

# Pendle Community High School and College

Pendle Vale Campus, Oxford Road, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 8LF

**Inspection dates** 19–20 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher and his team lead the school well. With good support from the governing body, teaching is improving and the achievement of the majority of students is good or outstanding. Progress is equally good for all different groups of students.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. When students arrive at the school, their knowledge and skills are carefully checked so staff can provide individual learning programmes which are well suited to the needs of each student. As a result, they make good progress.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress and achieve well. They become more confident and independent and are well prepared for their chosen pathways when they leave the school.
- The outstanding behaviour and attendance of students contribute significantly to the school's excellent climate for learning and its inclusive ethos. Staff take every step they can to ensure the safety of students. As a result, students feel very safe and secure in school.
- The very effective headteacher and senior managers work well together and have improved teaching and students' progress steadily since the previous inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some of the more-able students do not make quite so much progress as they should. Expectations are sometimes not high enough.
- In some lessons, the least-able students are not always given the resources or the detailed guidance they need to complete tasks with understanding.
- The school's leaders are only at an early stage in developing a wider range of assessments so they can improve the progress of the increasing number of students who arrive with complex needs.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by 13 staff, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with two groups of students, listened to a group of students read, and held discussions with staff, including senior and middle leaders and teaching assistants. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two governors.
- Inspectors read a range of documents written by the school, including a summary of the school’s view of its strengths and weaker areas, plans to improve some aspects of the school’s work, records of checks made on lessons, details of students’ progress, and policies and records of safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysis of questionnaires completed by parents attending parents’ evenings. They also looked carefully at 24 questionnaires completed by staff. Additionally, the lead inspector took into account a separate letter from one parent which was delivered to the school.

## Inspection team

Nell Banfield, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Frank Carruthers

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school provides for students with a statement of special educational needs. Around half of students have moderate learning difficulties and around one fifth of students have severe or profound learning difficulties. A small proportion of students are assessed as having speech and communication needs related to autism. Many students have complex multiple needs.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, or looked after by the local authority, is higher than the national average.
- Around three quarters of students are White British. Virtually all others are of Pakistani origin and speak English as an additional language.
- A number of students in Year 10 and 11 follow courses in carpentry, painting and decorating, and car maintenance at Nelson and Colne College. A slightly larger number attend Accrington and Rossendale College to follow courses in catering and dance.
- The school is co-located with Pendle Vale College. It has received a number of awards including an Excellence Award for Innovative Practice. The school is recognised within the Comenius Project, is a School Direct Partner and has Unesco school status.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of the amount of progress to be made by the least- and most-able students in each lesson and over time
  - providing precise guidance and specific resources that will help those students who learn more slowly to understand their work more clearly and improve their learning and progress.
- Develop the accuracy and range of assessment still further so all teachers can plan activities that meet the needs of the increasing number of students with complex needs.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry to the school varies. Some students arrive with low attainment and some arrive with attainment that is well below expectations for their age.
- Students' progress is good in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, in a humanities lesson, older students were able to explain the meaning of 'The American Dream' accurately and the teacher skilfully extended their vocabulary by calling this 'aspiration' and 'having goals'.
- By the end of Year 11, all students gain some external accreditation in a number of areas, together with entry level qualifications in English and mathematics. A small number of students achieve the lower grades in GCSE mathematics.
- All students move successfully to post-16 education, training or employment and achieve well in their time in the sixth form. Overall, this indicates good achievement.
- Girls and boys achieve equally well. There is no difference in the achievement of different groups of students. Students who are eligible for pupil premium funding make similar progress to other students and the standards they reach, as measured by their average point scores, in English and in mathematics are equally comparable.
- A small minority of students who can reach the higher standards sometimes do not achieve their best because teachers do not always ask questions that challenge them to think hard. Although these students often reach the school targets, these are not always sufficiently challenging.
- Those students in Years 10 and 11, who attend a local college, complete courses successfully, build their confidence and develop a positive general attitude to their learning.
- On students' arrival, teachers use assessments to make sure they understand what students can do already and what they need to learn next. In a Year 7 food technology lesson, two students made particularly good progress, improving skills in spreading butter on slices of bread and making and arranging sandwiches with their chosen healthy fillings, because the task was very well planned. However, assessment of students' wider and more complex needs is not always sufficiently precise to enable the teaching to support good and better progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall with a small proportion that is outstanding.
- Teachers are becoming more skilled at using the improved assessment system developed in recent months. They identify students more effectively who are not making at least the expected progress and are able to plan actions that improve most students' learning.
- Teaching support is very effective, particularly in noting those students who develop understanding quickly, those who have completed the task independently and those who have succeeded with support.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to make sure students can visualise items and processes more clearly so they develop an understanding of what is being taught. In a mathematics lesson, students used individual clocks to practise telling the time and later used software on the computer, independently, to explore clock time shown digitally. This extended their learning well.
- Opportunities are rarely missed for students to read widely from prompts used as part of teaching, from short and longer texts as part of lessons, and from books specifically chosen for them to improve their reading skills. Teachers help students to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways with pictures, symbols and signing routinely used in many lessons.
- Teachers enjoy extremely positive relationships with students and use humour to engage students further in their learning, such as when the teacher suggested they dress up as detectives to solve a crime.
- Where teaching is most effective, students are fully involved and carefully challenged. In an

English lesson, a more difficult text had been used as the vehicle for strengthening memory and story re-telling skills. Students were fully engaged in the story's events and had understood the text clearly as a result of the teacher's excellent planning.

- In some lessons, questions and tasks are too easy for more-able students and teachers miss chances to ask harder questions to make them learn and think more. Similarly, those who learn very slowly are sometimes supported to complete a task without developing their own understanding about what they are doing and why. Additional resources such as pictures added to a matching task so students could indicate similarities themselves, are not always given, and staff finally explain or show them the similarities.
- Students learn very effectively as a result of good partnership arrangements with the main school within the shared campus. Two more-able students made outstanding progress in a science lesson there. One showed his effective learning by answering a question directed at any class member correctly and confidently. Both students played a full and equal part in the lesson, well supported by a teaching assistant.
- The school ensures that students have the chance to enjoy trips and residential experiences and many join in a wide range of sporting activities after school. The skilful way in which a visiting art specialist included every student in a small group of lowest ability students in a collage making activity, prompted one student to make significant progress in communicating his ideas and all to contribute to the collage by choosing and applying the materials.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Students' exemplary behaviour makes an outstanding contribution to their learning and progress.
- Students enjoy their start to the day, entering school via a pleasant garden, vegetable beds and a greenhouse area. A warm welcome is given before introduction to form time and assembly, where structured opportunities are given to recognise and celebrate excellent learning and achievements, including helping others.
- Almost all parents, pupils and staff recognise that behaviour is outstanding. The school models and teaches good manners, respect for others' needs and the difference between right and wrong. Students are articulate in their appreciation of how the school prepares them for life outside.
- Students are unanimous that bullying and name-calling happen rarely and they have strong trust in staff to deal with any unkindness quickly and without fuss. Students can talk about different kinds of bullying. They have very clear views about the dangers of the internet and of mobile phone misuse.
- The management of behaviour is excellent, with any student unable to manage his or her behaviour being skilfully supported in returning to his or her learning. Lessons are seldom disrupted. The emotional and personal development of students is exceptionally well supported through inter-agency support or specialist support from within the school. The focus is clearly on students' self-management and management of their own behaviour.
- Students say they feel very safe and secure in school. Students trust all staff to care for and advise them effectively, sensitively and respectfully. Parents overwhelmingly agree. They all recognise the excellent levels of care provided by the school to ensure the well-being of all students, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Students speak very highly of teachers' skill in helping them to learn. One older girl said that the teacher 'makes it really interesting like the way he encourages you to get the question. Even though I don't like maths, I learn a lot'.
- Attendance is above average with minimal persistent absence.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has high expectations for improvement and these are shared by the vast majority of governors and staff. School leaders are currently planning a re-formed senior team and curriculum in response to the changing needs of the students arriving at the school. This represents excellent strategic planning for the future.
- Leaders are also developing an even wider range of assessments so they can improve the progress of students who are arriving with an increasingly wide range of complex needs.
- Performance management is robust and governors support the headteacher well in ensuring that any increase in pay or status is accompanied by teaching and management that support the improvement of student progress.
- Careful monitoring and accurate judgements of the quality of teaching have identified areas where practice needs to improve. Good arrangements have been made for development and training opportunities to ensure that teaching improves.
- Students' achievements are checked and followed closely and contribute well to the annual reviews of statements of special educational needs. Individual learning and behaviour plans are drawn up and target the main areas for the students to improve. Teachers use them to plan activities in lessons but activities planned for the more- and least-able do not always challenge them to reach the higher standards.
- The school's evaluation of the use of the pupil premium funding shows that individual students' progress has improved as a result of the extra support and teaching.
- The school's provision of a range of enterprise opportunities makes a good contribution to students' social, moral, cultural and spiritual understanding. All staff frequently remind and support students to use their 'sharing skills'. The effect of this can be seen in the way students successfully organised a charity shop to raise funds for a local Children's Hospice.
- Students in the sixth form benefit from very detailed and frequent assessments of their needs so that they can develop independence and achieve qualifications in key life-skills and vocational areas so they are well prepared for life after school.
- There is very effective provision to support exercise and self-awareness for a range of students with differing physical needs. Good use is made of designated areas, including multi-sensory space, to enable those most limited in movement to take part in the majority of activities.
- The partnerships developed by the school, provide outstanding opportunities for very well supported transition between stages into and through the school.
- Outstanding safeguarding arrangements contribute very effectively to the school's inclusive ethos and the students' individual sense of security.
- The local authority provides good support. Its external agencies such as educational psychologists and speech and language therapists also provide a good service to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is effective, proud of the school and ambitious for further improvements. Governors understand the school well. Statutory responsibilities are met. Policies and procedures are suitably in place and essential staff training is regular and current. Performance management arrangements for all staff, including the headteacher, are rigorous and link clearly to pay progression. Governors are supporting the headteacher in updating and improving the performance management arrangements for teaching assistants. They are clear that the pupil premium funding is being correctly and effectively used and have been given clear data by the headteacher that shows the accelerated progress made by the students supported by this funding.

## 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>	135015
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402665

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<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>	134
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Trevor Ashton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Wright
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 682260
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