

Friesland School

Nursery Avenue, Sandiacre, Nottingham, NG10 5AF

Inspection dates 15–16 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

- Students do not make enough progress in mathematics in Key Stages 3 and 4. The work set in mathematics lessons is often too repetitive and resources are not always used well to support achievement.
- The quality of teaching across Key Stages 3 and 4 varies too much. Teachers' expectations of students are sometimes too low and they do not always plan work at the right level of difficulty for individual students. As a result, the most able students do not achieve as well as they could.
- Where teaching is less than good, staff do not regularly check that students have a secure understanding of the work. Not all staff follow the school's marking policy and some written feedback does not give students enough guidance on how to improve.
- The school's systems for checking and managing the quality of teaching are not leading to rapid improvements where teaching is weak.
- The targets set for teachers to help them improve their work are too vague.
- The governing body does not provide enough challenge to school leaders, particularly in exploring issues related to students' achievement. Governors are too accepting of the information about pupils' progress that is given to them by school leaders.

The school has the following strengths

- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress and achieve well, particularly at A level. A large proportion of students go on to higher education.
- Over recent years students' achievement in English has improved. Students make good progress in English and standards are above average.
- Students behave well. They feel safe in school, largely due to the good quality care and support offered by staff.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by the school, especially through the performing arts.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 40 lessons taught by 40 teachers. Four of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the school’s leadership team. Inspectors and school leaders also jointly carried out a series of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of students, three members of the governing body and the local authority school improvement partner.
- Inspectors took account of the 53 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as several letters written by parents and submitted during the inspection. Responses to questionnaires completed by 55 staff were also analysed and considered
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including national published assessment data and the school’s own data, the school’s self-evaluation, improvement plans, safeguarding policies, behaviour policies and records relating to teachers’ targets for improving their work.

Inspection team

Julie Price Grimshaw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gillian Martin	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector
William Cassell	Additional Inspector
Jane Gaffney	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Friesland is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The great majority of students are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. This is additional support for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed services. No students from service families currently attend the school.
- Nine students in Years 10 and 11 currently attend Long Eaton School, Derby College or Children First Nurseries on a part-time basis to follow courses in construction, hair and beauty, motor vehicle mechanics, childcare or equine studies.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for secondary schools, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school has a specialism in the performing arts.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4, so that it is consistently at least good, by making sure that
 - all teachers have high expectations of their students
 - work planned is at the right level of difficulty, particularly for the most able so that these students make more rapid progress
 - staff check students' understanding regularly during lessons
 - all teachers follow the school's marking policy and provide high quality written feedback to students.
- Improve students' achievement in mathematics in Key Stages 3 and 4 by making sure that
 - students are moved on in their learning, rather than being asked to complete too many repetitive tasks
 - teachers do not rely too much on worksheets and make good use of a wide range of resources to support learning
 - students are given more opportunities to develop their understanding by applying mathematical knowledge to real-life situations.
- Improve the management of teaching by
 - equipping all those involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning with the skills needed to tackle underperformance rigorously
 - making sure that the targets set for teachers to improve their work are specific and measurable, and that the impact on students' learning is checked thoroughly.

- Make sure that the governing body takes greater responsibility for driving improvement by challenging the school thoroughly, particularly in relation to students' achievement. An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' achievement in Key Stages 3 and 4 varies across different subjects. In mathematics students do not achieve consistently well and, for many, progress in this subject is not rapid enough. In spite of some improvements in attainment in mathematics over recent years, achievement in this subject is not good.
- Students' attainment on entry to the school is typically average and sometimes above. In 2012 the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, was above average. Achievement in English has improved over recent years and is now good. However, over the last few years the proportion of students making typically expected progress in mathematics has been below the national average.
- Achievement in other subjects, by the end of Key Stage 4, is broadly average overall. However, in some subjects, including mathematics, the sciences and modern languages, the proportion of students gaining the highest grades (A* or A) is significantly below average. This is because the most able students do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of their peers. Some of these students make good progress, particularly when they receive good quality support from skilled staff. Nevertheless, their progress in mathematics is not rapid enough.
- The school has used the pupil premium funding mainly to provide additional adult support for eligible students. The achievement of these students by the end of Key Stage 4 is approximately two-thirds of a grade lower than their peers in English and a grade lower in mathematics. This represents an improving picture over time and the school has worked with increasing success to narrow the gap in attainment between those eligible for the pupil premium and their peers.
- Although it is too early to judge the full impact of the school's use of the Year 7 catch-up premium, this funding is being used well to develop students' reading skills.
- The school has an 'early entry' policy for GCSE in some subjects which works to the positive advantage of students.
- The small number of students who attend off-site provision achieve well in their programmes of study.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. All groups of students make good progress from their starting points and overall standards are above average. Students achieve particularly well at A level and a high proportion go on to study at university. The proportion of school leavers not in education, employment or training is very low.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching across Key Stages 3 and 4. In too many lessons, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their students, particularly the most able, can achieve. As a result, the work set is sometimes too easy and progress is not fast

enough.

- On occasions teachers do not check that students have a clear understanding of their work before moving them on to another task, and at times explanations are not clear enough. This can lead to students becoming confused, which slows the pace of their learning. A minority of teachers talk too much during lessons and do not give students enough opportunities to find out things for themselves.
- The quality of teachers' questioning varies considerably. Some teachers use questioning particularly well to check students' understanding and extend their learning. Other rely too much on students putting their hands up to answer a question, often resulting in the same few students being asked to respond while others do not participate.
- In mathematics, students are often asked to carry out repetitive tasks even when they have shown that they understand the work and could be moved on to new challenges. This can lead to students becoming disengaged and losing interest in their work. Some teachers rely too much on the use of worksheets and do not make good use of other resources to promote progress. There are not enough opportunities for students to develop their mathematical understanding by applying their knowledge to real-life situations and problems.
- The quality of marking varies because not all teachers apply the school's marking policy consistently. While some marking is of high quality and clearly outlines what students must do to improve, other examples of written feedback lack detail and offer little guidance to students.
- Where teaching is most effective, lively and interesting tasks maintain students' interests and as a result they are keen to learn and work hard. Teachers plan activities that are tailored to students' ability levels and set at just the right level of difficulty. Consequently, students are stretched and challenged, and make at least good progress.
- Good planning and organisation, together with highly effective use of assessment, lead to students making rapid progress. This was evident in a dance lesson observed during the inspection where the teacher's high expectations were clear and students gained an excellent understanding of how to improve their performance.
- Many teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This was particularly evident in the sixth form lessons observed during the inspection. Much of the teaching in the sixth form is good or better; teachers use their subject knowledge well to develop students' understanding, and students are encouraged to take an active role in their learning, contributing to discussions and explaining their viewpoints.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The great majority of pupils behave well in school. They are well-mannered and treat each other, and the adults who work with them, with respect. Students move in a calm and orderly way around the school buildings and almost all make sure that they arrive at lessons on time. Attendance is average.
- Although students' attitudes to learning are good overall, their behaviour for learning is linked to the quality of teaching. Where lessons are interesting and engaging, students have excellent attitudes to learning and are highly motivated. This leads to good and sometimes outstanding progress. Where teachers' expectations are not high enough and lessons lack structure, students

can drift off task and their progress slows as a result.

- The school has done a great deal of work to raise students' awareness of bullying and how they can actively work to prevent and deal with such incidents. Students have a secure knowledge of the different forms of bullying. Although they say that incidents are rare, they have confidence in the school's systems to deal with any bullying swiftly and effectively.
- Students feel safe in school and have a clear understanding of how to stay safe, including when using the internet. The large majority of parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire were confident that their children were kept safe in school.
- Almost all staff manage students' behaviour well. There is a clear 'stepped' procedure for behaviour management that is understood by all students.
- The quality of pastoral care offered to students, particularly new arrivals and the most vulnerable students, is very high and this is a strength of the school's work. Several parents praised the school's caring approach and felt that this had been a major factor in their children's enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school's judgements on the quality of its own work are over-generous. Although leaders have identified the need to accelerate the progress of the most able students, there has not been enough focus on other areas for development, particularly those relating to mathematics.
- There are established systems for checking the quality of the teaching and learning, involving a range of leaders and managers at all levels. Although this approach has led to clear improvements in English, there have not been rapid enough improvements in other subjects where teaching is weak, particularly mathematics. In addition, weaknesses in teachers' planning and marking have not always been identified and tackled soon enough.
- The school has worked to establish systems for managing staff performance, linked to training opportunities for teachers. Although some staff have benefited from the school's in-house training, the targets set for teachers to help improve their practice are too vague. As a result, it is difficult to measure teachers' success in achieving their targets and this limits the potential of the system to help drive up the quality of teaching. The impact of these systems on students' achievement is not being checked thoroughly enough.
- Students who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding are enabled to achieve increasingly successfully. However, the limited opportunities for the more able students to maximise their achievement, particularly in mathematics, languages and sciences, lead to inequalities.
- The range of subjects offered to students is good, being well-matched to their needs and interests. The students who attend off-site provision benefit from the opportunity to follow relevant vocational programmes. The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school uses its specialist status in performing arts well to broaden students' horizons, develop social skills and raise cultural awareness.
- The school has a good working relationship with the local authority and has gained some benefit from being involved in several initiatives, including 'Accelerating Achievement for All.'

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has relied too much on information supplied by the school's leaders. In particular, governors have based their judgements about students' achievement largely on the school's own data, rather than taking full account of national figures on students' progress and attainment. As a result, governors have not been fully informed of the details relating to students' achievement, particularly in mathematics, and have therefore not provided enough challenge on this issue to school leaders. Although the governing body is aware that overall standards at the end of Year 11 are above average, there is not enough consideration of students' progress across Key Stages 3 and 4.
- The governing body is aware of the school's systems for managing teachers' performance and they directly manage the headteacher's performance. Governors acknowledge that there is scope to refine the target setting process in order to have a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching. However, there is no evidence that pay awards have been given to staff unless deserved, and the governing body is strongly committed to making sure that only good quality work is rewarded through pay progression.
- Governors are aware of how the pupil premium is spent and understand that the school is making progress in narrowing the gap between the attainment of eligible students and other students. Their management of the school budget is sound and they make sure that statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding, are met.

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	112994
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	412863

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
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	1306
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annette Noskwith
Headteacher	Peter Monk
Date of previous school inspection	14 December 2009
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