

# Noel-Baker Community School

Bracknell Drive, Alvaston, Derby, DE24 0BR

**Inspection dates** 20–21 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

- Students make expected progress overall. They join in Year 7 with attainment that is significantly below national expectations for their age and by the end of Key Stage 4 do not sufficiently narrow the gap with national average results.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above is below average. A significant proportion of students underperform in English and mathematics.
- There is still some teaching that requires improvement.
- Opportunities to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are missed.
- The sixth form requires improvement because GCE A level results are below the national average and they have improved more slowly than results in the main school.
- Leadership of the sixth form is not sufficiently strategic and does not make enough use of students' progress information.
- Not all governors provide sufficient challenge and support to the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- Modern foreign languages, science, humanities, physical education and performing arts, are taught well.
- Students' good behaviour is supported well by good relationships with all staff.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 39 lessons taught by 36 teachers. Three observations were made jointly with the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors.
- The views of parents who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, were analysed. Inspectors took account of the two parents and carers who spoke to the inspection team. The results of 54 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors analysed the 2012, 2011 and 2010 examination results. They analysed the school's data on the progress students had made from their starting points and their current progress. Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including minutes of meetings, curriculum plans, records relating to safeguarding and behaviour and data on attendance and exclusions. They looked at the school's self-evaluation and the school's improvement plans.

## Inspection team

Michelle Parker, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ahmed Marikar

Additional Inspector

John Leigh

Additional Inspector

Patrick Cook

Additional Inspector

Glen Goddard

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- The school moved into its new buildings in September 2012 and is co-located with St Martin's special school.
- This is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds. A few students are from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- There are a lower-than-average proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and students from service families, is well above average.
- In Key Stage 4, students at risk of exclusion are supported through the LEAP programme (learn, enjoy, achieve, progress).
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its students off site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Speed up the progress for all groups of students through making teaching good by:
  - promoting literacy across all subjects
  - developing students' language in order for them to become more independent learners by expressing their ideas more articulately
  - making sure students respond more effectively to teachers' marking and feedback in the sixth form
  - improving teachers' questioning to challenge and engage all students.
- Make sure that opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences are planned and taught in every lesson and around the school.
- Make sure there is clear, strategic direction and management of the sixth form so that students' rates of progress match those in the main school.
- Increase governor participation in the life of the school by using governors' expertise fully and making sure that all governors offer challenge and support to the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Too few students make good progress.
- Students are developing better skills in reading and writing but they do not always explain their ideas clearly in conversations. Teaching in some subjects does not adequately develop students' technical vocabulary; consequently, they do not talk about their learning with the precision needed to promote good progress.
- At the end of Key Stage 4 in 2012, 42 per cent of students gained five A\*-C grades including English and mathematics. This was a considerable improvement on the previous year's results. There is a steady improvement in students' progress in both English and mathematics.
- In the majority of other subjects, students' attainment is broadly in line with the national average.
- Low standards in design and technology are being rigorously tackled.
- Students known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers as a result of the extra support they receive from the pupil premium. In 2012 the gap between Year 11 pupils eligible for free school meals and the others was about a grade in English and mathematics. This year this gap is closing. There were not enough looked-after children or pupils from service families to comment on their attainment.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium benefit from the additional support they receive, which helps them to keep up with their peers.
- Teachers are not sufficiently focused on improving students' literacy skills across all subjects, which means opportunities are lost to reinforce learning from English lessons.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to the others. They benefit from the extra support they receive so their achievement in English and mathematics is closer to the national average.
- The school selects a small group of students for early entry for GCSE in English and mathematics and this is improving their grades.
- Students who attend the LEAP programme make good progress because of it helps them to find ways to overcome obstacles to their learning and to participate more fully in the life of the school.
- In 2012, attainment in the sixth form was below the national average at GCE A level but results are beginning to improve. The school has tightened its entry criteria for the sixth form and ensured there is a much closer match of students' prior learning with the courses they take. As a result, Year 12 students' attainment is broadly in line with the national average for GCE AS levels.
- In the best lessons observed, inspectors saw students acquire knowledge and understanding quickly and securely.

**The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- In lessons which require improvement learning objectives often describe activities rather than the skills to be practised or the knowledge to be applied. Consequently, students are too dependent on the teacher to steer their learning in the class and opportunities to increase the challenge for all students through more independent working are missed.
- Teachers' questioning of students often does not check their understanding or help them identify inconsistencies in their understanding themselves. Similarly, teachers' planning does not always break learning down into episodes small enough to enable students to overcome difficulties themselves to increase the pace of learning.
- Teachers' marking in Key Stage 3 and 4 has improved and provides clear guidance to students on how to improve their work. The marking of sixth form students' work is not sufficiently frequent and clear guidance on how to improve the work and the next steps in learning are not always given.
- The school is reducing inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and is increasing the proportion of good teaching. Teachers' planning has improved and takes better account of students' prior learning.
- In the best lessons, learning moves at a fast pace because learning objectives are clear and provide a clear structure for the activities. In these lessons, teachers' excellent subject knowledge enables them to provide clear explanations that clarify students' understanding.
- Teachers provide a wide range of well thought-out resources. Students use the detailed assessment information well to improve their work and review their approaches with each other. In this way, they are encouraged to work more independently.
- The school has a wide range of carefully tailored support programmes. The recently introduced mentoring of Year 11 students by sixth form students in mathematics has begun to improve students' understanding and confidence and tackle gaps in their learning. Extra lessons and small-group work have helped less confident students explain where they have misunderstandings. Progress for these groups of students is improving.
- The revised tutor system is boosting standards in literacy and numeracy. Students read more frequently and participate in weekly mathematics challenges.

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

- Students' behaviour both in lessons and around the school has improved. This is because of the consistent application of policies and well thought-through support by staff. Rare occurrences of low-level disruption in lessons are swiftly and effectively managed. Staff are overwhelmingly confident that these whole-school approaches are improving behaviour.
- Exclusions are decreasing. Detailed analysis of incidents in lessons has enabled the school to identify students who would benefit from carefully focused help. One student stated that the LEAP programme had changed her life because she was now able to manage her own behaviour effectively. As a result, she enjoys school and is now making good progress in all her subjects.
- In Key Stage 3, the 'Focus' programme has been introduced to help students re-establish

routines and manage their own behaviour well. Students on the programme also receive additional help in English and mathematics.

- Students are well mannered, polite and courteous to visitors. Relationships are respectful. Students stated that they felt safe in school and knew how to keep themselves safe through awareness of things such as e-safety. Students stated that incidents of bullying and racism were rare and dealt with quickly.
- The recently introduced sixth-form prefects and head boy and head girl provide excellent role models for younger students. Prefects work sensitively with younger students. In addition, sixth formers work as 'learning ambassadors' at lunchtime, supporting students to complete their homework and use the computers.
- Attendance is improving and is just below the national average. The school employs its own education welfare officer who provides good quality support to families. The school takes an appropriately consistent and firm line with students with poor attendance and with their parents or carers.

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

- Performance management targets help to drive staff development and school improvement. However, these do not include targets for the progress made by different groups of students and do not make explicit the expectation that all students will make good or better progress.
- Recent changes to the leadership and management of the sixth form are beginning to deal with the inconsistencies in teaching. The numbers of students staying on in the sixth form has improved.
- Subject leaders' evaluations of the quality of the teaching in sixth form subjects are not yet consistent and some do not identify clearly enough strategies to improve students' progress. The monitoring of sixth form lessons is not as securely established as it is in the rest of the school. In the sixth form there is a greater variation in success in examinations compared with the rest of the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher and senior leadership team has enabled the school to make great strides in tackling areas of weakness. The whole staff is overwhelmingly supportive of their ethos and vision for the school.
- A new appraisal and capability policy has been introduced which sharply focuses on tackling weak teaching. Appropriate targets for improvements in teaching are set, regularly monitored and are linked to support for teachers.
- School improvement plans communicate clear expectations which enable every member of staff to see what their contribution is. Curriculum directors increasingly accurately evaluate their areas of the curriculum and use their analysis to promote teaching and learning. They understand their roles well. They manage challenging professional discussions well because of the good support provided. All teachers within their curriculum areas plan lessons together and use their evaluations to improve learning.
- Teachers' planning is beginning to address students' misunderstandings about learning objectives. Teachers' review of their practice has benefited from good quality professional development closely linked to school evaluation and improvement plans. Good practice is

effectively shared and teaching is improving.

- The pupil premium is used well to provide a range of well-tailored support to individuals and small groups. The support helps eligible students gain more confidence in being effective learners.
- The range of subjects and courses in the main school is broad and balanced. Appropriate plans are in place to widen the choice of post-16 courses from September 2013. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not always an explicit feature of learning. Plans are in place to develop this further.
- Evidence from the school's questionnaires to parents and carers indicate that the school works well with the majority of parents.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides effective support and challenge to the school through its regular monitoring.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They know about the quality of teaching and the achievement of students. The level of challenge and support to senior leaders is often good from a few governors and has helped the senior team to bring about rapid improvements. However, too few governors are actively involved in checking the work of the school and asking searching questions.
  - Governors know about the targets that are set for teachers to improve their teaching. They know how the school rewards good teaching and tackles any underperformance. Governors have recently carried out an audit of their skills. They appropriately intend to use this to deal with their training needs and encourage greater participation of the whole governing body in the life of the school.
  - Governors effectively monitor how the pupil premium is spent and understand how strategies have made a difference to the achievement of specific groups of students.

## 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>	112992
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	399754

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>	1146
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	149
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Freda Daniel
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mal Kerr
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 572026
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