walk to look at the development of students' well-being. In addition, a visit was made to 'vector 31' (the school's provision for students who may be considered vulnerable). Lesson observations were done jointly with senior leaders. A range of subjects was seen across the whole age range.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, middle leaders and teachers with no leadership or management responsibilities. Groups of students were spoken to formally and during social times.
- Inspectors scrutinised students' work, read documents presented to them, including those relating to governance, students' progress, self-evaluation, improvement planning, the curriculum and safeguarding.
- There were 126 responses made to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), these and the responses to the staff questionnaire were taken into account by the inspection team. The inspectors also took account of the views of parents shared through letters and telephone calls.

## Inspection team

Tanya Harber Stuart, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Rutherford	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clarice Nelson-Rowe	Additional Inspector
Lenford White	Additional Inspector
Andrew Henderson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Wales High School converted to an academy on 1 September 2011. When its predecessor school, Wales High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- Wales High School is a larger than the average sized secondary school.
- A new headteacher started at the school on the 1 September 2012.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- There are very few students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium (extra funding provided by the government for students who are entitled to free school meals, looked after by the local authority or are children of service families) is broadly in line with the national average.
- A small number of students attend 'vector 31'. This provides an alternative curriculum for students and focuses on hairdressing, construction and motor vehicle courses.
- The school meets the government's present floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Ensure all students make at least good progress by:
  - raising attainment and accelerating all students' progress in all subjects and especially in mathematics
  - systematically embed the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school
  - using the information from tracking data to ensure additional support for underachieving students is effective.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring marking tells the students what they have done well and what they need to do to improve
  - use data from marking and tracking to pitch the lessons at the levels of the students involved
  - realising some students work more quickly than others and need to be challenged more.
- Develop leadership and management, especially middle leaders, by:
  - focusing plans on improving the progress made by students
  - ensuring all check regularly on initiatives to make sure they are having the expected impact on students' progress
  - holding middle leaders to account for the progress made by students in their subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The proportion of students achieving five A\* to C grades including English and mathematics fell in 2012. Fewer students made the expected progress in mathematics and English than in 2011. Overall, students made adequate rather than good progress.
- The overall standards reached by students supported by the pupil premium are lower than other students in the school. The difference between the standards reached by students supported by pupil premium and other students increased in 2012. Students supported by the pupil premium are not catching up with their peers.
- Students' skills in mathematics, reading and writing are not developed systematically. Teachers miss opportunities in lessons to improve both numeracy and literacy skills. There is some good practice, for example in design technology, in the development of the students' skills in making precise measurements and accurate drawings.
- Sixth form students make better progress during their AS courses than the A2 courses. In some subjects, for example, information and communication technology and art, progress made is good. Lower attaining students in the sixth form make the best progress. However, the progress made by students is highly variable and adequate overall.
- Students with disabilities and those requiring extra support make better progress in the development of their reading and spelling skills. The support given to these students, in the form of one to one support and in lessons, means they make the same progress as their peers overall.
- Students in 'vector 31', which is partially funded by the pupil premium, achieve professional qualifications in hairdressing, construction and motor vehicle courses. Some of these students make good progress in these courses because of the quality of the provision.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Too many lessons are planned to meet the needs of one group of students. This means some students find the work too easy and others find it too hard. This limits the amount of progress students can make. Expectations of students have been too low in the past and have led to students, including those with disabilities and who need extra help, making adequate rather than good progress.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well in some classes. For example in a Year 8 mathematics lesson the teaching assistant supported students by offering help but did not tell them what to do or how to do it. The students had to think for themselves and work out the answers. However, in some lessons, when teachers talk too much, teaching assistants are not used to such good effect.
- Marking is variable in quality. It does not always tell the students what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Students do not always know what their next steps are.
- Teachers in 'vector 31' have excellent subject knowledge and provide students with high quality learning experiences. The teachers engage and motivate the students through good quality questioning and a strong focus on safety.
- Where teaching is outstanding, such as in a Year 8 science lesson, teachers focused on where the students started at and what they needed to learn. Excellent questioning which challenged the students to give extended answers, combined with high quality feedback and very good relationships interested and motivated the students. As a result, they made outstanding progress.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The attendance of students is broadly average. Since September 2012 it has improved. Students attending 'vector 31' have higher attendance on the days when they attend this provision. Governors have focused on attendance, holding senior leaders to account for improving it. Attendance has improved as a result of actions taken.
- Not all students have positive attitudes to learning in all their lessons. When teaching requires improvement, behaviour is less positive. Where teaching is good or better there is a tremendous atmosphere for learning and this enables the students to have great discussions.
- Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe both in the 'real world' and when online. They use this knowledge to ensure they are safe. Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive in terms of the school being safe.
- Bullying is exceptionally rare. Students have a very good knowledge of the different types of bullying including racist and homophobic bullying. Any incidents are dealt with very quickly and assertively.
- The sixth form students are very good ambassadors for the school. They are positive about how they have benefitted from the school and they are keen to make a contribution back. They mentor Year 7 students, are reading buddies and help on open evenings.

**The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The headteacher has a very clear view of how successful the school can be. He is determined that expectations, both in terms of the quality of teaching and the progress made by students, will be raised. He is focused on the things which matter and energetically tackling what needs to be done. The pace of change has increased and improvements are being seen.
- The students consider the newly appointed headteacher to be highly visible. He listens to the students and takes action. For example one student stated the headteacher was 'checking up on the teaching' and as a result they had seen improvements in teaching. They also understand the higher expectations now in place.
- The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance at the highest levels of management in the school is more robust and identifies clearly what needs to improve and what the strengths are. This was shown in the recent review of the mathematics department.
- Middle leaders are too generous in their view of how well students are doing and do not always review the progress the students are making or the impact teaching has on that progress. As a result, middle leaders have not been held to account enough for the progress students make in their subjects.
- The headteacher has a very accurate view of the quality of teaching. Joint observations with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team showed they were able to review exactly what impact teaching had on the progress made by students.
- Too many middle leaders have an over-optimistic view of the quality of teaching believing it to be at least good. There is a lack of consistency in planning and teaching methods and a great deal of variability in the quality of teaching. Too much teaching requires improvement and this is why students are not making good progress.
- The system for performance management is now more rigorous. It is now linked to progress and outcomes for students. Previously it was too focused on tasks staff had to complete.
- Target setting was based on the students making adequate rather than good progress. This has now changed. Expectations are higher and the minimum now expected is good progress.
- The curriculum for students aged 11 to 16 is broad with a balance of vocational, academic and recreational courses. In the sixth form any student may study any course after receiving appropriate guidance. Although this gives students many choices, some leave the school at the

end of Year 12 to continue their studies elsewhere.

- The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They have many opportunities to reflect on issues, for example, students were able to discuss eloquently the Football Association's stance on racism.
- Early entry for examinations is used in English for the more able students. They are entered for English language at the end of Year 10 to enable them to take English Literature in Year 11. The school's policy of making students re-sit the GCSE if they have not achieved a high enough grade means there is no detrimental effect on students and they make adequate progress in English.
- The single central record and recruitment procedures meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors are clear about where there are issues in teaching and the progress made by students. They are, along with the headteacher determined that things will improve. There are effective procedures in place for the governing body to obtain information about the school. There are now effective strategies for analysing information about students' progress and challenging the school. The governing body has responded to parental concerns about the transport provided and this has improved the relationships the school has with the bus company. The governing body has strong involvement in ensuring effective financial management, the budget is spent on the priorities highlighted.

## 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>	136331
<b>Local authority</b>	Not applicable
<b>Inspection number</b>	395635

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,610
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	J Holcombe
<b>Principal</b>	Pepe Di'Tasio
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01909 771291
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