

Bebington High Sports College

Higher Bebington Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside, CH63 2PS

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement requires improvement. Action taken by senior leaders has led to some improvements in teaching. Despite this, teaching is not good enough to ensure students make consistently good or better progress throughout the school, particularly in mathematics.
- In lessons teachers are not routinely making sure that work is appropriately matched to students' different levels of ability. Marking is of variable quality and students do not always receive helpful information on how to improve their work.
- Checks on the quality of teaching have not focused sharply enough on the progress that students are making in lessons.
- Behaviour is acceptable and students feel safe. Despite the school's efforts in raising attendance levels they remain stubbornly low and punctuality to school is not good.
- The sixth form requires improvement because not enough students are reaching the highest levels.
- There is too much inconsistency in the way leaders and managers fulfil their roles in improving teaching and progress, especially at subject leader level.
- The governing body is not critical enough of the information provided by the school, particularly regarding students' progress. It does not probe the school well enough in this area.

The school has the following strengths

- Students join the school with low attainment. The proportion who gain five or more GCSE A* to C grades at GCSE increased sharply in 2010 and has been maintained.
- The school provides a safe, inclusive and caring environment for its students. Relationships are positive between students and adults.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 part lessons, several of which were jointly observed by senior leaders. One year-group assembly and two class registration periods were visited.
- Meetings were held with staff including middle and senior leaders plus those responsible for behaviour and pastoral care and guidance. The team met groups of students representing all age ranges and abilities. A meeting was held with a number of governors, including the chair of governors, a parent governor and a community governor.
- A joint meeting was held with the School Improvement Partner and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the school’s own recent survey and of the 10 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Peter Cox, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Bimla Kumari	Additional Inspector
Osama Abdul Rahim	Additional Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- There is a larger than average proportion – almost twice the national average – of students known to be eligible for pupil premium (Pupil premium is the 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 majority of students are from a White British heritage with a lower than average proportion representing minority ethnic groups. The proportion of students who speak English in addition to their own language is lower than seen nationally.
- Of the disabled students and those with special educational needs, a larger than average proportion – almost twice the national average – is supported through school action. An above average proportion is supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There are considerably more boys than girls in the school.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school, including the sixth form, so that a higher proportion is good or better enabling students to make consistently good and better progress in all lessons and particularly mathematics by:
 - matching work more precisely to students' ability levels
 - using questioning more effectively to check students' understanding and to challenge their thinking
 - marking students' work more regularly and providing information to them on how to improve
 - developing students as independent learners and being less reliant on the teacher.
- Improve the levels of attendance and punctuality by:
 - sustaining the improvements seen since the beginning of the academic year
 - using every strategy available to influence the hard-to-reach families who condone low attendance.
- Strengthen leadership and management at all levels, particularly subject leaders, by:
 - sharing more widely between middle leaders the better practice evident in English and physical education (PE)
 - basing evaluation of teaching on students' progress in lessons and over time
 - ensuring the recently established higher levels of responsibility and accountability expected of subject leaders bring about sustained improvement in students' progress.

Governance is ineffective. Consequently, an external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school in Year 7 with levels of attainment that are low when compared with the national average. Overall students make the progress expected of them and consequently, the proportion gaining five or more A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics remains below the national average. The current school data that track students' learning indicate a modest improvement in attainment in 2013 for English and mathematics.
- Over the last two years, the rate of progress that students make in English has improved although still remains broadly in line with expectations and is no better. Mathematics has not been as successful; historically, students have not learned at the rate they should have. Inspection evidence shows that this underachievement is being arrested. Observations of classroom teaching and learning plus work done since September in students' books confirm an improving trend. Data indicate that Year 11 students will have made the progress expected of them in English and mathematics by the time they leave, given their starting points.
- The pattern of progress is inconsistent and varies significantly in other subjects, between year groups and between boys and girls. In 2011 and 2012, girls outperformed their counterparts nationally and significantly so in 2012.
- Pupil premium funding is well targeted and those students believed to be entitled to free school meals make better gains in their learning when compared to others across the country. The attainment of free school meal students in their GCSE subjects when considering their average point scores is significantly below average, as is that for other students in the school. However, when taking account of those subjects equivalent to GCSEs, both groups attain significantly better than the national averages.
- The progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs is tracked and overall this group is making similar progress to their peers including those on school action. Those students supported at school action plus do better by comparison in school and nationally because of the effective support offered by teachers and other adults.
- The school enters some students for their GCSE mathematics examination early and provides further opportunities for them to improve their grades to a higher level.
- Pass rates for AS and A level are improving slowly. Attainment at the higher levels remains below the national average and progress measures indicate that not all students are as successful as they should be in the sixth form. Some students make good progress in the non-traditional examination courses.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching overall requires improvement, although there are many examples of good practice across the school including, for example, in English and PE. However, there is not enough good teaching in all subjects and in all year groups, including the sixth form, to enable students of all abilities to make consistently good progress.
- Too often the work planned for students is inappropriately matched to their ability levels. For example, the same task is given to the whole class with little or no acknowledgement of the range of ability present. On these occasions students' interest and engagement in learning wane and opportunities to progress further are missed.
- Other aspects that stifle the challenge in lessons and developing a rapid pace of learning are when teachers talk for too long or closely direct the students without taking the frequent opportunities to question the whole class or individuals well enough to challenge their thinking and check on their understanding of what has been taught.
- In the stronger lessons when teaching is good, students are engaged and challenged and consequently make good progress in their learning. In these lessons teachers have high expectations and strong subject knowledge that help enthuse and involve students in practical

learning in pairs or in groups. In an outstanding PE lesson students were actively engaged in the activities and accurately assessed each other's development, helping one another learn at a fast pace.

- The quality of support from teachers and other adults for those students who are disabled or who have special educational needs allows these students to make at least the same progress as their peers. Well-focused support helps school action plus students do better.
- Marking of students' work in their books and folders is variable in quality and frequency across subjects and year groups including the sixth form. The most effective marking helped students understand what they had to do to improve and allowed time for students to correct errors or answer questions posed by the teachers. Too often the marking was merely cursory and meaningless and just an acknowledgement of work being seen by the teacher.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for basic skill development in each subject area including reading, writing, communication and mathematics. There is evidence of literacy being promoted across subjects but other basic skills are not as well developed.
- Teachers generally work well with students in the sixth form and often provide good teaching. Students are encouraged to work independently but they rely too much on the teacher to provide the answers, as is also the case in Years 7 to 11. This stifles initiative and higher order thinking skills.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through a range of opportunities to learn about different cultures and work with others. Social and leadership skills are developed further through a specialised programme, but some opportunities are missed in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students talk of feeling safe and secure and appreciate the inclusive environment promoted by the school where all are accepted and included. Students are well known to the staff and valued equally as individuals, and relationships and the quality of care are good.
- Those parents who responded to the online questionnaire believe behaviour to be good and that the school deals effectively with any incidents. These views were reflected in the school's recent survey of parents.
- Overall, behaviour in lessons is managed well. Records show that behaviour which falls short of the school's expectation is often students' initial reluctance to respond to requests from teachers. The most incidents are recorded in Key Stage 3. There is little analysis or evaluation of this information to help negate any further occurrences.
- Students' attitude to learning is not consistently good in all lessons. Some students easily lose interest, particularly when the teaching lacks inspiration and engagement. As a result, their attention drifts and they sometimes engage in low-level activities that are not to do with their learning.
- Students are generally passive in lessons and rely too much on teachers providing the information and answers for them. Some active participation in their own learning is evident in the later years and in the sixth form.
- The school continues to work hard to improve attendance and, as a result, improvements have been secured since the beginning of the academic year and particularly since a full-time attendance officer has been employed. However, it remains low and there are a higher than expected number of students who are persistently absent and also late. The school is doing everything it can to reverse this trend but it is too early to measure the impact of some of the new initiatives.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher and his senior leadership team have a shared understanding on what needs to

be done to improve the school. They have successfully raised attainment over time and the school development plan cites appropriate priorities. However, they have an overinflated view of the school's overall effectiveness.

- There remains some variance in the effectiveness of middle leaders. The school recognises the strengths of subject leaders in English and PE and is using them as good examples to others, yet recognise there is still more to be done. The degree to which subject leaders effectively meet their responsibility for better outcomes in their subjects lacks consistency.
- The quality of teaching in some subject areas, including mathematics, has been a concern to the school. The headteacher has managed the performance of staff judiciously. Pay progression has been based on successfully meeting teachers' performance management targets. These are closely linked to quality teaching and students' achievement. The governing body sanctions the recommendations.
- Pupil premium funding has been used effectively and is helping improve attendance and achievement of these groups of students and others.
- Targeted support for individual teachers and whole-school training has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching. The monitoring of the quality of teaching by senior leaders and middle leaders has not focused sharply enough on students' progress although the joint observations undertaken during the inspection were accurate.
- Data on students' achievement are collected regularly and analysed by senior and middle leaders. However, it is not analysed sufficiently well enough to set the course for better than expected levels of progress by students and consequently target-setting is not challenging enough.
- The local authority is effective in its support and has provided a School Improvement Partner from the beginning of the academic year to work with the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is ineffective as it does not hold the school to account well enough for the achievement of students. It relies too much on what it is being told by the school without the required degree of enquiry. Meeting minutes show there is minimal governor challenge to the school when presented with information about progress and the quality of teaching from the headteacher. The governing body does ensure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements and that discrimination is not tolerated. Other statutory obligations such as the curriculum are met.

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	105106
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	400756

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	860
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Wetton
Headteacher	Brian Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2010
Telephone number	0151 645 4154
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Email address	schooloffice@bebingtonhigh.wirral.sch.uk

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