

# Abbot Beyne School

Linnell Building, Osborne Street, Burton-on-Trent, DE15 0JL

**Inspection dates** 30 April–1 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		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

- Over time, students have not experienced enough good or better teaching. Hence, since the last inspection, GCSE results have not been high enough, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always ensure students learn quickly enough.
- Where teaching is weaker, low level disruption does sometimes occur, particularly in lessons involving lower attaining students.
- The school's approach to reading is not meeting the needs of students with low reading ages.
- Governors know the strengths and weaknesses in the school but have not ensured performance management is used to improve the school.
- The school's evaluation of how good it is does not take enough account of the progress students are making.
- The sixth form is not good because attainment is below average and rates of progress are average.

### The school has the following strengths

- GCSE results rose sharply in 2012; they are now at the national average.
- Attainment in English is good because students experience consistently effective teaching in this subject. Students experience some teaching that is outstanding.
- The effective training teachers are receiving over the last year has improved teaching.
- An extensive programme of well organised revision sessions outside of normal lessons is boosting the attainment of students who have previously fallen behind in their learning.
- Additional government funding is being used well to reduce the gap in attainment that exists between those eligible for free school meals and other students.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons, of which 11 were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and attended two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with six groups of students, six members of the governing body, and senior and middle leaders. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 102 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 48 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including the school’s own data on current progress. Inspectors looked at documentation relating to: school development, management of the work of staff, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, checks on teaching, students’ behaviour and attendance, the safeguarding of students and governance.

## Inspection team

Kevin Sheldrick, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Bernadette Green

Additional Inspector

Peter McKenzie

Additional Inspector

Elaine Long

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school with a sixth form and has reduced in size since the previous inspection.
- An above-average proportion of the students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, from forces' families or who are looked after by the local authority).
- The proportion of disabled students or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is average. The majority of these students are of Pakistani origin.
- The school's results for 2012 meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Last year, a few students attended full-time alternative education (off-site), organised by the local authority. The school occupies two sites. Years 7 to 9 are taught at a site about a mile away from the main school.
- From September, students have been experiencing fewer but longer lessons. Lessons are 100 minutes long.
- A new headteacher joined the school in September 2011. In September 2012 an assistant headteacher also joined the school to lead on improving teaching.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the sixth form, so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring all lessons proceed at a fast pace so students work hard in all lessons, particularly in mathematics
  - ensuring all lessons include effective questioning so students' concentration levels are always high
  - better meeting the needs of lower attaining students in lessons through adaptations that ensure they receive more well-timed guidance and have increased opportunities to read texts at an appropriate level in lessons
  - adopting a more rigorous approach to the teaching of reading to low attaining students, that includes more regular assessment of reading ages and ensures these students read more texts outside of lessons that are well matched to their needs.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership by:
  - undertaking a review of governance in order to increase the effectiveness of the governing body
  - ensuring development plans give greater emphasis to the progress made by all groups of students and indicators are identified that allow the governing body to check more frequently on the improvement being made
  - ensure all staff are more fully held to account for the progress all students make through implementing a more rigorous approach to performance management
  - improve the accuracy of the evaluations of teaching by taking greater account of the evidence about student progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students who took GCSEs in 2012 started in Year 7 with average attainment. By the end of Year 11 their attainment was average. This represents average progress over time. In 2010 and 2011 students made lower than expected progress. Currently, students are making expected progress.
- Students make good progress in English. Although students are making better progress in mathematics, until recently students have not made enough progress in this subject.
- Students known to be eligible for free school meals, and for whom the school receives pupil premium funding, also make average progress. However these students start in Year 7 with generally lower levels of attainment than their classmates and the proportion of them gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics, in 2012, was well below the national figure for all students. The picture was similar in 2011.
- In English and mathematics, pupil premium students were about a grade behind their classmates in both the 2011 and 2012 exam results. To reduce this gap, leaders at all levels have made the group a high priority. These students are receiving more individual support. Current evidence indicates that the gaps have been greatly reduced to below half a grade. In Years 7 and 8, students eligible for free school meals are now making good progress in English and mathematics because of the additional one-to-one teaching they are receiving.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs also make expected progress. The small minority of students with statements, and who receive support from external agencies, progress well. They receive well-judged additional support in lessons and in additional sessions out of lessons. The large majority of students with special educational needs made less progress than other students in 2011 and 2012. However, they are now making progress in line with other students largely because they are undertaking more appropriate courses in Year 10 and 11.
- There is no significant difference in the achievement of students by ethnic background and those with English as an additional language do as well as others. Boys have not attained as well as the girls in recent years but the school has successfully reduced this gap through ensuring more mentoring support is made available to those boys in danger of not making expected progress.
- In mathematics and English, students take GCSE examinations early, before the end of Year 11. Generally the school uses this strategy well to motivate students to achieve at a higher level. More able mathematicians are well prepared for A level because they have the opportunity to undertake a Further Mathematics qualification.
- In Year 7, catch-up funding is used effectively to finance a summer school with local primary schools. The summer school ensures a smooth transition for students that did not meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. The attainment of these students is being further boosted by one-to-one tuition in both English and mathematics.
- All students regularly read their chosen books in tutorial time but the school recognises that a more structured approach is needed for weaker readers. These students are not being assessed regularly enough and they are not reading sufficient texts at the right level.
- The few students who are placed with an alternative provider, attend well and are making at

least expected progress.

- Middle and lower ability students demonstrate an ability to learn independently in lessons and appreciate the opportunities they have in some lessons to choose work at an appropriate level.
- The progress seen in sixth form lessons was similar to that observed in the main school. Students make average progress. The very small minority of students undertaking vocational courses make good progress.

## The quality of teaching

## requires improvement

- Teachers' expectations of what students can do in lessons are not always high enough. At times too much time is given to complete the tasks provided and this creates a lack of urgency. Opportunities are missed to use competition and timed targets to encourage students to work quickly. Reviews of students' learning sometimes take too long because the whole class are kept waiting whilst students copy their work onto the whiteboard, rather than using technologies that allow this to be instantly displayed. These weaknesses were particularly evident in some of the mathematics lessons seen.
- Teachers' questioning is variable in quality and use. Effective questioning was observed in a Business Studies lesson on a supermarket topic where students were expected to evaluate critically each other's responses to the teacher's questions on pricing and promotion. At times, there is too great a reliance on willing volunteers responding to questions so other students do not have to concentrate. In some lessons, teachers do not find out precisely the difficulties students are experiencing. Some revision lessons are less effective because work is covered even though there is evidence that some students already understand the subject matter.
- Most teachers mark students' work regularly but students indicate that they do not always respond to this because time is not given to it or because teachers' comments are not clear enough. Most teachers use assessment criteria to aid students' understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- In the better lessons, students undertake activities that are matched well to their abilities. Students appreciate the lessons in which they can choose work at the level they find most challenging. This promotes independent learning particularly amongst more able students. In an outstanding music lesson, students were observed devising their own activities that enabled them to undertake highly appropriate revision for a forthcoming examination. Students appreciate the recent improvements to their mathematics lessons brought about because they are able to omit easy questions and devote more time to challenging work.
- At times, teachers have unrealistic expectations of how some groups of students are able to work independently and solve problems for themselves. At times, lower attaining students make slow progress because they receive insufficient guidance or have to work with texts they do not fully understand.
- Very confident teachers use the long lessons well to undertake a wide range of activities that ensure students develop a thorough grasp of the concepts being taught. For instance in an outstanding Psychology lesson students were actively involved carrying out their own research such as investigating if there was any link between head size and intelligence. Less confident teachers do not use a sufficient range of activities to keep students fully occupied.

- In the sixth form, similar strengths and weaknesses were seen as in the main school. Students respond well to the opportunities they have to work independently. Occasionally, the very small group size limits the discussion that can take place about the topics being studied.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted reasonably well particularly in history lessons and through all day events in which personal and social aspects of learning are addressed. Students develop a good awareness of different cultures and religions, helped by their participation in the 'Derby Faith Trail' and strong international links. Assemblies contribute to students' spiritual and moral development. However, in some subjects students are not given sufficient opportunity to reflect on their experiences.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- Students' behaviour around the school is considerate. Younger students appreciate being in an environment without older students because this makes them feel safer.
- Students reported that off task behaviour does occur, particularly in lessons with lower attaining students. Inspectors saw examples of this where teaching was not matched sufficiently well to the abilities of students and the pace of learning was too slow.
- Behaviour is usually managed well. The school's behaviour management policy is well understood by students because they helped create it. The effective management of behaviour has reduced exclusions so they are in line with the national average.
- Bullying is not common and students reported that it is addressed well, when they report it to an adult. Students' awareness of different forms of bullying is reasonable. They know about cyber bullying and most aspects of prejudice based bullying. Students are less aware that homophobic name-calling is a form of bullying.
- Attendance is at the national average. Absence rates are higher for students that are eligible for free-school meals.
- In the sixth form, students attend very well and make a positive contribution to the school; for instance, they support tutorial work including listening to younger students read. Sixth formers spoke positively about the guidance they receive and enthused about the support they receive from a post 16 mentor.

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

- Staff praised the integrity and openness of the school's new headteacher. The response to the questionnaire indicates that senior leaders have the unreserved support of all staff.
- The headteacher has accelerated the rate of improvement. Jobs and responsibilities have been clarified. Crucially the headteacher has ensured a very strong focus on improving teaching and learning.
- Learning in lessons is now getting better quickly because leaders are tackling weaknesses directly. There is a buzz about teaching and learning with all staff keen to participate in a range of professional development activities. There is an appropriate mix of bespoke training for individuals and an interesting and comprehensive programme of weekly training sessions for all

staff. Staff particularly enjoy the opportunities they have to work in pairs observing each other's practice.

- The leadership of teaching has resulted in more outstanding lessons. In addition, inspectors observed a number of staff teach good lessons as a direct result of the effective support they had been given by senior leaders.
- The school however has an overly optimistic view of the quality of teaching because it has relied rather too heavily on the observation of lessons that teachers have specially prepared. Not enough emphasis is given to the evidence the school has about the progress students are making over time to help to assess the quality of teaching over time.
- Information on students' progress is used well though to target help where it is most needed. As a result, leaders have minimised the impact of weaker teaching in the past.
- The local authority has provided a reasonable level of support. The support has been instrumental in ensuring improvement in mathematics, though there is more to do.
- Most middle leaders are aware of the weaknesses to be overcome to further improve teaching. Best practice is being more effectively shared within and between departments. Better leadership is resulting in students making more progress, including in mathematics where staffing difficulties have been largely resolved.
- Plans are underway to implement more rigorous target setting and performance management for teachers.
- The lower levels of progress made by lower attaining students in the past were linked to the lack of alternatives to GCSE courses. The school has addressed this issue and current Year 10 students are on more appropriate courses.
- The school's improvement plans identify the correct key issues for further improvement. However current targets are not clear enough, particularly those related to closing the gaps in attainment between different groups. The plan also lacks interim targets that the governing body can use to regularly check the progress being made.
- The school is using its pupil premium funding well so that it is having a greater impact on the students for which it is intended. The school is sensibly developing performance management targets to hold all leaders more accountable for closing existing gaps in attainment.
- In the sixth form, staff have a reasonable awareness of how to improve provision further; for instance, by developing more links with other local providers so a greater range of courses can be provided to better meet the needs of all students of all abilities.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet all current regulatory requirements.
- **The governance of the school**
  - All governors undertake induction training and many have participated in a range of courses to improve their skills. Key members of the governing body are aware of the examination results and what these indicate about the progress students make. Governors are aware of the weaknesses in teaching and how this has impacted on students' examination results and progress. They have taken action to ensure the falling roles have not resulted in financial

difficulties. Governors work closely with both senior leaders and also heads of department. Governors know how the pupil premium funding is being deployed but do not know how they will evaluate its impact on the outcomes for the students who are eligible. Although governors have supported senior leaders in tackling underperformance they have not ensured that only effective teaching is rewarded by pay and promotion. Governors have not consistently set appropriately challenging targets for senior leaders.



## 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>	124449
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412817
<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<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>	745
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	150
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Fletcher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annabel Stoddart
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01283 239835
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