

Colonel Frank Seely Comprehensive School

Flatts Lane, Calverton, Nottingham, NG14 6JZ

Inspection dates

12–13 March 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 achieve well. Attainment is well above average by the end of Year 11 and students make good progress.
- Teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection.
- The lively range of subjects and topics supports students' personal development well and is enriched by a good range of trips and visits and activities beyond school.
- The school provides good care for disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Students behave well and are proud of their school. Most have good attitudes to learning.
- Students feel safe and valued and have a clear understanding of how to keep safe.
- Senior leaders have created a demanding but supportive professional climate in school. Staff respond positively to the high expectations set for their work.
- On the basis of regular and rigorous reviews, members of the governing body, the headteacher and senior leaders and managers know exactly what steps to take to improve the school further.
- The school works hard to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to be successful.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some opportunities are missed to take learning further, sometimes work is too hard or too easy, and marking and feedback to students are inconsistent.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Students make the progress expected of them but few students make better progress than this. Attendance is below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons taught by 45 teachers. Three of these were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with leaders, staff, members of the governing body, students and a representative from the local authority.
- Documents relating to students' progress in their learning, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance, improvement planning, performance management of staff, information provided to parents, behaviour, safety and attendance were examined. Inspectors also looked at the work in students' books.
- Parents' views were taken into account through the school's recent survey as well as from the 142 responses on Parent View, the on-line questionnaire, and two parents who wrote to the inspection team.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clare Adamson

Additional Inspector

Bob Roberts

Additional Inspector

Sherry Gladwin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than an average-sized secondary school. Most students are White British.
- The sixth form is smaller than average.
- The school has had specialist status in mathematics and computing since 2004.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school holds several awards in recognition of its work. These include Investors in People and Green Flag Eco-school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - strengthening teachers' skills in questioning so that students think harder about their views and explanations
 - planning lessons more closely to individual needs so that tasks and activities are different for students of differing abilities.
 - improving the consistency of marking so that all students in all subjects know precisely how to improve their work and have the opportunity to engage in a dialogue about their learning.
- Secure recent initiatives to improve achievement, attendance and progress in the sixth form.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The proportion of Year 11 students gaining five or more A*-C passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is significantly above average and has been so for the last two years. Attainment is well-above average by other measures such as the average points scored by each student.
- The progress students make is good. Most students make the progress expected of them and often they make better progress than this, especially in English. In mathematics progress has lagged behind but this is improving rapidly as teaching has improved. Girls and boys achieve equally well.
- Results are good across a range of subjects. In 2012 students did particularly well in English literature, geography, history, biology and music. The proportion of students gaining the English Baccalaureate qualification is rising each year. Students develop good skills in information and communication technology.
- Few students are entered for GCSE examinations early and it is limited to those who might be in danger of not achieving a grade C. Those who do achieve this are encouraged to continue with their studies and to try to reach a higher grade. Higher-attaining students take their examinations at the end of their course to allow a more mature understanding of their subjects which will give the best opportunity for the highest grades.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress and expectations are high that they will progress at the same rate as other students. They receive targeted support, excellent care and encouragement to help them succeed.
- The small number of Year 7 pupils who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium have already made good progress in line with other pupils since September.
- Students known to be entitled to receive support through the pupil premium make good progress and attain results above those of similar students nationally. However, there remains a gap in the attainment of these students and others in the school because other students have done so well. In 2012 the small number of students known to be eligible for free school meals were over a year behind the others in English and over two years behind in mathematics. There were too few looked-after children to comment on their attainment and no students from service families. The school is working hard to reduce this gap and can show that it is closing rapidly in both English and mathematics.
- The students who join the sixth form have just below average attainment. They make the progress expected of them and nearly all students complete the courses they start. Most are able to go on to the universities of their choice or follow other chosen careers. Sixth form students make a strong contribution to the life of the school and are active in their support of younger students, for example, by helping to run after-school activities.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Across a wide range of subjects

and in all key stages teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding.

- Teachers are keen to get the best from students and plan lessons to challenge and often inspire. They use their good, and sometimes excellent, subject knowledge to make lessons interesting and exciting.
- In the best lessons teachers are crystal clear about what students are to learn and planning is exceptionally well-organised. Expert questioning challenges students to think deeply and to develop mental resilience. For example, in a Year 8 history lesson, students were given quotations from a variety of different sources about the reign of Queen Mary. They used these to great effect to establish whether she was deserving of her reputation as 'Bloody Mary'.
- The best lessons give students many opportunities to work independently, in pairs or in groups so that they develop a better enthusiasm for learning and feel responsible for what they have achieved. They pitch work at the right level for different students, based on a good understanding of their previous learning.
- Teaching assistants are used well by teachers and play an important role in supporting the learning of different groups of students, such as disabled students and those who have special educational needs so that they are able to make the same progress as others in the class.
- In the minority of lessons where progress is slower it is because the teachers talk too much leaving limited time for students to contribute, questioning does not encourage deeper thinking and tasks are too similar for the different abilities of students in the class.
- Marking has improved since the last inspection because all teachers are following an agreed system. However, inconsistencies remain in the quality of advice that students receive on how to improve their work and too often students ignore comments and requests from teachers to complete or expand on their work. There is little evidence of any written dialogue developing between the students and the teachers who mark their books.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is typically good around school because students are generally polite and courteous. In lessons attitudes to learning are positive and most students work co-operatively together in small groups and are sensitive in evaluating the work of others
- Students report that they feel happy and safe in school. They understand how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of different types of bullying such as cyber-bullying, racist and homophobic name-calling. They say that bullying is rare and any that occurs is swiftly dealt with by the school. Parents agree.
- The school has an excellent range of links with other agencies to support students whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Sixth form students make a substantial contribution to the school through the many activities they undertake in supporting younger students.
- Attendance is above average in the main school but below average in the sixth form. Punctuality to school and lessons is good. The school has good systems in place to check on attendance and take immediate action if students fall below expectation. A new emphasis on attendance in the

sixth form is bringing about improvement rapidly.

The leadership and management are good

- The exceptional leadership and management of the headteacher, well supported by her deputy headteacher and senior leadership team and the governing body, have led to significant improvements in teaching, the range of subjects and topics and the achievement of students.
- Senior leaders are thoughtful, analytical and effective and have the support and loyalty of staff and students. They have a very clear and accurate view of what the school needs to do to improve further. The constant improvement of teaching is at the heart of all development planning.
- Rigorous tracking of students' progress has led to increasingly higher standards and achievement.
- New leadership in the sixth form is tackling previous underperformance and ensuring better achievement for students. Attendance and progress are being monitored closely. Guidance for university applications supports students well.
- Pupil-premium funding is being used to give students extra support in English and mathematics, which sometimes includes one-to-one support and an Easter revision course for Year 9 students. The school closely checks on the effectiveness of this funding and can show that the gap is narrowing every year between eligible students and others.
- Teachers who lead subjects and aspects of the school have responsibility for tracking and analysing students' progress in their areas of responsibility. They are fully involved in checking the quality of planning, marking and teaching.
- Targets set for teachers are effective in making sure that 'Teachers' Standards' are met, practice is developed where necessary and pay progression is linked to pupils' progress and performance.
- The range of subjects and topics is interesting and offers numerous opportunities for students to contribute to their school and the wider community, for example through the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. It supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, through 'super learning days' such as 'global learning day', 'personal health day' and, for Year 8, 'Dragon's Den' where students developed business and enterprise skills.
- This is a school that pays good attention to giving students equal opportunities to succeed. Extra money is used effectively to reduce the gap in attainment between different groups of students so that it is narrowing. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The vast majority of parents hold the school in high regard and are well informed about their children's progress. Parents particularly appreciate the ways in which the school helps them to support their children's education. For example, the excellent booklet about independent homework issued to students in Year 7 puts strong emphasis on the value of individual research but also tells parents and students how this is best done.
- The local authority provides effective support across a range of subjects and courses for governors.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are well aware of what is happening in school because they visit regularly to check on its work. They know about the quality of teaching and how important it is to maintain and improve upon good teaching. They make sure that the management of performance recognises good teaching and that teachers in need of extra support receive it. They understand the information which compares the school's performance to schools across the country. They manage the budget effectively and check on how pupil premium funding is used to make sure it benefits the students it is intended for and is closing the gap in achievement for these students. Governors undertake a variety of training provided not only by the local authority but also from within the school itself.

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	122867
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	406121

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	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	998
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Slater
Headteacher	Vondra Mays
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2010
Telephone number	0115 9652495
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