

Woodhey High School

Bolton Road West, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire, BL0 9QZ

Inspection dates 11–12 September 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.

- Achievement has been consistently good since the previous inspection. Students achieve well in English, mathematics, science and in a wide range of subjects. Achievement of the English Baccalaureate is exceptionally strong.
- The most able students and girls achieve particularly well.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs, including those in the resourced provision, are cared for very well. They achieve equally as well as other students in their personal development and academic progress.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Staff know the students well and plan tasks that get the most out of them. Extra support often helps students who have fallen behind to catch up.
- Students behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They are extremely diligent in lessons and keen to learn.
- They develop into mature well-rounded young people with a strong sense of social responsibility. They are highly respectful of each other and adults.
- Students feel safe and secure in school and say that incidents of bullying are extremely rare.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors provide a determined and successful drive for improvement. Subject leaders contribute strongly to developments and staff morale is good. Purposeful staff training, often in collaboration with local partner schools, has led to improvements in teaching. Close scrutiny and frequent checks on students' progress are helping to maintain good achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The gap in achievement between students eligible for support through pupil premium and others, and between boys and girls is not closing consistently from year to year.
- Teaching does not always give students enough opportunity to grapple with problems for themselves and take the initiative in tasks.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently give students clear guidance on how to improve. The school's policy whereby students are expected to improve their work in response to the comments is not fully embedded.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made 35 visits to lessons, two of which were a series of short visits to different classrooms. Two of the observations were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors analysed students' workbooks across a range of subjects.
- Discussions were held with staff, students, governors and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the School Effectiveness Partner.
- Documents looked at included the self-evaluation document, improvement plans, information on students' progress, records of students' behaviour and attendance, governing body minutes and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Parents' views were taken into account through the 90 responses to Parent View (the Ofsted on-line survey). The views of staff were taken into account through the 54 staff questionnaires received.

Inspection team

Gillian Salter-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clarice Nelson-Rowe	Additional Inspector
David Woodhouse	Additional Inspector
Christine Addison	Additional Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds.
- A below average proportion of students are known to be eligible for support through pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those children in the care of the local authority and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. An average proportion of students is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has specially resourced provision provided by the local authority for up to 10 students with autistic spectrum disorder. Currently, there are eight students.
- Alternative courses are provided for a small number of students at Bury College of Further Education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- A new headteacher, previously the deputy headteacher, was appointed from September 2013. The headteacher has provided training for middle leaders within the partnership of local schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Close the gap in performance between girls and boys more quickly, and ensure that students eligible for support through pupil premium catch up on those who are not, more consistently across subjects and from year to year by:
 - developing the systems of support for students who fall behind in their work that have been successful for some Key Stage 4 students more widely across subjects and for younger year groups
 - identifying and tackling early the problems some students eligible for pupil premium have in attending school regularly.
- Improve teaching further so that more is outstanding by:
 - giving students more opportunities to grapple with problems for themselves, take the initiative in tasks and so further develop the skills of independent learners
 - ensuring that all marking gives students useful guidance on how to improve
 - expecting students to respond to teachers' comments and make the suggested improvements to their work more often.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Key indicators for overall attainment and progress have been well above the national average over the past three years. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has been consistently well above the national average.
- Most students make good progress from their different starting points. Girls and the most able students, including the most able boys, make exceptionally good progress in both English and mathematics. Performance in the English Baccalaureate is particularly strong.
- Students eligible for support through pupil premium most often make progress in line with similar students across the country in English and mathematics, and sometimes better than this. The gap between these students and those not eligible for pupil premium fluctuates from year to year and between subjects. The performance of some of these students is affected by irregular attendance.
- In 2012, students eligible for support through pupil premium were about one grade behind other students in their performance at GCSE with the gap being wider in mathematics than in English. In 2013, this difference has reversed.
- In 2012 and 2013, boys' progress in English and mathematics compared favourably with that of boys across the country. However, within this picture, some lower attaining boys do not always make the progress expected of them. The gap between boys' and girls' achievement is not closing consistently from year to year across subjects.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress to students in the school as do students who are part of the specially resourced provision.
- Most Year 7 students eligible for catch-up funding (i.e. those who fell behind national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2) make good progress and accelerate their progress in English and mathematics in response to the additional support provided.
- Students communicate with each other and staff confidently. Writing is mostly well presented with largely accurate spelling and punctuation. Students are encouraged to read widely and weaker readers are given the support they need to catch up. Students draw on their competency in mathematics to carry out a wide range of numeracy tasks across a range of subjects.
- Early entry to GCSE mathematics is carefully managed so that performance of the most able students is not held back.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and helps most students to make good progress. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Positive and supportive relationships between staff and students help students to become confident learners who are not afraid to have a go or get things wrong first time.
- Lessons are well planned and build on what students have already learned. Tasks are well structured so that, where it is appropriate, learning takes place in small steps.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of what they teach. They give clear explanations and demonstrations to students and question students astutely in order to assess progress and deepen understanding.
- Teachers know the students well because staff track students' progress closely. Teachers make sure that tasks stretch students so that they are challenged to do well.
- Teaching assistants provide well-focused support in classrooms that, at the same time, allows students to work things out for themselves.
- Teaching of students supported by the resourced provision is very good. Staff know the students' needs very well indeed. Staff work well as a team and alongside mainstream staff to

ensure that students gain the most from working alongside their mainstream peers.

- Targeted support for students at risk of underachieving helps many students to catch up, mainly in Key Stage 4 and Year 7. This is not yet extended across all year groups and subjects.
- In some good and in outstanding lessons, students are encouraged to think through problems for themselves, work in pairs and groups and use each other and a wide range of resources to find out more. They take a lead in managing how they learn. As a result, in these lessons students develop good skills as independent learners that prepare them well for the future. There is not yet enough of this outstanding practice across the school.
- The usefulness of marking in helping students to improve varies between subjects. In some, it is very clear what they need to do to improve, for example in English. In others, teachers' comments are less helpful. The expectation that students will respond to teachers' comments and make any improvements suggested is not yet fully embedded.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' positive attitudes to learning contribute well to their good progress over time. Students enjoy working in pairs and groups and learning from each other when given the opportunities to do so. During the inspection, students were calm, well behaved and applied themselves to tasks with great diligence in all lessons. Students say that low-level disruption is rare.
- Students display a mature, courteous response to adults which is underpinned by mutual respect. Students show much respect for each other.
- Behaviour around the school is often exemplary. For example, lunchtimes are orderly social occasions in a dining area with a healthy menu, both designed, in part, by the students.
- Students feel safe and secure in school and the site is well maintained. Students know how to keep themselves safe including when using modern technology.
- Bullying incidents, racist incidents or other serious incidents are rare. Students are well versed on the different types of bullying and know who to turn to for help should it occur.
- Incidents of fixed-period exclusions have fallen. The school has effective systems to manage the few incidents of poor behaviour.
- Attendance has been consistently above the national average over the past three years. Within this picture some students eligible for support through pupil premium have not attended regularly. These students' problems with attendance have not always been identified and tackled early enough to avoid an impact on their overall achievement.
- Staff manage the behaviour and personal development and attendance of some individual students very well, including disabled students and those with special educational needs. There are case studies of students who have benefited a great deal from carefully targeted support helping to improve their attitudes, behaviour and attendance.
- Pastoral leaders do not always analyse information on behaviour and attendance for different groups of students closely enough so that it is difficult to develop a systematic approach to improving the behaviour and attendance of specific groups.
- Students develop into well-rounded individuals who take on a wide range of responsibilities. The school council is active in making improvements to the school. Many students lead sporting activities within the school and the local community.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, governors and senior leaders provide a strong drive for improvement and set high expectations of staff and students. They are deeply committed to the good achievement and well-being of the students. Staff morale is good. The school is successful in maintaining good achievement and above average attainment over a sustained period.
- Largely accurate self-evaluation informs the school improvement plan which sets out the right priorities. Subject leaders regularly check students' progress and, mainly in core subjects, help

get support to the students most at risk of underachievement. These systems are not yet used effectively across all year groups and subjects so that some boys and some pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium do not achieve their full potential.

- Improvements to teaching are managed well. Training of staff is effective and well supported by middle leaders. It has resulted in improved teaching. Partnerships with local schools are particularly effective in sharing what works best in teaching.
- The curriculum is carefully managed to meet students' varying needs and promote positive attitudes. Students with weaker basic literacy and numeracy skills receive additional lesson time and support. A strong emphasis on the English baccalaureate subjects is balanced by opportunities to follow a range of courses of a more vocational nature.
- Courses are provided away from the school site meet students' needs well and help students to find the right pathway into the next stage of education.
- Students across the school receive good independent advice and guidance on their choices of subjects and pathways into the next stage of their education or training.
- The science specialism supports good achievement in science.
- Students benefit from an excellent range of extra-curricular activities including in sport, drama, music, dance contributing to their strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although there are many links with schools abroad, there are fewer opportunities for students to link with people from the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom.
- The specially resourced provision is well managed. Staff bring a good level of expertise to their role. They work well as a team to provide the support students need to work alongside their peers effectively in mainstream classes and to achieve well.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this effective school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are ambitious for the school and very rigorous in holding leaders to account for improvement. They bring a good range of skills and experience to the role. They keep up to date through regular training. Governors are well informed of the students' performance and are aware of the current priorities, including those relating to boys and students eligible for support through pupil premium. They understand how the school is doing in relation to the national picture. Governors know how good teaching is in the school. They set challenging targets in managing the performance of the headteacher. The performance of staff is managed appropriately and information on students' progress is increasingly being used to hold teachers to account.

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	105361
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	426268

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	1,027
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Luise Fitzwalter
Headteacher	Brian Roadnight
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2008
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