

# Tupton Hall School

Station New Road, Old Tupton, Chesterfield, S42 6LG

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 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 |                      | 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

- All students do not yet make consistently good progress. Although there is some good and outstanding teaching, the quality of teaching across the school is not strong enough to secure improvements in students' learning and progress at a fast enough pace.
- The challenge provided for students is not always high enough.
- Although the majority of students generally behave well around school, in a few lessons, the attitude to learning of some students requires improvement.
- Governors do not question the headteacher enough about the progress being made by all students.
- The sixth form requires improvement because, in some subjects, particularly at AS level, achievement is too low.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has high expectations and is resolute in his quest to improve the life chances of students. He has already taken effective action to bring about improvements in students' behaviour and achievement.
- This is an inclusive school which values individual students and focuses on meeting their needs.
- The curriculum successfully meets the needs, aspirations and interests of the students in the main school and the sixth form.
- Students are cared for well and they feel safe.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 54 lessons taught by 53 different teachers, of which six were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Six groups of students met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior and middle leaders and newly qualified teachers. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 70 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), and of 114 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors read a range of documents. These included information on the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plans, data relating to students' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

|                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Anne Seneviratne, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| John Young                       | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Richard Masterton                | Additional Inspector    |
| William Cassell                  | Additional Inspector    |
| Beverley Strange                 | Additional Inspector    |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Tupton Hall School is an 11-18 specialist sports college with a second specialism in information and communication technology (ICT). It is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students or those with special educational needs supported at school action is in line with national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found nationally.
- The school meets the current government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A number of Key Stage 4 students access a range of alternative provision through the Chesterfield Learning Community.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2012.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure all teachers:
  - challenge students more and have higher expectations of what they can achieve
  - plan a range of lesson activities to meet the needs of students of different abilities, especially the most able, in every class
  - use questioning more effectively to check and develop students' knowledge and understanding
  - mark students' work thoroughly, explaining clearly what they need to do to improve.
- Improve students' achievement further by:
  - raising attainment to a high level in all subjects, particularly in those areas where students have historically attained less well
  - ensuring all students make at least good progress in all subjects relative to their starting points
  - building on the improvements secured so far to make certain that gaps in achievement for any group of students, but especially those students supported by the pupil premium, are closed quickly
  - raising the attainment and progress of the most able students
  - improving the behaviour of the minority of students whose attitude to learning is not good.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the school's leadership further by:
  - prioritising improvements in teaching and learning to ensure that the expert knowledge and features of outstanding teaching, which exist in the school are shared with all staff
  - ensuring that governors are fully equipped to rigorously hold the school's leaders to account for the progress that all students make, and exercise their strategic influence more effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students enter the school with standards which are broadly in line with others nationally. In 2012 students did not make as good progress as they had in the previous two years. Currently, students are making good progress in the majority of lessons.
- In 2012, the percentage of students attaining five A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and Mathematics was broadly in line with national average. In 2011 it had been significantly higher than the national average, following an improving trend in the attainment of students. In several subjects the proportion of students achieving A\*/A grades is significantly lower than the national average.
- Prior to 2012, achievement in English had been on a clear upward trend with the numbers making expected progress in 2011 being considerably above the national figure. However, the number of students who made expected progress in English in 2012 dipped considerably below the national percentage. There has been an improving trend in students' achievement in mathematics but the number making expected progress in 2012 remains below the national percentage.
- The progress in English and mathematics of those students who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding has been slower than students nationally in this group and there was nearly a grade difference between what these students achieved in these subjects and their peers in school. The school is now being much more focused in targeting additional support and these students are beginning to make faster progress. Much of the pupil premium funding has been used to staff and resource the Aspire Centre, which provides personalised support for students. One-to-one tuition has proved particularly successful with Key Stage 3 students in mathematics.
- The progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs is not consistently good but the school has recognised this and there is an increasing range of effective provision to meet their specific needs which is starting to accelerate their progress
- The progress of students attending alternative provision is monitored closely; these students are well supported and they attend regularly. They say that the opportunity to participate in college placements has improved their attitude to learning and has helped them to improve their progress in their other subjects in school. Students taking Level 2 vocational courses are making good progress in these subjects.
- In the sixth form, the percentage of A level entries graded A\* to E has been higher than the national average for the last three years and was 99.1% in 2012. The percentage of entries graded A\* to B has been below the national average for the last three years. Overall, at A level, the progress that students make is in line with the national average but below at AS level. Students achieve particularly well in social science subjects.
- The school does not have a policy of entering large groups of student early for examinations.
- In the majority of lessons observed during the inspection students' learning and progress was good. However, in a minority of lessons observed this was not the case. This was usually because the learning activities did not create opportunities for this to happen.

- The school actively encourages reading for pleasure, particularly in Key Stage 3 where reading takes place regularly in English lessons. There is now a sharper focus on literacy across the school but teachers miss too many opportunities to develop literacy in their lessons. Year 7 students who are given extra support with their reading have improved their literacy skills and speak very positively about the help they receive.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- There are variations in the quality of teaching across the school and it is not consistently good.
- Often, where teaching requires improvement, lessons lack the appropriate level of challenge. Teachers do not take enough account of individual students' targets and current achievement when planning lessons. This means that students are not given the opportunity to make good progress.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not use questioning to probe students' understanding, which means they do not learn as much as they could. However, where teaching is good or better, effective questioning is used to develop students' confidence in expressing their ideas. Teachers in these lessons ask searching questions, challenging students to take their thinking to the next level.
- There are too many missed opportunities in lessons to promote students' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development and to widen their horizons.
- Where the quality of teaching is good or better, teachers use their passion for their subject and their knowledge of their students to engage, enthuse and involve them in the lesson. They provide interesting work for the students to undertake with many opportunities for them to learn actively and collaboratively. They use a range of assessment throughout the lesson to inform the learning and ensure all students are making good progress.
- The quality of marking is variable across subjects. At its best, marking celebrates success and gives specific guidance for improvement, but too often, it lacks detail and does not explain to students how to progress to the next level.

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

- Behaviour is good in most lessons. In a minority of lessons, some students' attitude to learning is not good. Where teaching is weaker, some students lose interest or, in some cases, engage in behaviour which disrupts the learning in the classroom. Students confirm that typically behaviour in lessons is variable. Students feel that behaviour around the school has improved a lot since the new headteacher came in September.
- In lessons, students' behaviour is managed well overall but students say that teachers do not always use the behaviour management system consistently. Some students speak positively about the reward system which is linked to attitudes for learning, commenting that it motivates them to behave and achieve. However, some students feel that there is a degree of unfairness about who receives these rewards.
- Students say they feel safe in school and parents agree with this. Students on alternative

provision say they feel safe on their placements.

- Students know how to report bullying and feel it is dealt with effectively in school. However, their awareness as to what constitutes bullying is variable. They have a good understanding of cyber bullying but have less understanding of homophobic bullying. Students say there is some name-calling linked to physical appearance and boys, in particular sometimes use homophobic language.
- Over the last three years, attendance has been improving, but it remains below the national average. The school is working with individual students to address persistent absence and there has been a reduction in this figure this year.
- Over the last three years the number of students receiving fixed-term exclusions was higher than the national average. Since September there has been a significant reduction in this figure as a result of the way the school is using a range of strategies to meet the needs of all students.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The headteacher has a clear view of how successful the school can be. He is determined that expectations, both in terms of quality of teaching and the progress made by students, will be raised. The pace of change has increased and the improvements which have been made already are acknowledged by staff, students and parents. One head of faculty said, "He has had a massive impact and is driving us forward".
- Both staff and students consider the headteacher to be highly visible. One student said, "He's around every lunchtime and at the end of the day." Another talked of how he is encouraging a sense of responsibility and pride, saying, "He's always telling us that it's not my school, it's your school."
- The senior leadership team has been extended, which has helped to increase the pace of improvement. Middle leaders are growing in strength and becoming increasingly accountable for their areas of responsibility. They are aware of the challenges ahead and are developing into reflective, strong leaders.
- Expert knowledge and features of outstanding teaching exist within the school but these are not shared effectively with all staff. Consequently, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school and it has not been sufficiently improved in the areas identified as action points in the last inspection. The criteria which senior leaders use to judge the quality of teaching do not emphasise enough how important it is to challenge students and ensure that the needs of all students are met in each lesson.
- The school's view of its own performance is not sufficiently robust and is therefore not accurate. However, leaders at all levels in the school now effectively track students' progress, whereas previously they had relied too heavily on data on students' attainment.
- The performance management targets set for teachers are clearly linked to students' achievement and their own professional development. The headteacher and governors use the performance management process effectively to determine teachers' salary progression.
- The curriculum provides well for students' needs, abilities and interests. The school effectively personalises provision, including off-site opportunities to help students to achieve. Students in

the sixth form have a wide choice of both academic and vocational courses.

- The school is supported and challenged by a link advisor from the local authority. He knows the school well and his reports provide a useful and impartial review of the school's performance.
- Procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is very supportive of the school and the headteacher. Governors monitor how the pupil premium funding is spent but do not systematically evaluate the difference this funding makes on students' achievement. They review information about the quality of teaching in the school and ensure that weak teaching is not rewarded through salary progression. Governors' awareness and understanding of detailed achievement data is weak and consequently they are not effective in holding school leaders to account for the progress that all students make.

## 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> | 112933     |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Derbyshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 401324     |

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

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                         | Comprehensive  |
| <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>    | 1773   |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 385  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | David Skinner  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                            | Andrew Knowles   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | 19 October 2009  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 01246 863127   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                             | 01246 250058   |
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