

Lostock College

Selby Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 9PL

Inspection dates 12–13 June 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

- Students are not making enough progress in mathematics and English. Overall, boys' achievement is much lower than girls'.
- Students do not receive the support they need to develop their reading, writing and number skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Although teaching is good in several subjects, work is not always challenging enough for more-able students.
- Students supported by the pupil premium (additional funding) achieve less well than other students.
- The governing body does not hold senior leaders to account well enough for the achievement of students supported by the pupil premium and for students' achievement in English and mathematics.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' achievement across a broad range of subjects is good. In core science achievement is outstanding.
- Teaching is good in several subjects and there are some examples of outstanding teaching.
- Attendance is above average. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students are happy at school.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve well.
- Care and support for students, particularly those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, are strengths.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision significantly helps students' personal development.
- All students go on to further study, employment or training.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, five of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of students and the Chair of the Governing Body, and spoke with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 17 parents who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire. They analysed the results of the staff questionnaire to which 28 replies were received.
- Inspectors analysed the 2012 examination results and the published results for previous years. They looked at the school's data on students' progress, lesson plans, minutes of meetings and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance. They also reviewed the school's checks on how well it is doing and school improvement plans.

Inspection team

Lisa Fraser, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nigel Pressnell

Additional Inspector

Fiona Burke-Jackson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most secondary schools.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds; Pakistani, African and White and Black Caribbean are the largest other ethnic groups.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has a performing arts specialism.
- The school works in two teaching alliances with Altrincham Girls Grammar School and Great Sankey High School, Warrington to develop new approaches to teaching.
- Until recently the headteacher also carried out the role of executive headteacher of Gorse Hill Primary School.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A significant proportion of students join the school in Key Stage 4 because they have found it difficult to learn in other schools.
- Sixteen Key Stage 4 students attend off-site alternative provision, which includes courses at Broadoak School, Manor High School, Rathbone and work placements arranged by the Education Business Service.
- Eight Key Stage 4 students participate in the Bright Futures internship scheme for one day per week with Trafford Housing Trust and Cargill.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure that lessons are challenging enough for more-able students
 - increasing the pace of learning in lessons where it is too slow
 - providing students with more opportunities to reflect on their learning.
- Raise achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that all students make at least the expected amount of progress in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that students are given opportunities to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful contexts in a range of subjects
 - closing the gaps in achievement for boys and for students supported by the pupil premium.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - developing a whole-school approach so that all teachers support students' literacy and numeracy development effectively
 - ensuring that the governing body holds school leaders more strongly to account for the achievement of students supported by the pupil premium and students' achievement in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement had been improving steadily since the previous inspection but dipped in 2012, with attainment falling to well below average. The proportion of students making expected progress in both English and mathematics fell short of that expected nationally. Girls significantly outperformed boys and the gap between the achievement of students supported by the pupil premium and that of their peers in school widened.
- Students join the school with skills in reading, writing and mathematics which are well below national averages. By the end of Year 11 the proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C, including English and mathematics, usually exceeds government floor standards. School data indicate that standards for current Year 11 students are rising and achievement in other year groups is also improving.
- Students' progress on BTEC courses is good. In core science students' achievement is outstanding because teaching is consistently at least good. In other subjects there are not enough opportunities for students to develop their literacy and numeracy skills and this hinders their progress in English and mathematics.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs supported at school action plus make better progress than their peers as a result of the extra support they receive and the good-quality information about their specific needs which is shared with teachers by the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- Early entry in GCSE mathematics is successful for students who joined the school in Year 7 because the proportion that make better than expected progress is very close to the national average.
- Students who join the school at a late stage of their secondary education achieve well because they receive good careers advice. Every one of these students, like all others at the school, goes on to further education, training or employment when they leave. Students are encouraged to widen their horizons through organised trips, for example to Oxford University.
- Current data indicate that students supported by the pupil premium are now making much better progress than last year. Pupil premium funding is being used effectively for one-to-one tuition in English and mathematics and to provide social, emotional and academic group tuition. As a result, the gap between pupil-premium students and their peers in school is closing. Nevertheless, these students are still two terms behind in English and three terms behind in mathematics.
- Students from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as other students.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is being used effectively because in English three quarters of students are on track to make expected progress or better.
- A number of students study off-site for part of their learning, including a group who follow an exciting internship programme. Students' off-site attendance is well monitored by school leaders and these students make good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teaching over time has not resulted in students' good achievement in English and mathematics.
- In some lessons the pace of learning is too slow and the level of challenge is not always high enough for more-able students. Students are not always given enough opportunities to reflect upon their learning.
- Staffing issues which have only just been resolved have affected the quality of teaching in mathematics and English over a significant period. Inspectors observed examples of outstanding teaching in both English and mathematics, indicating that teaching is improving in these subjects and no teaching is inadequate.

- Well-planned assessments in science help students to develop their scientific knowledge in addition to their literacy skills. In a Year 10 geography lesson outstanding teaching enabled students to use their numeracy skills to analyse data from a recent field visit and to use this information effectively in their assessment task.
- In other subjects there is some evidence that teachers are working to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills but not enough as yet to have had a significant impact on students' achievement in English and mathematics.
- In the best lessons relationships are excellent and teachers make good use of a range of resources, including information and communication technology.
- Teachers know each individual student well and plan lessons which meet the needs of most students. Students are engaged and motivated in lessons when teachers plan opportunities to develop their learning and social skills by working in pairs and groups.
- Teachers use questioning techniques skilfully, particularly in history and science, to draw out developed verbal responses from students which help to boost their confidence.
- Across all subjects there are examples of marking which clearly identify what students need to do to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour and safety are good and students enjoy coming to school. Parents agree that their child is safe at school.
- Attendance is above the national average. Persistent absence is below average and improving. Students in Year 11 have especially good attendance.
- Around the building and in lessons students generally behave well. Students are particularly welcoming to visitors and chat maturely and with interest.
- Students are respectful of the school environment which is clean, tidy and visually stimulating thanks to the excellent quality of work displayed by the art department.
- Students say they feel safe and that senior leaders deal effectively with the very rare instances of bullying which arise. Students are clear that racist attitudes are not a feature of their school; they have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including homophobic and cyber-bullying.
- Students speak warmly of the extra help and encouragement they receive from staff. Senior leaders work hard to offer a wide range of support to develop the achievement of students with particular needs, including music therapy, extra classes in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) and off-site learning. One parent contacted inspectors to praise the school's support for her child during a recent family bereavement.
- Work with a number of different agencies to encourage the attendance of students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable is impressive. These students also receive good support from the school's counsellor.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because there is a small proportion of off-task behaviour which slows the pace of learning at Key Stage 3. Although the overall number of fixed-term exclusions was too high in 2012, current data indicate that this has fallen dramatically.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because students' achievement has not been consistently good. Senior leaders have clearly demonstrated that they have the capacity to improve because, excepting for results in 2012, achievement has improved steadily over a number of years.
- Leaders at all levels are not using data about the performance of groups closely enough. This means that action is not always taken sufficiently quickly to secure good achievement for all

students. Senior leaders acknowledge that they have been too slow to focus on strategies to raise the achievement of students supported by the pupil premium; this is a focus of current school development plans. Senior leaders work hard to ensure there is equality of opportunity for all students.

- Developing literacy and numeracy across all subjects is a key priority for senior leaders because students' reading, writing and number skills are not good enough. Teachers do not get enough guidance to ensure a consistent whole-school approach which supports students' literacy and numeracy development.
- Performance management has recently become much more robust and is used to inform decisions around pay. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching are now good. All staff are observed teaching and this feeds into appraisal systems which link to Teachers' Standards. Senior leaders have not been afraid to make difficult decisions to ensure that there is no inadequate teaching.
- Subject leaders are well placed to drive forward improvements in teaching and learning because they are all very strong teachers. Good use of training time in school and a number of partnerships with other schools ensure there are plenty of opportunities for teachers to develop their skills and learn from each other.
- The school has acted positively to reverse the dip in English and mathematics in 2012. For example, recent changes to the curriculum mean that students now have extra time in mathematics and English.
- The headteacher's expertise in working with students and families in vulnerable circumstances has ensured that the care and support for all students are strengths of the school. Other schools across the local authority and beyond also benefit from her excellent knowledge and skills.
- Good support is provided by the local authority to the school in developing students' behaviour and safety.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong, supported by good assemblies, the school's affiliation with the Church of England and the madrassa which operates on-site five nights per week. Specialist status in the performing arts makes a contribution to students' spiritual and cultural development because students are keen to share how much they enjoy participating in school productions.
- A striking feature of the school is how well students work together to benefit others. For example, students and staff have recently been fundraising to support both a student who has won a history scholarship to Washington University and a teacher's visit to a school in rural Uganda.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - An external audit of the governing body is not recommended despite the school requiring improvement. Governors bring a range of valuable experience and skills to the school and undertake appropriate training. The governing body is very supportive of the school's work around care and guidance for students but is not holding senior leaders to account strongly enough for achievement in English and mathematics. Governors are not closely involved in monitoring the progress of groups of students, particularly those supported by the pupil premium. Governors understand the school's arrangements for the management of teachers' work and the link between good teaching and salary progression. The governing body makes sure that arrangements for keeping students safe are secure, including when they are attending off-site provision.

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	106365
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	412539

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	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Kilvert
Headteacher	Dawn Farrent
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
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