

Putteridge High School

Putteridge Road, Luton, LU2 8HJ

Inspection dates 7–8 February 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress, and their progress is improving because teaching is good.
- Students behave well. They enjoy learning, feel safe and say that bullying is rare and dealt with really well. They treat each other exceptionally well, whatever their backgrounds or disabilities.
- The school has an accurate view of where it needs to make improvements, and acts fast to do so.
- The headteacher, governing body and other leaders have a shared view on how the school should improve teaching and achievement and give clear direction on how this should happen. They provide good professional training for teachers and leaders to improve their skills.
- Students with physical and visual impairment make excellent progress against their individual targets because the school's teaching and care for these students are outstanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes students' writing does not reflect the high quality of discussion and explanation that they often express in their speech.
- Teachers' marking does not always give students guidance on how to improve their work or make sure they follow guidance when it is given.
- Occasionally, learning is not demanding or fast paced enough.
- Sometimes teachers' questioning is not searching enough and students do not have opportunities to discuss their understanding and knowledge of what they are learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 teachers in 38 lessons or parts of lessons. Six of these were observations with senior leaders to check that they evaluate teaching accurately.
- Meetings were held with staff and students, and with members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined documents about the school's work, including information about how well students achieve, development planning and the school's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors took account of 76 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, and also examined the school's own survey of parents' views.

Inspection team

Edward Wheatley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Cheryl Jackson	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector
Natasha Campbell	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most secondary schools.
- Students come from mainly White British backgrounds. A small number of students are at the early stages of learning English, mainly those who come from Eastern European countries.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is well-above average.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for students with physical or visual impairment. It can take up to 20 students, but currently has fewer than this.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funds given to the school by the government for children looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals or with a parent in the armed services) is broadly average.
- Most students receive their education on site. A small number attend local colleges for vocational courses, and a group of other students attend 'On Track' or 'Active Support', local organisations that work with students who are at risk of being excluded from school.
- The school has experienced significant changes in its senior leadership team and at head of department level since it was last inspected.
- The school is due to become an academy on 1 April 2013, and will be part of the Barnfield Federation.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by making sure that:
 - learning is always demanding and fast paced
 - questioning is always searching and there are frequent opportunities for students to improve their understanding through discussion about what they learn in lessons
 - students have opportunities to write in depth and length about what they know and understand
 - teachers always give guidance on how students can improve their work and provide opportunities for students to follow the advice they give.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good progress. They start school with below-average levels of attainment and, by the end of Year 11, the standards they reach are broadly average. Standards are rising and progress is improving. Past variations between subjects have reduced and good teaching is leading to steady improvements in all subjects.
- Students read well from a wide range of books and other materials. They speak well and when they have the opportunity explain their understanding and knowledge successfully. However, when they write, they do not always use the same range of expression or detail, and this limits how useful their written notes are when they use them to revise.
- Their mathematical skills are broadly average. They calculate mentally and on paper competently, and consolidate their numeracy skills in several subjects by practising them regularly.
- The most-able students make good progress. The most able students in mathematics take their GCSE examination in Year 10, and in the most recent examinations the great majority of these students gained 'A' or 'A*' grades. In other subjects, teaching helps students to meet the requirements of GCSE courses over the two years and all abilities benefit from this systematic approach. Able students are not disadvantaged by the absence of early entry and gain considerably from the well-measured approach adopted by the school.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported and have frequent opportunities to work independently and to gain confidence in their ability to do well. Those students who are at the early stages of learning English do well. Good support ensures they gain English language skills quickly. Working with other students promotes their confidence and competence in learning.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium funding make good progress. For example, students eligible for free school meals join the school at levels lower than similar students nationally, and reach levels in English and mathematics above those for similar students, but not as high as those of other students in the school. Funding is used well, providing adult support to help learning and to purchase resources to accelerate learning further. Consequently, the gap between the attainment of students eligible for the pupil premium and that of other students is narrowing.
- Students with physical or visual impairment in the specially resourced provision make outstanding progress. Their individual needs are carefully identified, and specialist teachers and staff in mainstream lessons make sure they are exceptionally well supported. They gain a considerable degree of confidence in their own abilities to carry out tasks, and they are helped in this by excellent relationships with other students in lessons.
- Students attending courses in local colleges make good progress. Those students at risk of exclusion make good progress also, because attention to their particular needs has rekindled their interest in learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Assessment of students' progress is accurate, and teachers mainly use this information well to plan lessons that provide a wide range of tasks to suit individual students' abilities.
- Teachers regularly check students' progress. They provide extension work for the most able and help for those who find tasks hard. For example, in a particularly successful Year 9 English lesson, students used photographs of civil unrest in Africa to encourage detailed and descriptive writing. There were high expectations of how well students should use adverbs and adjectives, and the teacher moved round the class prompting and questioning students to help them achieve their best. This worked well, and students produced high-quality individual writing.
- Where learning is particularly good, teachers ask searching questions and encourage discussion. This makes sure students talk about what they do, and learn to explain their knowledge well. However, sometimes teachers' questioning misses opportunities to engage students in discussion so that they learn to explain their understanding effectively. In addition, teachers do not always give enough opportunities for students to write at length, so that they do not write down what they know and understand as well as they express it in their speech.
- Occasionally, teachers do not set demanding work for all abilities, or teach at a fast enough pace. Consequently, in these situations, the rate of students' learning and progress slows and they do not achieve as well as they could.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for disabled students and those with special educational needs outside the special resource. The students eligible for extra help from the pupil premium are equally well supported to achieve well. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to make sure suitable work is planned for all students, and to provide opportunities for students to learn independently.
- Help is impressive from teachers and teaching assistants for the students in the specially resourced provision for students with physical or visual impairment. It enables them to learn and gain skills in small, achievable steps, and to build their self-confidence.
- Lessons frequently include opportunities for students to work together, to share and collaborate over tasks, to help each other and to arrive at group decisions about how well they have learned. This contributes effectively to students' moral, social and cultural development, and especially in learning to work in partnership with students from different backgrounds and with physical disabilities.
- Reinforcing and learning English and mathematical skills are important elements of many lessons. In music, for example, students are expected to explain the mathematical elements of their musical composition before performing it, and this helps give clarity to how they plan their work.
- Teachers' marking is generally good, telling students how well they are doing and what level they are working at. At its best, marking gives students guidance on how to improve their progress and teachers ensure students follow the advice they give. However, marking does not always tell students clearly enough what they need to do to make better progress, and sometimes teachers do not ensure the advice they give is followed by all students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave well. Exclusions have fallen over recent years. School behaviour rules are clear, teachers apply them firmly and fairly, and students know what is expected of them.
- Students treat each other extremely well. They make sure all students are included in class activities and go out of their way to make students with physical or visual difficulties feel at home in lessons and around school.
- Students are keen to learn and enjoy being in lessons. Their attention wanders a little when work is too easy or they are not involved enough, but soon returns to the work when they are expected to do something themselves. They say the school has improved steadily in the last few years.
- Students usually work together well in small groups, helping each other and listening to each other's ideas and comments about what they are learning. They collaborate in practical activities and in producing group decisions about what they have learned. This makes a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They realise that bullying happens in everyday life, and know that the rare incidents that happen in school will be dealt with effectively.
- They know how to keep themselves safe in practical lessons, around and out of school, and in using the internet and mobile devices. They know who to go to for help if they need it.
- Most students attend school regularly. Their attendance has improved steadily over the last three years. The school is rigorous in its approach to dealing with absence, and works effectively to improve the attendance of those students who are often away from school. Students on vocational college courses, or attending 'On Track' or 'Active Support' courses because they are at risk of being excluded, attend well and are interested in the activities provided for them.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides excellent direction for the school to improve. Leaders at all levels are agreed on what the school's weaknesses are and what needs to be done about them.
- The school acts quickly to deal with weaknesses. Inadequacies in leadership and teaching have been dealt with well. The school is providing coaching and guidance on taking teaching quality further forward. Teachers, themselves, are determined to move teaching from good, overall, to outstanding.
- Teachers' targets help them improve their teaching, and are linked to students' progress and the school's priorities for development. Staff new to leadership roles are well supported and trained to carry out their responsibilities.
- The local authority subject advisers provide good support. The school receives increasingly valuable support from Barnfield Federation, the sponsor for the school's move to become an academy, especially in improving resources for learning.
- The school provides a wide range of subjects for students to support their academic aspirations,

or to prepare them for work when they leave school. Links with local colleges, where the school's students do well, are well managed. Equally well managed are links with other organisations to support students from all backgrounds, and make sure that students who are likely to lose interest in school or risk exclusion stay in education and gain useful skills.

- The leadership of provision for students with physical or visual impairment is excellent. The support for individual students is exceptionally good in ensuring they meet their learning targets. These students are seen as part of the whole-school community, and to make sure they benefit from this, guidance and support for teachers to manage and teach them in mainstream lessons is particularly good.
 - The school provides a wide range of visits and visitors. Assemblies are effective in making students think about and reflect on important social and moral events. In this way, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
 - Leaders tolerate no form of discrimination, and this attitude is impressively evident in the way students treat each other. The progress made by students of all abilities is good and improving, and their attendance and behaviour have improved. In the light of these improvements, and of those in teaching, there is strong capacity for further improvement.
 - Parents are generally pleased with the school. The school's own survey gives a similar picture, and it works hard to deal with concerns when they arise.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body supports the school well in its plans for improvement, and to smooth the change to academy. It works closely with the school to reduce a budget deficit, and has a good grasp of future savings needed to eliminate the deficit altogether. It ensures all of its members are well informed and trained in order to support the school. It is well informed about the performance of students compared with similar groups of students nationally, and checks how effectively funds are spent on efforts to raise standards. For example, it makes sure that pupil premium funding speeds up the progress of students it is indeed for. It is well informed about teachers' targets to help them improve their teaching, and checks that their salaries are linked to their performance. The governing body makes sure that safeguarding regulations are met and that there are appropriate procedures to check the suitability of staff appointed to the school.

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	109685
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	405251

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	678
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bill Pollard
Headteacher	Helen Beauchamp
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2011
Telephone number	01582 415791
Fax number	01582 419357
Email address	apitchford@putteridge.org

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

