

# South Wigston High School

St Thomas Road, Wigston, LE18 4TA

**Inspection dates** 18–19 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- From their low starting points, students make good progress. Students' achievement in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 3 is good.
- Teaching is good in most subjects. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations, and question students well.
- There are examples of outstanding teaching across several subject areas.
- Students who might find it hard to behave well receive outstanding help. Students get on well with each other and with staff.
- Leaders have established strong systems for making sure teaching is good, and have eradicated any inadequate features. The school is improving.
- Governors take an active role and make sure arrangements for keeping students safe in school are very strong.
- An outstanding range of after-school clubs gives students varied opportunities to learn new skills.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and significantly supports students' personal development.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always plan activities that meet the needs of students: sometimes all in the class complete the same work.
- Students do not get many opportunities to work on their own or practise writing skills across all subjects.
- Students are not always clear about how they can improve their work.
- Governors and some school leaders, including subject leaders, do not all analyse the progress made by year groups or different groups of students in enough detail.
- Improvement plans do not identify measurable ways of checking that they are working so leaders cannot be fully sure they are leading to rapid success.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons. Three of these were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the Chair and another member of the Governing Body, senior leaders, other staff, and groups of students.
- Inspectors took account of the 56 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 39 responses from the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors analysed test results and scrutinised a range of other evidence including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans, records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance, lesson monitoring information, safeguarding documentation and examples of students’ work.

## Inspection team

Lisa Fraser, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Hermione Horn	Additional Inspector
Alan Jarvis	Additional Inspector
Helen Owen	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average secondary school, and has specialist status for the arts.
- The large majority of students are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, for those from service families and for students known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion of students at school action plus or who have a statement of educational needs is above average.
- None of the students receive alternative provision (none are taught in other schools or units).
- South Wigston High School converted to become an academy in March 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards for Key Stage 2 (Year 6), which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- In agreement with the Department of Education and the local authority, the phase of education of the school is changing from its current 10–14 age range to 11–16. From September 2013, there will no longer be a Year 6 intake.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good or better in all subjects by ensuring teachers:
  - use information about students' progress to give work that is at the right level of difficulty for all students
  - plan activities which reduce students' reliance on teachers and develop their initiative to find things out for themselves
  - mark work and give feedback to students that tells them exactly how to improve in the specific subject being taught.
- Further improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - making sure that improvement plans are sharply focused on students' progress with specific and measurable targets so that all aspects of the school's work can be checked more easily
  - ensuring that subject leaders and heads of year have more opportunities to meet together to share good practice
  - implementing plans to support students' writing skills across all subject areas
  - making sure that leaders at all levels, including the governing body, develop a clearer understanding of the attainment and progress made by groups of students in all years.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good overall because students make good progress from low starting points. By the end of Key Stage 3 they have made good progress in English and mathematics.
- Students enter the school in Year 6 with skills in reading, writing and mathematics which are well below average. Over the two terms before they do national tests they make good progress from their low starting points, however, the percentage of students reaching the level expected for their age (level 4) at Key Stage 2 remains significantly below average.
- In Key Stage 3 students make good progress across a range of subjects because of students' positive attitudes to learning and the good teaching they receive.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, supported at school action plus or by a statement, make good progress as a result of effective small group teaching where there is a specific focus on developing students' literacy and numeracy.
- Additional pupil premium funding is used by the school to support one-to-one and small group teaching and to raise the aspirations of the students through organised visits to local colleges and universities.
- The school's current data indicate the gap between the achievement of students supported by the pupil premium and others is narrowing. At Key Stage 3, these students make quicker progress than other groups in English as a result of the good extra support they receive. Pupil premium students make good progress from their low starting points in mathematics. They are now a term behind their peers and the gap is reducing.
- 'Year 7 catch-up funding' is helping students to accelerate their progress. For example, ten students supported by this funding made a term's progress in mathematics in two months.
- Weaker readers in Year 6 receive daily lessons on linking letters with the sounds they make. Reading is well promoted through schemes that help students to read in pairs, a whole-school 20-minute reading slot every Friday, and breakfast and after-school clubs. As a result, students have very positive attitudes to reading.
- Senior leaders recognise that students' writing skills are particularly weak. Teaching in humanities helps students to improve their written work, but there are limited opportunities to improve students' literacy in other subject areas.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The great majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding. No teaching is inadequate but a small minority of teaching requires improvement.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. They use high-quality resources to ensure students make good progress.
- Teachers' skilful use of questioning helps students to improve their ideas and understanding. For instance, in a Year 8 geography lesson on the difference between developed and developing

countries, the teacher's targeted questions both helped students to consolidate their understanding and provided extra challenge. As a result, students made outstanding progress.

- In the best lessons, teachers plan a variety of different activities in order to make sure that work is at the right level for each student. In a few lessons, students all complete the same work, which is too easy for some and too hard for others.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in lessons for disabled students and those who have special education needs.
- The quality of marking is variable. In humanities subjects such as history and geography, and in English, students receive teachers' comments on their work that help them understand what they need to do to improve. However, in some other subjects teachers' feedback is general rather than being closely focussed on key points about learning the specific subject.

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

- Students are proud of their school and are particularly polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors.
- Relationships between students and staff are very good. Students appreciate the extra support they receive and say, 'if you need help, you'll get help'.
- Students get on well with each other, conduct themselves sensibly between lessons and demonstrate high levels of respect for the school environment.
- Learning is never interrupted because students who may have challenging behaviour receive outstanding help to learn to manage it.
- Bullying is rare and students agree with staff, parents and governors that arrangements to keep them safe at school are very good. Students have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, through assemblies and their work in citizenship lessons.
- Students are motivated to do their best by the wide range of rewards they receive for good achievement and behaviour.
- The school council is respected by students and makes sure that senior leaders take account of students' views. Students speak enthusiastically about opportunities to develop their leadership skills through sports and house captain roles.
- Behaviour is good but not outstanding because students are not all learning the skills of finding things out for themselves. Sometimes lessons are too dominated by the teacher and students do not have the chance to work without direct adult input.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Leadership and management are good overall because of the leaders' close attention to ensuring good teaching, and because they have also made sure several aspects of the school's work are outstanding.

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- Parents and staff give their full backing to the school's leadership. Students rate leadership highly and describe the school as 'very organised'.
  - Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching are good and teachers' pay is increasingly linked to their good performance in the classroom. As a result, senior leaders have been successful in eradicating inadequate teaching.
  - All staff are observed teaching twice a year and the results feed into a robust performance management system which links closely to Teachers' Standards. Both senior and subject leaders take an active role in observing lessons and sampling students' work.
  - Senior leaders are managing the smooth transition to the 11-16 phase well. School improvement plans focus on the right issues but do not always identify measurable outcomes. Senior leaders' evaluation of success is therefore sometimes too general to be sure plans are having the best effect.
  - External support is used to validate senior leaders' assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The local authority has contributed to the school's rising Key Stage 2 results in mathematics by providing some additional support.
  - Data on students' achievement are collected regularly and analysed by senior and subject leaders. However, leaders do not track the progress of groups of students closely across all year groups. This means that action is not always taken quickly enough to secure outstanding achievement for all students.
  - The longstanding senior leadership team recognises the need to build capacity and improve the leadership skills of subject leaders and heads of year. Not enough time is allocated to enable these staff to meet together to learn from each other's good practice.
  - An outstanding range of over 70 after-school clubs, sports and activities enrich students' learning and personal development. For example, each year students in Year 9 have the opportunity to work onsite with the army to develop their teamwork skills.
  - Citizenship lessons and 'healthy lifestyles day' develop students' understanding of diverse issues including, drugs, racism and relationships.
  - Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, shown in students' positive attitudes and the school's harmonious atmosphere. In Year 7 students develop their understanding of communities different to their own with study visits to seven different places of worship. Numerous overseas study visits enhance students' linguistic skills and cultural understanding.
  - The arts make a particular contribution to students' cultural development through the school's specialist status. Good numbers are learning a musical instrument through peripatetic lessons. Students speak animatedly about their participation in a range of productions, including the most recent Egyptian-themed 'Glint of gold'.
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■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body makes a very strong contribution to making sure that the school's arrangements for students' safety are robust. Governors take an active role in ensuring the school's finances are secure. The governing body asks school leaders challenging questions about students' end of key stage achievement, in subject area reviews. However, governors are not closely involved in monitoring the progress of groups of students, particularly students supported by the pupil premium, in all year groups. Governors know about how good teaching is, and understand the school's use of performance management. They are making sure it is linked to staff's pay progression. The governing body seeks to undergo all relevant training in order to best support the school.
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## 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>	137931
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412675

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	10–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	780
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roy Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Toward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	N/A
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