

Challney High School for Girls

Addington Way, Luton, LU4 9FJ

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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 as there is variation in the progress made across year groups and subjects, and by different groups of students. Progress in English has particularly been slow.
- Teachers do not always use the information they have about students' progress to plan lessons that meet the needs of all students.
- Often, students are passive learners as teachers talk for too long and do not encourage students to work together in groups and to take responsibility for their own research and learning.
- Some teachers do not mark students' work frequently enough. They do not always guide students on how to improve their work. Students do not routinely correct their mistakes.
- Some staff are not trained well enough to support students who speak English as an additional language.
- Students are not always supported to make good progress and develop their literacy skills well enough across the subjects.
- Some leaders do not take enough notice of information about students' progress to hold other staff to account and to plan for faster progress.
- The governing body is not informed well enough about how well students are achieving. It has not monitored how effectively the pupil premium funding has been spent.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has passionately set about raising expectations and has identified the key priorities for improvement. She is rapidly bringing about improvements in students' achievement, the quality of teaching and leadership.
- Students make consistently good progress by the time they leave the school in mathematics, science and languages.
- Effective use of the Year 7 pupil catch-up funding is ensuring students who join the school with poor reading skills are improving at a good rate.
- Students have good attitudes to learning, they behave well and their attendance has risen to above average.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons taught by 31 teachers. Fifteen of these observations were made jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders of the school.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, parents and carers, staff, including senior and middle leaders, and groups of students.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at school documentation, including teachers’ planning, the school’s self-evaluation and development plans, assessment information, monitoring files, governing body minutes, safeguarding documentation and samples of students’ work.
- Inspectors considered the 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 68 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Catherine Robinson-Slater	Additional Inspector
Heather Housden	Additional Inspector
Rosemarie McCarthy	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school for girls.
- A well-above-average proportion of students are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families).
- About one in four pupils in Year 7 is eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A well-above-average proportion of students speak English as an additional language.
- Most pupils come from a range of minority ethnic groups, the largest group being of Pakistani heritage.
- A very small number of students experiencing specific learning difficulties attend alternative provision at Active Support, Luton, which supports them accessing the curriculum away from the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school moved into a new building in January 2011.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students make consistently good progress in all subjects by improving the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by:
 - ensuring teachers use the progress information that they have on their students to plan a range of activities and resources in lessons that meet the needs of all students
 - improving the quality of marking so that students are guided on how to improve their work and by ensuring that they frequently edit and correct their work
 - creating frequent opportunities in lessons for students to work together in groups and to take responsibility for their own research and learning
 - planning more opportunities across all the subjects to develop students' literacy skills.
- Improve the impact of leaders on students' achievements by:
 - making sure that they use the information they have on students' progress to inform self-evaluation and improvement planning to ensure that all pupils make at least good progress across the subjects
 - arranging training for all staff in developing a range of teaching strategies and resource creation to support more rapid progress across the subjects for students who speak English as an additional language
 - ensuring that the governing body checks on the achievement of all students and pays particular attention to the impact of the school's spending decisions on the pupil premium funding.
- 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 make inconsistent progress as they move through the school. In a few subjects, they attain well, but in many they do not reach the levels of which they are capable. Most students speak English as an additional language and they consistently make less progress than similar groups nationally. This is because staff are not trained well enough and the resources used are not always appropriate to support these students to make good progress across all subjects.
- Students join the school with standards in English and mathematics that are well below average. The proportion gaining five GCSE passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics has been well below average over the last three years. Progress in English has been particularly slow, but in mathematics it has been consistently good. The school's own progress information and inspection evidence show that the current Year 11 students are making faster progress in most subjects, including English, and are on track to reach average standards overall.
- Students supported by the pupil premium funding benefit from extra tuition and opportunities to enhance their personal development. Their attainment in 2012 lagged behind that of other students by more than a third of grade at GCSE in English and over three quarters of a grade in mathematics. The gap is closing but remains uneven in different year groups.
- New assessment and support plans introduced this year are helping disabled students and those with special educational needs to make similar progress to their peers. The high proportion of students who are from minority ethnic backgrounds are beginning to make better progress, especially in Year 11.
- Students' reading skills are getting better, especially in the lower years. This is because the additional Year 7 catch-up funding has been used well to acquire new resources to support the teaching of reading. As a result, the students benefiting from this additional support have, on average, increased their reading ages by 11 months during the first two terms this year.
- A small number of the highest-ability students are entered early for GCSE mathematics. They attain very high grades and proceed to study for an additional qualification in mathematics, thus ensuring they are well equipped to continue learning the subject at the next stage of their education.
- Students who are educated away from the school are making sound progress. The school is rigorous in checking the quality of these courses, students' attendance and the progress that they make.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although the majority of teaching is good with a little that is outstanding, it remains too variable across the school and includes a very small proportion that is inadequate. As a result, not enough students learn well and make consistently good progress across all subjects.
- Teachers do not always use the information that they have on students' progress to plan activities that ensure that all students are supported and challenged to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Too often, teachers expect students to sit through long explanations and/or are expected to

work passively by themselves. This limits their opportunities for working collaboratively, for sharing ideas and finding out things for themselves.

- The quality of marking and feedback is too variable and sometimes it is infrequent. Teachers do not always pick up on students' misconceptions or give useful guidance on how they could improve their work. Students are not expected to regularly edit and correct their work so that they can learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers across the subjects do not always help students to develop their literacy skills well enough in their lessons.
- Teaching assistants generally work well with teachers and help students who have additional learning needs.
- In the better lessons, which are regularly found in those subjects where students make particularly good progress, teachers have strong subject knowledge and high expectations of what every student can achieve. They plan activities that engage and capture the interests of students. Throughout the lessons, the teachers check students' understanding and adapt their teaching to address any misconceptions. The pace is brisk and students work well together and learn from each other.
- Teaching makes a strong contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Examples seen during the inspection included an English lesson looking at the ethics of factory farming, a history lesson considering the question of whether ancient Rome was a civilised society or not, and a religious education lesson comparing the Christian and Muslim views of contraception.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students are proud of their school. A calm and harmonious atmosphere pervades the corridors and the girls are polite and welcoming. They take great care of the new building, ensuring it is litter free.
- Staff and students respect, and get on well with, each other. As a result, students display good attitudes to their learning and try their best. On the odd occasion when teaching is ineffective, there is some low-level disruption to learning.
- Students are well aware of various forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is rare and, when it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by the staff. They also speak highly of the Year 11 'anti-bullying forum' in which students help others to deal with any inter-personal problems.
- Students feel safe at school. They are well aware of how to stay safe on the internet and of the dangers of substance abuse. Students are supported well in dealing with the risks found in the local area. They also comment that if they are experiencing any difficulties there is always an adult they feel they can talk to.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is above average. Students arrive punctually to school and to lessons.
- Students appreciate the many opportunities to take on responsibilities such as being sports captains and school councillors. They are particularly proud of the many activities which they

initiate to raise substantial funds for charity.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school benefits from the energetic and passionate leadership provided by the new headteacher. On joining the school, she quickly identified that much needs to be done to improve the quality of leadership in order to address the weaknesses in teaching and students' achievement. She has overcome a number of obstacles and is successfully raising the quality of teaching and leadership. As a result, standards are rising.
- The school has extensive systems for collecting information about students' performance. It is not used effectively enough by some leaders to support accurate self-evaluation and inform action planning to ensure all students make consistently good progress.
- This year has seen the introduction of much more rigorous systems to improve the quality of teaching and accountability. There is a comprehensive and growing suite of training opportunities for all staff. Leaders ensure that all teachers are observed at least once a term and undergo termly appraisal reviews. In some instances, however, leaders' assessments of the quality of teaching are too generous and they are not sharply focused enough on students' progress.
- The proportion of teachers who historically have been rewarded through the upper scales is high in relation to the quality of teaching. The new headteacher is ensuring that only consistently good teachers will be rewarded in future.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity but have not yet ensured that all groups of students achieve equally well. Discrimination is not tolerated.
- Teaching programmes meet the needs and interests of students. With additional enrichment opportunities, such as sport, attending musical recitals, and visits to museums and art galleries, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well. There are not, however, enough planned opportunities across all subjects for students to develop their literacy skills.
- The local authority provides regular support for school leaders and teachers. Advisors and consultants who began working with the school at the start of this year are helping the school to improve the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of its leadership.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance requires improvement as the members of governing body have not checked on how well all students achieve and what effect the spending of the pupil premium is having. Governors know how the school's results compare to the national average. Governors are informed about the quality of teaching and know that more needs to be done to raise standards. They are not aware, however, how well students are progressing across the school and in different subjects. They have only recently begun to check how the pupil premium funding is spent but do not know what its impact is. They have begun to challenge senior leaders and have identified the need to undertake more visits to the school to check on all aspects of its work. They understand how teachers' performance is measured and question the headteacher's recommendations for staff's pay increases. They ensure that all statutory responsibilities, including those relating to the oversight of the budget and safeguarding, meet requirements. They are aware that the review of some policies is overdue and are planning to undertake this task soon. Governors demonstrated strong strategic leadership in establishing

the new building and in appointing the new headteacher.

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	109682
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	412835

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	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	964
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Masood Akhtar
Headteacher	Shirley Havard
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2010
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