

# Royds School Specialist Language College

Pennington Lane, Oulton, Leeds, LS26 8EX

## Inspection dates

14–15 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		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

- In recent years the majority of students have made the progress that is expected of them, but not enough have made good progress, especially in mathematics.
- Although there is some good and outstanding teaching, and teaching is improving, there is still too much that requires improvement. Teaching is not always strong enough to drive students' learning and progress at a fast pace.
- Teachers do not always use the information they have available to match lessons to students' needs and abilities and sometimes the work is too easy.
- The sixth form requires improvement because, on some courses, students do not do well enough.
- Some subject leaders are not as effective in raising achievement as others.

### The school has the following strengths

- Disabled students and those with special educational needs do as well as other students because of the good care and support they are given.
- Governors and senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking action to raise standards in the main school and the sixth form.
- Students make consistently good progress in English and science as a result of strong teaching in those subjects.
- The quality of teachers' work is systematically monitored and is linked to pay. There is a good range of training to help them improve their teaching.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in both the main school and the sixth form. They have a well-developed appreciation of different cultures which they have gained as a result of the school's strong international ethos.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 38 lessons including four joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and another member of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, teachers, four groups of students, and a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the comments made in a letter to inspectors from another parent. The results of the school's questionnaire to parents were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's assessment data on students' progress over time, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring documentation, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and safeguarding documents. The school's website was also viewed.

## Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Rimmer

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Stephen Wall

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Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school was designated a Languages College in 2003 and continues to embrace its specialism.
- The school is a larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students funded under the pupil premium is higher than that seen nationally. The pupil premium provides schools with additional funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are in local authority care and those from service families.
- A large majority of students are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students whose learning needs are supported by school action or school action plus and those who have statements of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- Some students take courses at nearby Whitwood College and at Leeds City College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for attainment and progress.
- The school holds a number of quality marks including the Artsmark, Fairtrade, Healthy Schools, Sportsmark, International Schools Award, Leeds Inclusion Chartermark and Investors in People.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school so that more lessons are good or outstanding by:
  - making sure that the level of challenge and expectations of what students can achieve are higher, especially in mathematics
  - ensuring that information about students' progress is used more effectively to match activities closely to their needs and abilities
  - ensuring that learning in lessons is reinforced through appropriate homework
  - providing students with more opportunities to learn for themselves without relying too heavily on the teacher
  - ensuring marking is of consistent quality to show students how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve students' attainment and progress further in mathematics by:
  - providing students with opportunities to apply mathematical skills in a wider and more challenging range of situations and combinations
  - making sure that students are more aware of their targets and the steps they need to take to reach and exceed them.
- Make leadership and management more effective in raising achievement further by:
  - increasing the consistency with which subject leaders keep checks on the quality of work in their departments
  - ensuring that all leaders focus on students' learning and progress when making judgements about the quality of teaching
  - continuing to develop the use of rewards and sanctions to promote positive behaviour and secure their consistent application by all staff.

- Review the courses offered in the sixth form to ensure that they are better suited to promote the achievement of all students.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students join Key Stage 3 in Year 7 with broadly average levels of attainment. By the end of Key Stages 3 and 4, attainment is average. Their rate of progress over time has been average in English and below average in mathematics. However, progress in both subjects is accelerating.
- Leaders and managers are tackling underachievement in mathematics effectively and the proportion of students gaining at least a grade C has improved. As a result, the proportion of students achieving five or more grades A\* to C including English and mathematics has improved steadily over the past few years.
- Students make good progress in English and science because teaching is consistently good.
- Sensitive and carefully considered support for students with special educational needs, particularly in the school's ACE (Attendance, Caring, and Education) unit, helps these students make as much progress as others. This is because the team of staff have a clear understanding of the abilities of each individual student and ensure they receive timely support, the impact of which is carefully monitored and shared with parents.
- Students known to be eligible for the pupil premium have attained below national averages over time. However, the school is focusing support more closely on their needs and their attainment is coming closer to the national average.
- School leaders recognised that students' reading, writing and communication skills were an area for further improvement. A concerted effort by teachers to encourage students to explain their ideas more fully, using standard English, and a focus on reading more widely in all subjects, has been effective in improving these skills. Students heard reading aloud in classes did so with good fluency and understanding.
- The school enters a small number for early GCSE examinations in Year 10 so that classes can be reorganised in Year 11 to provide more targeted support for students in order to improve their grades. Early entry does not have a detrimental effect on students' chances of improving their grades.
- Since 2009 standards in the sixth form have improved as a result of improvements in teaching and increased expectations of students' attendance. However, there is still too much variability in standards between subjects. Moreover, some have very low numbers of students opting to study them and the school has recognised the need to reconsider the range of courses on offer.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Senior leaders have put a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection and inspectors saw many examples of good, and some outstanding, teaching. This has led to some improvement in student attainment in recent years. However, there is still too much teaching that requires improvement and which is not enabling students to make rapid progress.
- Leaders and managers have sharpened systems to set learning targets for students and to track their progress. However, not all targets are sufficiently challenging and not all teachers use this information fully to inform their planning. Where this is the case, the same topic is presented to a whole class without taking account of the different starting points of the students. The work is often too easy to enable students to make good progress.
- In some weaker lessons teachers talk for too long and dominate activities too much; students are not given sufficient time to work independently and have insufficient opportunity to develop their confidence in expressing their ideas or finding things out for themselves. This also applies to the teaching in the sixth form.
- Where teaching is good or better, the pace of learning is fast and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Questioning is used to probe students' understanding and to develop their confidence in expressing their ideas and views. Teachers constantly check on students' progress,

adapting their teaching to meet their needs. For example, in a science lesson students knew exactly what to do as soon as they entered the room, they were clearly used to routines and expectations and were therefore able to take responsibility for their own learning, which resulted in no time being wasted. In this lesson good questioning, intervention and feedback resulted in students maintaining high levels of interest and enjoyment and making very good progress. In an art lesson students were improving drawing skills at the same time as learning about the Maori culture. Students were engaged in a variety of activities, the teacher constantly checked their learning and progress and students were eager to participate in discussion, all resulting in good progress being made.

- Teaching is improving in mathematics but is not yet consistently good. Students generally enjoy their lessons but they are not always provided with enough opportunities to apply their skills to problems that make them really think about the mathematics they are learning. They are not always fully aware of what their targets mean and of the steps they need to take to reach or exceed their targets.
- Leaders have set about improving the quality of marking and feedback and students have begun to benefit from the new 'STEP it up' system. The best marking was seen to be thorough and feedback to students enabled them to know what they needed to do to improve. The new system is not yet consistently applied and, where weaker marking was seen, feedback to students was not sufficient to enable them to make the next steps for improvement.
- Homework is not consistently used to build on class work or to develop students' learning further.
- Teaching in the ACE (learning support) unit is good because lessons are very carefully tailored to the needs of the students.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The school has developed many systems as well as partnerships, with schools, parents and external agencies, with the intention of securing positive behaviour. Parents and students now have a better understanding of the relationship between good attendance and good progress. These actions are being successful and have enabled the school to improve attendance, to reduce the number of repeat offenders and the number of student exclusions and to increase the number of students staying on into the sixth form.
- The majority of students say that school policy on behaviour is applied consistently in most classrooms. However, there are some students, as well as a small number of staff and parents, who do not agree. This is why behaviour is not yet good.
- Students say they feel safe in school and parents agree. Staff monitor corridors, playgrounds and other areas where students spend their free time. Students say that bullying is not a problem but that, when it does happen, it is always quickly dealt with. They also say that behaviour has greatly improved since the introduction of the new behaviour policy.
- Behaviour in lessons is strong and students' attitudes to learning are generally positive. However, there are too many lessons where some students are content to follow routines, to sit back and let others do all of the work or answer the questions. This is generally where teaching activities do not fully meet their needs.
- Students are generally polite and respectful to each other and to adults working with them. They enjoy working in groups and pairs and show a good understanding of right and wrong. This indicates good social and moral development.
- The attendance and safety of students who attend part time at the local colleges are checked on rigorously through close liaison with college staff.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- Since the previous inspection senior leaders and governors have taken significant steps to drive improvement in teaching. They have developed the monitoring of the school's work and the

skills of middle leaders to evaluate the quality of provision. The initiatives recently introduced are proving effective but have not yet been embedded sufficiently to accelerate students' progress. Not all subject leaders have been effective in raising achievement and there are some discrepancies in the judgements they have made of teaching.

- The school has introduced Minimum Classroom Expectations of all teachers and has restructured the formal processes for managing the quality of teachers' work. It is now linked to pay progression and the national Teachers' Standards. Senior leaders have used these processes to challenge teachers whose work was less effective, so increasing the proportion of better quality lessons.
- The range of courses in the main school is good and offers choices of academic and vocational subjects (in partnership with a local college) that provide a good match to students' needs and abilities. It is sufficiently flexible to ensure that those students whose circumstances might put them at risk are also well provided for.
- The school is well placed to improve further and this is demonstrated by the improvements since the previous inspection. The senior leadership team has recently been restructured and there is now a much greater emphasis on quality assurance.
- There are appropriate support and guidance systems in place and students throughout the school say that they feel well cared for and supported in terms of both their personal and their academic development. Students told inspectors that the school is improving and that there is an increasing focus on raising their aspirations. Specific interventions are provided where students are identified as underachieving.
- The school makes every effort to work with parents. Attendance has improved and there are examples of effective family support work.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly supported by a rich programme of activities, trips, visits, the school's international dimension, cross-curricular work and the House System.
- Partnerships are a strong feature of the school's work. There are strong transition arrangements from primary to secondary school. The school has just set up a Trust in order to create more formal links with partner schools and other local organisations in order to raise aspirations for the whole community. The school has shared provision, Southway, for those pupils who may be at risk of being excluded.
- Leadership of the sixth form requires improvement. Information on students' progress is not used effectively enough to raise achievement. The range of courses offered does not facilitate good progress for all students.
- There is a link adviser assigned to the school from the local authority. The school subscribes to the Leeds Learning Partnership which provides subject and senior-leader networking opportunities. There is also a link with an outstanding school that has recently been set up to provide school to school support and opportunities for sharing good practice. These arrangements provide effective support.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements. The school ensures that all students have equal opportunities to find success and that there is no hint of discrimination.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is becoming increasingly effective in holding the school to account by asking the necessary questions to challenge leaders and managers. This is resulting in improvements in teaching and in achievement. The governing body is well organised and controls resources and finances well, making sure they are matched to priorities to make the school better. Governors ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively to support and improve achievement for this group of students.

## 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>	108081
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	400963

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<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>	1,166
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	135
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Peat
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bernadette Young
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 205 9559
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