

Fazakerley High School

Sherwoods Lane, Fazakerley, Liverpool, Merseyside, L10 1LB

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Students achieve well across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is mostly good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers know their students well and have positive relationships with them which enable them to plan lessons which help students to make good progress.
- Students are happy, feel safe and they enjoy coming to this school. Behaviour which is respectful and considerate contributes to a vibrant, purposeful atmosphere in the school.
- Parents and carers have expressed high levels of satisfaction and support for the school. They know that their children's personal development and learning needs are well met.
- The headteacher and other leaders have put clear plans into place which provide a caring but challenging approach to further improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of students.
- Governors provide a regular visible presence in the school and have a thorough knowledge of their role and the school's priorities. They are fully committed to providing a quality education for the school's students and the community which it serves.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although there is some outstanding teaching, it is not yet consistently first rate across the school.
- There are too few opportunities for students to develop their independent learning skills across all subjects.
- Written feedback and advice in teachers' marking is not as good as it could be which means some students do not always know what to do to improve.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Although improving, the achievement of some students could be better.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 49 part lessons; two of these observations were carried out jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors looked at information on students' performance for the school year 2011/12 as well as information provided by the school on current learning and progress.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority and the school's Police Community Support Officer. Formal and informal discussions took place with students from all age groups in the school, both formally and informally.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, records of attendance and exclusions, information about the use of the pupil premium and governing body minutes.
- Inspectors considered the responses of 58 parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They analysed the results from 23 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Gary Kelly, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rebecca Lawton	Additional Inspector
Eric Craven	Additional Inspector
Clive Hurren	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fazakerley High School is smaller than the average sized secondary school with a sixth form.
- Most students are of White British heritage. There are few students from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils who are looked after by the local authority and the children of personnel in the armed forces) is above the national average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is above the national average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with national averages.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which are minimum requirements for students' academic achievement.
- A very few students receive part of their education at the local authority led Pupil Referral Unit.
- The sixth form ceased its formal partnership arrangements with other Liverpool sixth forms as part of a local authority collaborative in July 2012.
- Fazakerley High School has achieved a range of awards since the last inspection including: Investors in People Gold Award, Sports Games Mark, International Schools Intermediate Award, Healthy Schools Award, Career Academy Status, CPD Quality Mark, Eco Schools Award and Accredited Trainers for Olevi's Improving Outstanding Teaching Courses.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more of it is outstanding by:
 - making sure teachers challenge students of all abilities, including the most able, with tasks that are at the right level which are neither too easy nor too hard for them
 - ensuring there are more opportunities for students to show their initiative and develop their skills in working by themselves in different lessons
 - making sure teachers' marking and feedback are sufficiently detailed so students are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
 - encouraging students to take account of, and respond to teachers' comments in their marking.
- Raise achievement further in the sixth form by:
 - ensuring that sixth form students choose the right courses
 - making sure support is put in place quickly for those students who find learning more difficult.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When students join the school in Year 7, individual starting points are usually well below the national average. However, students achieved broadly average GCSE results in Year 11 in 2012. Although the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics fell slightly, they were in line with national averages. The school's latest assessment information shows that GCSE results are on track to further improve in 2013.
- Although attainment at GCSE remains average, the school has accurately identified underperformance in some subjects, most notably history and geography, and taken steps to improve students' progress and attainment. As a result, students' achievement in these subjects is now improving.
- There is no significant gap between the performance of boys and girls. The impact of the school's commitment to developing reading and literacy skills across the curriculum is evident in the good progress boys make in English and mathematics.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement because students in some subjects are underachieving. Some students have chosen to study courses which have not been accurately matched to their abilities. The school is aware that support needs to be put in place for those students who find learning more difficult.
- Students join the sixth form with attainment which is below average and there are fewer more-able than is usual. Due to sixth form collaborative arrangements coming to an end, the school has ambitious plans to raise expectations and the early signs of this are positive with an increasing Year 12 cohort, and the school's latest assessment information suggests there will be better results in 2013.
- The school adopts an early examination entry policy in some subjects, and allows students to begin studying some GCSE subjects in Year 9 without this having an adverse impact on students' opportunities to attain higher GCSE grades by the end of Year 11.
- As a result of effective use of the pupil premium funding through, for example, student support and literacy and numeracy intervention, the progress and attainment of these students in English and mathematics are rising, their attainment is about half a grade less than other students in these subjects. The Year 7 'catch-up' premium is used effectively to improve students' reading and writing skills.
- The school provides good support for disabled students and those with special educational needs. These students are making good progress because their work is well planned, broken down into sufficiently small steps and targets are assessed and reviewed regularly. Good communication has been established with the parents of these students and improvement plans, focusing on positive behaviour and progress, are successful.
- The few students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. The school successfully ensures students have equal opportunities.
- The school carefully monitors the progress of the very few students who learn at an alternative provision run by the local authority.
- Few students are not in education, employment or training when they leave the school in Year 11. Students are prepared well for their next phase of learning, training or employment.
- The artwork and display on view in classrooms and around the school building is of a very high quality, enhancing the learning environment of the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching seen during the inspection is good and the school's own records over time show that

this is consistently the case. Relationships between staff and students were very positive and supportive in all lessons seen.

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge and positive relationships with students to motivate and inspire them. In some lessons teachers' tasks were fun and exciting, enabling students to improve their knowledge step by step. This was particularly noticeable in a dance lesson where all students were engaged and empowered to continually self- and peer-assess so they could then make decisions on how to make adjustments to improve.
- In an outstanding English lesson, students' literacy and communication skills were tested as they were encouraged to discuss a theme from *Romeo and Juliet* in depth, facilitated by the teacher.
- Where teaching is most effective, questioning is used by teachers to check students' understanding and discussion is encouraged. Students then work in pairs and groups to discuss and challenge each other's ideas and take responsibility in making decisions for themselves.
- There are still some weaker features in the quality of teaching in some subjects. Where teaching requires improvement, activities are not always well matched to students' individual abilities. The highest-attaining students are sometimes given tasks that are too easy for them and in some lessons the same activities are planned for all students.
- Teachers often provide clear verbal feedback for students during lessons on how well they are doing. However, not all teachers provide clear written feedback in their marking on how students can improve their work and make better progress. Students are not always given enough opportunities take account of and respond to teachers' comments in their marking.
- Students told us how much they valued the support provided by teachers and other adults and their willingness to 'go the extra mile' to give them help when they need it.
- The deployment of teaching assistants to departments is well planned. Teaching assistants and other adults providing support have a thorough knowledge of individual students, their abilities and needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour observed during lessons and at all times in and around the school was good or outstanding.
- Students' attitudes to learning in lessons were always good and sometimes exemplary, even when activities lacked sufficient pace and challenge. They are polite, and are keen to engage in conversation whether it be about learning or individual interests.
- Students told the inspectors that behaviour is well managed and they have a clear understanding of what happens when behaviour falls below the high standards expected. They say that poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning in lessons; staff and parents agree.
- Students told inspectors that they feel safe and well cared for and that the school listens to their views. There is a very harmonious community atmosphere in the school.
- Students say there is very little bullying, and on the rare occasions when it happens, they are well supported and any incidents are quickly sorted out. They are well informed about different forms of bullying and other aspects of safety.
- The quality of care for students and their families who face challenging circumstances is outstanding. The pastoral support in place is tenacious in checking on the well-being of all students and particularly those who are deemed to be more vulnerable.
- The school manages and promotes positive behaviour and this has resulted in there being no permanent exclusion for two years, and no student has been excluded on a fixed term basis for a year.
- Attendance continues to improve and is broadly average. Strategies to reduce persistent absenteeism have been particularly successful.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is well supported by other senior leaders and together they have clear plans for continued improvement which are shared with staff and students.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, robust and clearly identifies areas for development; policies and procedures are in place to ensure this improvement is timely.
- The school offers a broad and developing curriculum with access to a growing range of academic courses in addition to a vocational offer which better meets the needs of some students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs. The school ensures that there is equality of opportunity for all. There is a wealth of extra-curricular activities on offer for all students, including a rich menu of sporting opportunities and this provision is recognised through the school's 'Sports Games Mark' award.
- The school works exceptionally well with parents and the community as a whole to ensure positive relationships exist so removing barriers to learning. This is particularly the case in the work with students with special educational needs and those needing additional support; this is a real strength of the school.
- In Key Stages 3 and 4, students are given a wide range of experiences to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with a thorough programme of personal, social, and health education (PSHE). This provision is still developing in the sixth form.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory responsibilities and record keeping is thorough.
- The local authority is aware of the school's areas for development and provides a good level of support to the school, including support for the sixth form.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are ambitious for the school and have a realistic view of the school's effectiveness and its priorities. They understand the school's current performance and are skilled enough to be able to ask the right questions when holding the school's leaders to account. Governors recognise the need to continue to develop their skills further, particularly in gaining a fuller understanding in the links between pay progression, performance management, the quality of teaching and students' progress. They manage the school's budget well and have a clear understanding of the use and impact of the pupil premium funding on eligible students' achievement.

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	104692
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	413380

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	845
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	S Doherty
Headteacher	C Rourke JP
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2009
Telephone number	0151 524 4530
Fax number	0151 524 4532
Email address	admin.fazakerleyhigh.org

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