

# Matravers School

Springfield Road, Westbury, BA13 3QH

**Inspection dates** 19–20 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	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		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

- Teaching quality is not consistently good enough to raise achievement for all students within and between subjects, particularly in mathematics.
- Students' progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 is not fast enough leading to below average attainment.
- Low attainers, students eligible for pupil premium support and most of those identified as disabled or with special educational needs are not making as much progress as their peers.
- The governing body has only recently begun to focus on the long-term aims of the school and hold senior leaders to account more rigorously.
- The sixth form requires improvement because its leadership is too reliant on the recent but effective direction of the deputy headteacher.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has been resilient in the face of a range of significant challenges. In an effective partnership with the deputy headteacher appropriate steps have been taken to swiftly arrest the school's drift and secure notable improvements within a short space of time.
- Very recently appointed senior leaders are already contributing to the school being well placed to make the required improvements.
- In the sixth form, students have access to a high proportion of good or better teaching and are making better progress than in previous years.
- Students behave well and have positive attitudes towards learning.
- There are significant strengths in the development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Information about this inspection

- Thirty eight part lessons were observed by inspectors, many of them alongside senior leaders. In addition, a number of lessons were visited for short periods of time with a specific focus on assessment.
- The quality of marking was scrutinised.
- Meetings took place with students, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to some students read
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including those the school uses to check how well it is doing, improvement plans, policies and safeguarding arrangements.
- By the end of the inspection visit, 71 responses to the on-line parent survey (Parent View) were collected and analysed.
- Inspectors analysed 25 questionnaires that were returned by staff.

## Inspection team

John Seal, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Helen Blanchard

Additional Inspector

Roisin Chambers

Additional Inspector

Joseph Skivington

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school has two alternative provisions: one for students with statements for special educational needs and another for those students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- Most of the students are White British.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is slightly below the national average. In this group are those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The proportion of students identified as being at school action and school action plus is below average but the proportion of those with statements of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher is a National Leader of Education from a local outstanding school. She was appointed in September 2012 on a temporary, interim basis until August 2013. Plans are in place to appoint a permanent headteacher imminently.

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

- Eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching to ensure all students make progress that is at least in line with national expectations, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring all teachers build on students' prior learning and use assessment information to match learning activities to the right level of difficulty
  - providing feedback to students during lessons and mark work to provide them with clear information about what they need to do to improve
  - giving students the skills and opportunities to learn independently of adults
  - all staff having the highest expectations of what students are capable of
  - providing students with thinking and discussion time following questioning.
- Ensure all middle managers hold teachers to account for the progress of the students they are responsible for including those eligible for pupil premium funding, by making sure the new procedures for appraisal are carried out effectively.
- Ensure the governing body as a whole holds the school to account by accurately and objectively checking the school's strengths and weaknesses through a wide range of evidence.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students' attainment on entry to Year 7 varies from year to year, with some year groups being in line with standards seen nationally and others significantly below.
- Regardless of their starting points, students have in recent years made slower progress than would normally be expected. As a result, although the proportion of students' attainment has steadily increased over three years, it is still significantly below the national average.
- Attainment in mathematics has been of particular concern with standards declining in recent years. Lesson observations, scrutiny of work and the school's own data show that standards are now rising.
- The school enters students for early entry examinations in English and mathematics. Although a successful strategy in English, this has compounded the low attainment in mathematics by not giving students the time they need to learn enough to gain higher grades in their GCSEs.
- Students' achievement within different subjects varies dramatically depending on individual teachers. For example, in the different areas of design and technology, students are highly motivated and demonstrate a keenness to get the highest grades possible. In others, they were lacklustre; their work was unkempt and erratic and not challenged effectively by the teacher.
- In work looked at by inspectors the same variable picture was seen. Overall standards of attainment and presentation varied from being below age expectations to well above because the work was not consistently pitched at right level for students' ages or abilities.
- Lower attaining students, especially in Year 7, are not making enough progress in their reading because they are only now being taught the skills to identify letter sounds (phonics), this is a barrier to their being able to read with understanding in different subjects.
- Lower attaining students, disabled students, and those with special educational needs but who do not have statements are not making enough progress because until very recently they were not provided with appropriate support in lessons or additional activities.
- Those students who are in receipt of the pupil premium are making slower progress than their peers because the systems to provide them with appropriate resources and support have only been in place since the start of September 2012. The school's assessment information based on average point scores for English and mathematics indicates that they are beginning to gain ground and the identification of what type of support they need is becoming more accurate.
- The achievement of the students with behavioural difficulties in the alternative provision is good. It has a curriculum that matches their needs closely enabling students to continue their learning and in some cases re-join their peers.
- Those pupils who have statements of special educational needs receive good support and achieve well.
- Sixth form students' achievement in most subjects matches that seen nationally. This year, the school's assessment information and work seen during lesson observations indicate that students' progress is increasing with more of them being on track for higher grades than in previous years.
- Since April 2012, the school has made a concerted effort to increase students' progress. The accurate assessment information clearly demonstrates a securely rapid increase in progress from the end of the summer term 2012 to now. As a result, the rates of progress in all year groups are accelerating. This is especially evident in Year 11 where a higher proportion of students than in previous years are on track to attain better GCSE grades.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Teaching varies too much between a very small amount of outstanding to a diminishing amount of inadequate. Examples of good practice are increasing.
- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers do not use their knowledge of students' prior learning to plan activities which meet their needs closely enough.
- During lessons in most subjects, the quality and usefulness of teachers' feedback to students about how to improve differ from handy tips to get the best grades and levels to limited amounts of praise with no further guidance on what to do next. Good examples of feedback were seen in students' English work in Key Stage 4 while in mathematics it was a more variable picture. Teaching in mathematics is improving but more work needs to be done to ensure students' progress over time is good.
- Teachers' expectations of what the students are capable of are not always high enough. Where teachers skilfully ask students questions, they are able to gauge how to provide more challenging work and raise achievement more quickly. In other lessons, too much direction is given by the teacher. The whole class has to follow the lesson at the same pace regardless of students' different needs and abilities.
- In the more effective lessons, teachers provide students with opportunities to discuss and work together in pairs and groups. This raises their levels of interest and levels of progress. However, students are not always given enough time to think about or discuss the solutions to problems before the teacher moves on to the next part of the lesson.
- Standards of literacy are broadly in line with the national average. However, those students who have difficulty in reading and understanding text are not making enough progress because they are not being taught to identify letters and their sounds in a systematic manner (phonics).
- Literacy skills are taught with varying degrees of success in different subjects. For example, students were observed learning key words in music and some basic skills are taught in the younger students' history and geography lessons. However, the teaching of communication, grammar and comprehension skills is not a consistent feature across all subjects.
- Students who spoke to inspectors commented on the improvements in teaching. One commented that 'you always walk out of a lesson knowing that you have learnt something new'.
- Teaching in the sixth form has improved with some good examples observed by inspectors. In a philosophy lesson, students were observed working independently on answers to examination questions and in an English lesson, contextual and moral issues in different types of literature were being discussed. As one sixth-former said 'the bar has been raised'.
- Over 60% of parents who contributed to Parent View thought that teaching is good. Inspection evidence and senior leaders' monitoring information indicate that it requires improvement.
- Teaching makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the school's Gambian project has enabled Key Stage 4 students to visit the country. They were able to reflect on what they had learned from their new African friends. All Key Stage 3 students are writing to Gambian children. Some excellent discussions in tutor groups were observed and the school made a significant contribution to the local Literary Festival.

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

- Students told inspectors that they felt behaviour was good overall with the older students being even more positive. A few of the younger students, although generally happy with behaviour, felt that some staff applied the rewards and sanctions inconsistently.
- In the few lessons that have some low-level disruptions, these often come about because staff do not have effective behaviour management strategies or activities are not interesting enough,

leading to some restlessness.

- Around the school during breaks and between lessons, there is an atmosphere of friendliness and tolerance. Students are courteous to each other, staff and visitors.
- Students feel safe in school. They told inspectors that bullying is rare and when it happens is tackled well by staff. Racist incidents are extremely rare.
- Exclusions are declining dramatically and there are very few disrupted lessons.
- Students' attendance is regular and the number of persistent absentees has reduced significantly. Their punctuality at the start of the day and for lessons is good.
- Parents regard students' behaviour positively. The large majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire feel that their children are looked after well, feel safe and are happy at the school. The inspection team's evidence supports these views.

## The leadership and management

## require improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good because although the senior leadership team is doing the right things to improve the school there has not yet been enough time to see the impact of the changes made. The governing body has also been in a state of transition with the local authority providing the school with two experienced governors, one of whom is the new Chair.
- The headteacher has set a clear direction for improvement, underpinned with a 'Rapid Improvement Plan' which makes clear what the priorities are. With the effective support of the deputy headteacher, she has rightly been uncompromising in her stance concerning improving teaching as quickly as possible.
- Although very recently appointed, the extended senior leadership team, comprising of four assistant headteachers and heads of super faculties, have an accurate view of what the school needs to do to improve. A sense of urgency in tackling the issues is apparent.
- Effective plans for improvement supported by accurate evaluations of the school's performance have given most staff a clear understanding of the need to raise students' achievement and improve teaching. As a result, in a very short time span, students' progress is accelerating.
- Robust systems for checking the quality of teaching are now in place; senior leaders regularly visit lessons, scrutinise students' work and track their progress with precision. This information is used robustly to challenge weaker teaching and is currently informing a re-appraisal of pay and responsibilities to more accurately reflect teachers' performance.
- Middle leaders are beginning to be involved in holding teachers to account, but it is too early for them to be making a sustained and consistent difference.
- Senior leaders effectively monitor the progress of different groups of students. They are clear that some students, particularly those receiving pupil premium funding, disabled students and those identified as having special educational needs and lower attainers, have not until recently been making enough progress to narrow the gaps with their peers. The systems are now in place to support a more successful approach to promoting equal opportunities but this work requires further improvement because not all of these identified students are making as much progress as they should.
- The curriculum has been recently restructured to match the needs of the students more closely, an area for improvement from the previous inspection. These changes enable students to start their school life in Key Stage 3 receiving the right amount of challenge and support to meet their abilities. In Key Stage 4 there are more appropriate pathways and support available to them to choose both academic and vocationally related courses.
- The sixth form curriculum has a suitable range of courses and the deputy headteacher's recent robust focus on improving its leadership has improved teaching and enabled students to receive

effective information, advice and guidance in choosing courses to meet their needs.

- The school's systems for ensuring the safety and welfare of students meet current requirements. Safeguarding systems, policies and child protection training are up to date.
- In addition to providing experienced governors, the local authority has deployed advisory support for English and mathematics and some funding for targeted improvement work. There are regular monitoring visits from a school improvement advisor.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body carries out its statutory duties. However, it is only recently that governors have gained a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities particularly with regard to the long-term direction of the school and holding the school to account for its performance; for example, ensuring the judgements of the quality of teaching and outcomes of appraisal are in line with the students' achievement.

## 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>	126510
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402403

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>	Foundation School
<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>	995
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jacqui Goodall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Beverley Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28–29 April 2010
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