

Wentworth High School

Wentworth Road, Eccles, Manchester, M30 9BP

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
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 has serious weaknesses.

- Students' achievement in mathematics and English is inadequate. Too many students do not make the progress that they are capable of in these subjects, particularly at Key Stage 4.
- Some teachers do not take enough account of the different needs of students when planning lessons.
- Teachers' marking does not always give enough information to help students improve their work.
- Students' attitudes to learning are not consistently good. In lessons where the work does not meet their needs, students can lose interest and disturb the learning of others.
- Some subject leaders lack sufficient expertise to make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching and how this relates to the progress students make.
- The new governing body does not have a clear picture of the progress students make in some subjects. This is because the information collected on students' progress is not reliable.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is improving across the school. Half of the teaching observed was good or better. As a result, students' achievement is improving in some subjects.
- The recently appointed headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders and governors, is taking effective action to tackle weaknesses in the mathematics department.
- Disabled students and those students who require extra help with their learning achieve well because of the appropriate support they receive to help meet their needs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 part-lessons taught by 27 different teachers. A joint observation of one lesson was carried out with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors attended a morning assembly, observed students during form period and also observed them in the playground at break and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, a group of teachers, a representative of the local authority and groups of students of different ages.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in the 23 responses to the on-line Parent View survey.
- Students' work was examined as were school's policies, leaders' analysis of how well the school is doing and the improvement plan.
- Inspectors looked at the records of students' behaviour, attendance records, information about students' progress and their test and examination results.
- The school's procedures for keeping students safe were considered.

Inspection team

Charles Lowry, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Latham

Additional Inspector

Mary Lanovy-Taylor

Additional Inspector

Fiona Burke-Jackson

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- Wentworth High is a smaller-than-average, mixed comprehensive school located in Eccles in the City of Salford.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium provides schools with additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents serving in the armed forces and for those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage; others come from a range of ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is close to twice the national average.
- The proportion of students who require extra help with their learning and are supported at school action is above average. The proportion of students who are supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The on-site Barrier Free Unit caters for the needs of disabled students and those with medical conditions.
- All students are educated on the school site.
- The proportion of students who start and leave the school after Year 7 is above average.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. A new governing body has been in place since 1 January 2013.
- In 2012 the school won an award for excellence in challenging bullying.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good and all students make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4 by:
 - making sure that teachers plan activities to meet students' individual needs by drawing on all the information available to them about how well their students are doing
 - reducing the amount of time that teachers spend talking so that there is more time in lessons for students to take part in well-planned activities that encourage them to think and find things out for themselves
 - making sure that marking of students' work is of consistently high quality so that students know what they have done well and what they need to do to make the work even better
 - making sure that the information collected on students' progress is reliable and based on accurate assessments of how well students are doing.
- Improve students' behaviour by:
 - providing students with activities in lessons that stimulate their interest and fire their enthusiasm so that they all develop positive attitudes to their learning
 - making sure that teachers deal quickly with those students who, on occasion, may disturb the learning of others.
- Strengthen the effect that leaders and managers have on students' achievement by:

- continuing to develop the skills of subject leaders so that they take full responsibility for improving the quality of teaching in their departments
- making sure that information collected on students' progress is reliable and analysed rigorously so that governors are able to hold leaders and managers to account fully for the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- When they start at the school, students' attainments are well below average. Due to weaknesses in the quality of teaching, students' progress from their starting points in English and mathematics is inadequate by the end of Key Stage 4, and has been for the last two years. Leaders and managers have recognised this and are taking robust action to tackle it. The quality of teaching is improving although it is too early to assess the impact of this on current students' progress.
- In November 2011, the school entered a small number of students early for GCSE mathematics. These students had joined the school part way through Key Stage 4 and early entry ensured that they achieved at least a pass grade. This year the school has extended this policy and all students in Year 11 were entered early with the exception of the most-able. However, it is too soon to determine whether this policy will have a positive impact on students' achievement in this subject.
- In some subjects, for example science, achievement is improving. GCSE results in art and modern languages are above average.
- Staff successfully meet the needs of those students who require extra help with their learning, including disabled students who are members of the Barrier Free Unit. As a result of good care and guidance, and the additional help these students receive, the gap between their achievement and that of their peers is smaller than that found nationally.
- Staff successfully meet the needs of those students who arrive at the school at an early stage of learning English. These students receive support from specialist teachers and quickly gain the language skills necessary to take an active part in lessons. Consequently they achieve well.
- The attainment of students for whom the school receives additional funds from the pupil premium is below that of their peers. However, the gap in performance is narrower than that found nationally. In English the gap is half a GCSE grade and in mathematics the gap is a third of a GCSE grade. This is because senior leaders use this funding effectively to provide additional support for these students; including extra classes, one-to-one help with coursework and careers advice.
- Most parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire believe that their child is making good progress. Although inspectors would agree that this is the case in some subjects, the progress made by students in English and mathematics, is not good enough.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to enable all students to make good progress.
- The headteacher, ably supported by governors, is taking effective action to deal with weak teaching. For example, in mathematics the appointment of two mathematics teachers, including a head of department, has improved the quality of teaching in this subject. Consequently achievement in mathematics is beginning to improve, albeit from a low base. In English, regular checks by senior leaders on the quality of teaching have identified those teachers in need of extra training to improve their practice. As a result, students are beginning to make better progress and are starting to overcome previous underachievement in this subject.
- In some lessons, teachers' expectations of what students are capable of are not high enough and the work students are given is sometimes too easy. This is because teachers have not taken enough account of the information they have on what students already know and can do when planning activities. An example of this is when all students are given the same task; this fails to provide sufficient challenge for more-able students and their progress slows because of this.
- In some lessons the methods teachers choose to help students learn are not thought through and students have to sit and listen for long periods. This reduces the time available for students to work either in groups or individually and find things out for themselves. When this happens

some students can become bored and lack enthusiasm.

- The quality of some marking is not helpful and students do not learn from their mistakes. In the best examples, students' work is regularly reviewed by their teachers and the comments describe what the student has done well and what they need to do to improve their work.
- When teachers have high expectations of students and they are given responsibility for their learning, they make rapid progress and enjoy lessons. For example, in a business education lesson students worked in groups to decide the best location to build a new school. They were given a range of resources including colour maps to help them explain why one location was preferable to another. The students made good progress because they had to take into account a number of factors, discuss the advantages and disadvantages and then justify their decision to the rest of the class.
- The best lessons are planned so that students are given a variety of tasks that appeal to the different ways they learn. In these lessons, teachers skilfully question students, making them think and provide answers that show their understanding.
- Almost all parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire feel that their child is well taught. Inspectors would agree that this is the case in art, modern languages and science.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' attitudes to learning are not consistently good in all lessons. A minority of students demonstrate poor attitudes to their studies when teachers' expectations are not high enough or the work is not matched to their needs. In these circumstances, a few students take the opportunity to disturb the learning of others and some teachers do not deal with this type of behaviour well enough.
- Behaviour around the school, in the dining room and in recreation areas is generally calm.
- Students show respect for their school environment. Consequently, the site is relatively litter-free and instances of graffiti are rare.
- Students who met with inspectors said that they feel safe and that staff support them well. Students are confident that staff do all they can to protect them from dangers. Most parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire agreed with this view.
- Students are mindful of the dangers posed by the internet, text messaging and social networking sites and know how to keep themselves safe when using these technologies.
- Students are well aware of the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber, racist and other prejudice-based bullying. Students agreed that levels of bullying have decreased since the appointment of the current headteacher. Students are confident that staff deal effectively with bullying when it does occur.
- Staff manage behaviour well. This has resulted in a drop in the number of fixed-term exclusions this year.
- The governors have directed some of the pupil premium funding to improve attendance, which now matches the national average. There is a good range of strategies in place to improve attendance further.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Senior leaders and governors do not have a completely accurate picture of the standards being reached by some students. Staff regularly check how well students are progressing in each of their subjects but some of this information is not reliable enough. This is because subject leaders do not routinely check students' work to see how it compares with national standards.
- Senior leaders are taking effective action to improve the quality of teaching. They have identified where improvements are required and are providing support for those teachers who require it. The quality of teaching and learning is beginning to improve, and starting to overcome

underachievement, particularly in English and mathematics.

- New and improved systems for monitoring the quality of teaching have strengthened the role of subject leaders in checking the work of their departments. These systems also make them more accountable for the standards achieved by students. Some subject leaders are not sufficiently skilled to identify the most important messages from this monitoring or to use the information to drive improvements in the quality of students' learning and progress.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced a policy to include the development of literacy skills in all subjects. Inspectors observed some good examples of students being given the opportunity to read and develop their speaking and listening skills in lessons.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities but the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics does not ensure that all students achieve as well as they should.
- At Key Stage 4, the curriculum provides a range of academic and vocational options to meet the needs of all students. A variety of trips and after-school activities contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school fosters good relationships between all members of the school community and discrimination is tackled vigorously.
- A revised policy for the performance management of staff has recently been put in place. Teachers are held to account for the quality of their teaching and the standards achieved by students. Teachers who do not meet their targets do not receive a pay rise.
- The local authority provides effective help for staff with regard to improving standards in mathematics and also provides support from a consultant for the headteacher.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - During a period of turbulence in Wentworth High School's history, the local authority provided timely and effective support by reviewing the school's arrangements for governance. As a result, a new governing body has recently been appointed, which is being supported by a national leader of governance. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching. The outcomes of performance management are shared with governors and they are clear about the links between teachers' pay and performance management targets. They are knowledgeable about the funding the school receives from the pupil premium, how it is spent and the impact this funding has on outcomes for some students. Arrangements for safeguarding students and the procedures used to check the suitability of staff and visitors are managed very well.

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	105982
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	412758

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	683
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sheila Hamnett
Headteacher	Mrs Heather Aaron
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2010
Telephone number	0161 789 4565
Email address	wentworth.highschool@salford.gov.uk

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