

# Colton Hills Community School

Jeremy Road, Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, WV4 5DG

**Inspection dates** 15–16 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Good	2
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 because students do not make consistently good progress. Students' attainment by the time they leave at the end of Year 11 is below average.
- Too few students make faster than expected progress because of a lack of sufficient challenge in many subjects.
- The progress of students supported through the pupil premium funding and of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement because they are not always given the support they need.
- Teaching is not strong enough across all subjects and year groups to ensure that students make faster progress. Teachers' marking and their use of questions are not always good enough.
- Some subject leaders do not check carefully enough how well students are achieving in their respective areas.
- Governors have not been as effective as they should have been in the recent past in holding the school to account for students' progress and the quality of teaching.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Too few students make good progress and the quality of teaching and achievement across subjects and courses is too variable.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students behave well and enjoy their learning. They feel very safe and show positive attitudes in lessons and around the school.
- Recent action taken by school leaders are leading to improvement in teaching and achievement.
- The school does a great deal to help those students who are new to learning English.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons, including 10 that were seen together with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to students read and visited classrooms with senior staff to look at how well disabled students and those who have special educational needs were learning. Inspectors also visited lessons with senior staff to look at students' progress in mathematics, English and science, and at learning in a wide range of other subjects.
- Discussions were held with senior and subject leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, groups of students and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of its work and examples of students' work.
- There were insufficient responses from parents on the online questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to take note of. Parents' and students' responses to the school's own recent surveys, and written comments made by parents while attending parents' evenings, were considered. Inspectors also analysed the 20 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Michael Merchant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Additional Inspector
Phil Kelly	Additional Inspector
Peter Lawley	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The very large majority of students come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups, and a high proportion are learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students that are eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding from the government for groups of students including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is high. There is currently a very small number of students in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs.
- A very small number of students spend some of their time studying work-related courses at Wolverhampton College and South West Bilston Academy.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- The school has been led and managed by two acting headteachers since the retirement of the previous headteacher in December 2012. A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up post in September 2013.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better in all subjects to ensure that all groups of students make at least the expected three levels of progress between Years 7 and 11 by:
  - making sure that teachers set work in lessons that fully matches students' different capabilities, particularly the more able
  - always expecting the very best work from all groups of students and ensuring that all are fully involved in the tasks set in lessons
  - making better use of questions to enable teachers to check students' understanding and encourage them to think more deeply about the topics they are learning
  - ensuring that teachers' marking gives all students a clear idea of precisely what they need to do to improve their work and that all act on the advice given to them by their teachers
  - rapidly giving support to those students in danger of underachieving, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium.

- Strengthen the way in which all leaders improve teaching and ensure consistently good achievement, including in the sixth form, by:
  - making sure that all leaders responsible for subjects and groups of students keep a close check on the progress of students and the quality of teaching in their respective areas
  - making sure that governors are more active in monitoring the school and checking that agreed actions are effective in improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of students.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students join the school in Year 7 with attainment that is below average. GCSE examination results are below average overall and have fallen over the last three years. School information, based on GCSE modules already taken, shows that the current Year 11 are on track to attain more highly than in previous years.
- Inspection evidence, supported by robust data provided by the school, indicates that current students are making better progress than those who have recently completed their examinations.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. Their progress has not been checked well enough by some school leaders and they do not always receive the precise support in lessons to allow them to make good gains in their learning.
- The achievement of most groups of students, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those from the wide range of different heritages, varies. Too few make good progress, indicating that the school's commitment to equal opportunities is not completely put into practice.
- The school enters some students early for GCSE mathematics, with the opportunity to take the examinations again for those not attaining target grades. Higher-attaining students are not held back by this policy and are attaining the grades of which they are capable.
- The small number of students following more practical subjects off site are gaining valuable experience in a range of subjects. This is helping them acquire the necessary skills to gain suitable employment or further training.
- The school makes inadequate use of funding received through the Year 7 catch-up programme (extra money from the government to support those students who attained below expected levels in English and mathematics in Year 6). It has not ensured that, for instance, through additional support, such students make fast enough gains in acquiring number, reading and writing skills.
- There is a gap between the achievement of students eligible for the pupil premium funding and others in Year 11. Students supported by the pupil premium attain, on average, a grade and a half lower than their classmates in English and in mathematics. This gap is similar to that seen nationally and is getting smaller because the school uses its additional funding to help eligible students through one-to-one tuition and extra staffing on classes.
- Students' achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. In 2012, AS and A-level students attained broadly average grades and made the progress expected of them. Inspection evidence suggests that current students are making better progress but this has yet to be established as a clear pattern over time.
- The progress of most groups of students requires improvement. In 2012, while the proportion of students making the progress they should in English was close to the national picture, the corresponding figure in mathematics was much lower. Few students made progress that exceeded national expectations.

- Students learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the very precise and effective support they receive, both in class and in small groups.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because, in too many lessons, it does not help students make good progress.
- In too many lessons, teaching is slow and uninteresting. Some teachers expect too little of their students. Too often, teachers give the same work to everyone. This results in some students, especially the more able, completing tasks quickly and then sitting idly whilst they wait for others to catch up.
- In some lessons, students listen to the teacher for long periods without being actively involved. This means that opportunities are lost for students to be more inquisitive and to learn from each other.
- Although, in many classes, teachers take care to check that students have understood an idea by asking individuals precise and often quite probing questions that encourage them to think deeply, this is not always the case. Many teachers still rely on volunteers putting up their hands rather than targeting questions to individual students. This makes it easy for some students not to participate in question and answer sessions.
- Teachers' marking across the school lacks consistency. It does not always show students what they need to do to improve their work or follow up to see whether students have acted on the advice they have been given.
- The use of additional adults in class and the regular withdrawal of disabled students and those who have special educational needs for extra help are not always effective enough to ensure that these students make the progress they should.
- The exception to this is the success the school has had in providing effective support for those students who are new to learning English. Teachers are careful to distinguish English as an additional language from special educational needs, and their approach is flexible to allow students to move to higher-level groups when their progress starts to accelerate.
- Teaching in the sixth form requires improvement when teachers do not use questions well enough to encourage students to think and offer explanations. Nevertheless, there is some highly successful practice. Students made excellent progress in a Year 12 business studies lesson when studying the role of advertising in the media. The teacher's perceptive use of well-directed questions hit just the right note and prompted students to work eagerly in groups to think creatively and imaginatively about the issues involved.

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

### **are good**

- Most students behave well in lessons and around the school and treat others with appropriate respect and courtesy. Students say that they feel safe and that adults will help them overcome any difficulties they might experience.
- Most parents, staff and students consider behaviour to be good. As behaviour has improved,

the number of incidents which have resulted in students being excluded from the school has fallen.

- Students have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They report that the use of racist or homophobic language is extremely rare and, if it does occur, students are confident that it will be challenged and dealt with successfully by staff. The school actively encourages all students to express their individuality and appreciate that people are different.
- Students say they feel completely safe in the school. They also say that if they have a problem, they know they can talk to an adult who will help them.
- Students from different cultural and religious backgrounds get on well together and appreciate the harmonious climate created in the school.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A good range of trips, visits and other enrichment activities helps to build their confidence and self-esteem.
- Attendance is below average but is improving for all groups of students. Most students come to school regularly and are punctual.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because a small minority of students occasionally misbehave, which spoils the learning and enjoyment of others. This is particularly so when teaching lacks imagination and tasks are dull and repetitive.
- Although most students display positive attitudes to learning, a small minority are passive in lessons and depend on prompting from adults to keep them working at the right pace. Consequently, these students do not develop sufficient resilience and independence; skills that are important for their future success.

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

- Until very recently, senior leaders have done too little to redress the decline in students' achievement or to improve teaching sufficiently. The school has not been active enough in checking on those groups of students who could be doing better, particularly those supported by the pupil premium and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- Some subject leaders and those responsible for groups of students, including the sixth form, do not use information on the progress that different groups of students make rigorously enough to identify when they need to step in quickly to organise additional support when any student shows signs of slipping behind.
- Leaders have not had a realistic view of how well the school was doing and did not have an accurate view of its performance. This meant that leaders and governors had not clearly identified the most important issues that needed to be addressed to accelerate the school's improvement.
- The new acting headteachers have begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion. They have ensured that all staff, leaders, and governors now have a thorough understanding of how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to improve. As a result, self-evaluation is now accurate and this, together with better teaching and improved

progress in some key subjects such as science, shows that the leaders have shown the capacity to improve further.

- Effective systems are now in place to monitor the quality of lessons and the overall progress of students. Clear feedback, coupled with appropriate advice and training, is offered to teachers whose performance falls short of the mark.
- Systems for setting targets for teachers to improve their work are now being used rigorously to reward good performance and are based on an accurate review of teaching and progress.
- The local authority keeps a close check on the performance of the school and has provided a balance of challenge and support to help the school improve.
- The curriculum supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and there is a strong emphasis on securing improvements in students' literacy skills. A range of vocational courses meets the students' needs well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring a range of skills to their roles and have undergone some useful training. Until very recently, they have not had a realistic knowledge of how well the school is performing in relation to other schools across the country. They now have greater awareness of the quality of teaching across the school and are becoming more involved in decisions that reward teachers for good performance. Governors understand how pupil premium funding is spent but have had insufficient information to be able to check on its impact on the school's most vulnerable pupils. In addition, the governing body has not, until recently, had enough information to identify patterns in pupils' achievement accurately or to make sure that teaching is improving quickly enough.



## 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>	104395
<b>Local authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	404944

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<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>	740
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Duane Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Arnull & Jane Lockley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558420
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