

# Newall Green High School

Greenbrow Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M23 2SX

## Inspection dates

27–28 November 2012

|                                |                      |                      |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory         | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Inadequate</b>    | <b>4</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Inadequate           | 4        |
| 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 has serious weaknesses.

- Achievement is inadequate because students have not been making the progress expected of them, particularly in mathematics.
- Good practice in teaching has not been shared effectively. Therefore, there is too much teaching and marking that is of mediocre quality. As a result, the pace of improvement in students' achievement has not been fast enough.
- A legacy of poor teaching and leadership in mathematics is still holding back the progress of students in Key Stage 4.
- Attendance is lower than the national average and too many students in the past were excluded from school. Rates of exclusion and absence, although decreasing, are still high.
- The governing body, which is responsible for three federated schools, needs to give more attention to improving achievement at this school.
- Subject leaders do not always check to see that teachers are acting on advice they have been given to improve their teaching.

### The school has the following strengths

- The sixth form is good. It provides excellent facilities for a range of work-related courses. As a result, students achieve well.
- The new headteacher has rapidly established more effective systems to hold staff to account. There is a much sharper focus, shared by teachers, on improving students' achievement.
- The school provides effective support for students with special educational needs and disabilities. As a result, these students achieve well, given their starting points.
- Governors are well-informed and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons, of which two were joint observations with members of the leadership team.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of students and a telephone discussion was held with the school's educational consultant.
- Inspectors took account of nine responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team observed the school's work and considered a range of information provided by the school regarding, for example, students' achievement and minutes of the governing body meetings.
- Records relating to attendance and behaviour, the school development plan and information on the setting of targets for teachers were also scrutinised.

## Inspection team

|                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Joan Bonenfant, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| David Woodhouse                | Additional Inspector    |
| Gary Kirkley                   | Additional Inspector    |
| Peter McKay                    | Additional Inspector    |

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

### Information about this school

- Newall Green High School is an average-sized secondary school with a sixth form.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is much greater than the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents in the armed forces, and for students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is greater than that found nationally.
- The school has four types of specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs: for students with physical disabilities; for students on the autistic spectrum; for students with severe learning difficulties; and for students with speech, communication and language difficulties.
- A number of students attend work-related training away from school. This is organised in conjunction with Manchester City Council and involves a range of local employers.
- The school's recent GCSE examination results met the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.
- The school is part of a federation formed with two local primary schools. The former headteacher is now executive headteacher of all three schools. The new headteacher of Newall Green High School was acting headteacher from September 2011. She was appointed as headteacher in April 2012.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in September 2012.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better by:
  - providing more high quality training, ensuring all teachers attend such training and checking to see that good practice is applied in the classroom
  - making sure that individual teachers act swiftly on advice and instructions given to improve their teaching
  - ensuring all teachers mark work regularly and thoroughly, so that students have clear advice about how to make their work and learning better.
- Raise achievement in mathematics by improving the teaching of this subject in the following ways:
  - ensuring that all teachers design lessons that are well-matched to the needs of students, with appropriate support and challenge
  - encouraging students to apply their skills in a range of problem-solving activities that are related to the real world, so that students understand the importance of improving their numeracy skills.

- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average and reduce rates of exclusion further.
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring all subject leaders are rigorous in following up identified weaknesses in their area of responsibility
  - making sure governors have a sharper focus on improving achievement and are more effective in holding the school to account for such improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- In mathematics, standards at the end of Key Stage 4 remain low. A much smaller proportion of students than is the case nationally make the expected rate of progress. This has led to substantial underachievement for many students, year-on-year.
- Many staff changes in the mathematics department, combined with poor teaching and weak leadership, have presented a considerable obstacle to improvement in this subject. Staffing is now stable and new leadership is in place. Detailed information presented by the school provided firm evidence that students' achievement in mathematics is improving in Key Stage 3, but there is still underachievement in Key Stage 4.
- The proportion of students achieving five A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, at GCSE has risen since the previous inspection, but remains below the national average. The proportion of students gaining the highest grades in GCSE examinations has risen steadily, but is also below the national average.
- Students' performance varies across subjects. Students' progress in science is in line with the national average and a small group of the more-able students who take GCSEs in science achieve well. This is not the case in all subjects. For example, results in modern languages examinations have repeatedly been below the national average. The school recognises this and has appointed a new subject leader to address underperformance in this subject.
- When students join the school in Year 7 they are working at standards in English and mathematics that are well below those found nationally. There has been a concerted drive to improve standards in English. As a result, the proportion of students making expected progress is now broadly in line with the national average.
- Literacy is promoted across many subjects. Students who enter the school with weak reading and writing skills receive effective support and, as a result, their literacy skills improve. However, procedures to promote numeracy through different subjects are underdeveloped.
- The school has introduced one-to-one tuition and provides extra staffing to help students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. As a result, these students make better progress than other students in the school and their average point scores in English and mathematics are in line with the national average for this group of students.
- The resourced provision, which caters for a wide range of special educational needs, is well-managed. Learning programmes are designed carefully to meet the needs of individual students. As a result, these students make good progress from their starting points. Some students attend work-related training at places away from school. This programme is well-managed and the school monitors the progress of these students carefully. As a result, students achieve well, with most students going on to further study or employment when they leave school.
- Students' achievement in the recently established sixth form is good. The range of work-related courses is well-matched to the needs of students. High quality teaching and excellent facilities, sometimes of industry standard, combine to prepare students well for the next stages in their lives.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is good and often outstanding in the sixth form, leading to good achievement. Good practice also exists elsewhere in the school where over half the lessons observed during the inspection demonstrated good or better. However, this good practice has not been shared effectively and so there is still too much teaching of mediocre quality. For this reason, students' achievement, particularly in mathematics, has not improved quickly enough.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving overall and this was confirmed by lesson observations during the inspection. However, improvements have been slow to take effect and there is still

too much weak teaching that is holding students back, particularly in Key Stage 4.

- In the best lessons, teachers plan activities and tasks that are interesting, well-matched to the needs of learners, and build well on students' knowledge. Teachers give students clear advice about how to improve their work and this helps students to achieve. Effective teaching over time, helpful marking, and improved leadership in English, for example, have resulted in a marked improvement in standards in this subject.
- In the weaker lessons, teachers have low expectations. They plan activities that are not challenging enough and students lose interest. As a result, sometimes students do not behave well, because they are bored by the lesson.
- Subject leaders regularly check the quality of teachers' marking but do not always follow this up to make sure that teachers are following the instructions they have been given to improve their marking. As a consequence, marking is not always as good as it should be.
- Teachers set challenging targets and students know their targets. The school is ambitious for students to reach these targets and there is a clear programme in place to identify when students are falling behind. Further support is offered to such students, and this helps them to do better.
- Teachers are good role models for their students. For the most part, students respect their teachers. Relationships are friendly and purposeful.

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

### **requires improvement**

- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is usually good, although some low-level disruption occurs when teaching is dull. Senior leaders have introduced a straightforward system for managing poor behaviour, which is clearly understood by students. Students say that teachers apply this system consistently in lessons and that behaviour has improved.
- Students say they feel safe in school and this view was echoed by a majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire. Students say that bullying sometimes happens, but that school staff step in to sort it out. Students speak enthusiastically about the opportunities they have to become 'anti-bullying ambassadors', which encourages them to look after each other.
- Students say that the use of racist or homophobic language is rare. If it does occur, students are confident that this will be challenged and dealt with successfully by staff. The school encourages students to express their individuality, and to appreciate that people are different.
- Exclusion rates have been high in the past. Better policies to manage behaviour have helped to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions substantially. However, the exclusion rate remains above the national average.
- Attendance has improved because the school has taken effective action. However, attendance is still slightly below the attendance rate seen in most schools.
- The school provides considerable support and advice to students regarding the safe practices they should adopt outside school. As a result, students say they know they can approach staff if they have a problem in their lives.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- The recently appointed headteacher is passionate about school improvement. She demonstrates great commitment to the school and has a clear idea of what needs to be done. She has quickly established clear lines of accountability and there is a much sharper focus on raising students' achievement. The executive headteacher has developed a long-term vision for the federation of the three schools to work together to promote equality of opportunity for all young people in the community and, in this way, improve their life chances.
- In the past, school leaders have not always acted swiftly enough to tackle poor performance.

This has now been addressed and teachers know that they have to account for students' progress. Governors and senior leaders use information about students' progress and the quality of teaching to decide whether teachers should be paid more. Governors have not allowed pay increases for teachers who have not met their targets.

- The school's self-evaluation of its work has sometimes been overgenerous, but is now more realistic. Planning for improvement lacks detail but is aspirational and clearly focused on appropriate priorities.
- The school has a programme for improving the quality of teaching. There is some evidence to show that this has been effective in improving teaching.
- The school has not been rigorous enough in following up whether teachers apply in the classroom what they have learned in their training. Not all teachers are improving their teaching at a fast enough pace. As a result, students' achievement in some subjects, mathematics for example, is not as good as it is in other subjects that are taught well, such as in science.
- The school has been successful in addressing some of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The proportion of students achieving GCSEs has increased and a higher proportion of the more-able students are achieving A\* and A grades in a range of subjects. Improvements in English, attendance and the reduced exclusion rate all demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- In Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, students can study a wide range of subjects. The school has improved the curriculum for the more-able students by allowing them to choose a wider range of academic courses. In the sixth form, the choice is more limited, but the school plans to improve the range of options available to post-16 students.
- The sixth form is well led and managed, providing a beacon of aspiration for students and helping to forge good links with the local community. For example, local senior citizens enjoy coming to the hairdressing salon to have their hair done. School leaders are in the process of building on this success and plan to introduce a wider range of more traditional courses, so that all students in the school can benefit.
- There is a wide range of exciting enrichment activities on offer and this is a strength of the school. Students can go on trips to museums, theatres and places of worship and this contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They also have opportunities to discuss moral issues in lessons. In an outstanding Year 7 science lesson, for example, students were discussing issues around human fertility in a mature and thoughtful manner.
- The decision by school leaders to enter students early for GCSE examinations in mathematics has led directly to some students underachieving in this subject. The policy will no longer be applied after this academic year.
- Students are encouraged to look after one another and are successfully taught to challenge racism and discrimination of all kinds.
- School leaders have built up useful partnerships with local agencies, such as the police and the health service. This has often helped students who have problems in their lives. Good links with local businesses are helping students to find employment when they leave school. The school has received light touch support from the local authority.
- Procedures for safeguarding meet requirements.

#### ■ The governance of the school

- The governing body is loyal and committed to school improvement. Governors bring a wide range of experience from the outside world to support the school. They have a very clear grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ask challenging questions of the headteacher regarding, for example, continued underachievement in mathematics. They have also set challenging targets for the headteacher for improvement and have a clear understanding of the systems in place to check the quality of teachers' work. Governors have managed finances very effectively. Funds available for the pupil premium have been spent wisely on additional staffing so that the students for whom the funding is provided benefit from intensive support. This has led directly to these students making steady progress. However, the fact that the governing body has responsibility for three schools means that they

are pulled in many directions and in the past there has been insufficient focus on raising achievement in the secondary school at a faster pace. The school recognises this and since the start of this academic year the governing body has been re-organised so that groups of governors can focus more on individual schools in the federation.



## 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> | 105571     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Manchester |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 400361     |

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>    | 986  |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 108  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body                         |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | Mark Gaunt                                 |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                            | Alison Wright                              |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | 22 September 2009                          |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 0161 234 4455                              |
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