

# Up Holland High School

Sandbrook Road, Orrell, Wigan, Lancashire, WN5 7AL

**Inspection dates** 2–3 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- From their above-average starting points, students make too little progress, particularly in mathematics. In 2013, only an average proportion of students gained five or more GCSE passes at A\* to C, including English and mathematics.
- The most-able students make inadequate progress. Too few students reach the A and A\* grades they are capable of.
- The rate of progress of students supported through the pupil premium is often too slow because the provision for these students is not good enough.
- Teaching requires improvement, particularly in mathematics. It does not ensure that students make consistently good progress.
- Teachers' questioning skills and their plans to provide work that caters for students' varying needs and abilities are sometimes weak.
- Marking varies too much in quality. Teachers do not consistently offer good enough feedback to help students improve their work.
- Lessons are not motivating or challenging enough because work is not matched well enough to students' needs. Some students, particularly boys, become disinterested and, as a result, behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement.
- In the past, leaders' actions to improve teaching and students' achievement have not been taken quickly enough.
- Governors have not held the school to account with enough rigour.
- Best teaching practices are not shared widely enough throughout the school.
- Some heads of department are too generous in their assessment of students' ability; hence, opportunities to improve learning are missed.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is highly ambitious. Her leadership has been central to the improvements made in recent times. Staff are in full support of making improvements.
- New senior leaders are helping to accelerate the pace of improvement. Teaching is improving strongly, for example in English.
- Systems for checking students' progress and setting targets are improved. Students needing extra help to achieve their target grades are now quickly identified and given support.
- The school takes good care of its students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 40 parts of lessons and observed 38 teachers. A joint observation was held with an assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and one middle leader, groups of students, representatives of the governing body and the local authority school adviser.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, performance data, records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance and looked at samples of students' work.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents from the 76 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire, and parents who wrote personally to the inspection team.
- Consideration was given by the inspectors to the views of staff, including those expressed in the 22 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Judith Straw, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Peckett	Additional Inspector
Christine Addison	Additional Inspector
John Leigh	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.*

### Information about this school

- Up Holland High School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage and only a few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority and students who have a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.
- A very small number of students use alternative provision to follow vocational and other courses at Acorns Centre, West Lancashire College, Instant Training and Development Centre, and Achievement Sport, part of Hope Academy.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection a new deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers have been appointed. Other staff have been promoted to leadership roles.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that it is consistently good or better, in order to raise students' attainment by the end of Year 11, and ensure all groups of students, especially the most-able, make at least good progress by:
  - ensuring that the work set for students is well matched to their different abilities and is always sufficiently challenging, especially in mathematics and for the most-able students
  - improving teachers' skills in questioning students in order to develop and extend students' knowledge and skills more effectively
  - ensuring lessons are always motivating, challenging and move on at a good pace
  - giving students more opportunities to work on their own so that they are actively engaged in learning and so that their attitudes to learning, particularly the boys, are always good
  - improving teachers' marking of students' work so that it is of a consistently high quality, provides clear detailed feedback to students on how to improve and ensures that students always are given the opportunity to respond to requests to repeat or improve work
  - ensuring the provision for those students supported through the pupil premium allows them to achieve well
  - providing more opportunities for students to use and apply their numeracy skills as part of work across the curriculum subjects.
- Improve further the effectiveness of leaders and managers, including governors, so that they secure more rapid and sustainable improvement by:
  - tackling the remaining small minority of inadequate teaching even more rigorously

- sharing widely examples of the good and outstanding practice that currently exist in the school
- improving the accuracy with which heads of departments review and use information about students' attainment and progress
- ensuring that the governing body holds school leaders even more closely to account for quickly improving the quality of teaching and achievement
- An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Students' achievement, from their above average starting points, is inadequate; consequently, the standards they achieve by the end of Year 11 in English and mathematics are, overall, broadly average.
- Students underachieve in mathematics. By the end of Year 11, students attain average standards in mathematics. Until recently, the school has entered all students in GCSE mathematics examinations early, regardless of their ability. This has had the effect of improving the proportion gaining a pass at A\* to C grade so that it is in line with the national average. However, too few students have achieved A\* or A grades. The school has recognised that this approach has not ensured that the most-able students achieve their potential and now no longer uses early entry. Currently, students' progress in mathematics is still not good enough because of some weaknesses in teaching that remain. Teaching does not provide enough challenge for the most-able students.
- In English, achievement has been variable. In 2012 for example, students achieved well and standards in Year 11 were well above average. However, in 2013, standards in English in Year 11 fell back to average. This meant that the overall proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, also fell to average. Standards in English are now improving because the quality of teaching has been strengthened. Students in Years 7 to 10 are making better progress and challenging targets have been set for the current Year 11.
- In the past, a significant number of students from different groups underachieved. These include the most-able students and boys. Weak teaching, often arising from inaccurate assessments of what students know and can do and work that is not motivating enough are key reasons why this has occurred.
- Previously, students known to be eligible for free school meals have made more than average progress in English but not in mathematics. In 2012, they attained slightly less well at GCSE, being about one third of a GCSE grade behind other students in English and one quarter of a grade behind in mathematics. The school has used pupil premium funding to provide individual support to students in English and mathematics, music tuition, alternative provision where necessary, and to provide strong pastoral support. However, this has had too limited an impact and so these students still underachieve. The gap in the achievement of these students has not yet narrowed.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding, which is provided by the government to support those students who did not reach the national expectation in reading at the end of Year 6, is used to good effect. One-to-one coaching has been provided and this is helping eligible students to make better progress.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They receive strong support in lessons and their progress is carefully checked.
- The achievement of boys is often weaker than that of the girls. Boys are sometimes too passive or not inclined to make the effort required of them if they are to do well. They do not always take responsibility for their own learning.
- The very small proportion of students who attend alternative provision is carefully monitored so that their behaviour, attendance and progress are good. These students achieve well.
- Better use of data to check on students' progress is now helping to ensure that students who are falling behind are quickly identified and supported. The underachievement of boys, the most-able students and those students support through the pupil premium has already been identified by leaders and is being addressed. Expectations of what students will achieve are higher and students' progress is being checked against more challenging targets. Even so, it is too soon to see any significant impact of this on achievement.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Although teaching is improving strongly and the proportion of good and better teaching is increasing, there is still too much that requires improvement and a small minority which remains inadequate. Teaching is too inconsistent to overcome students' previous underachievement at a good enough rate and consequently teaching, overall, requires improvement.
- Where teaching requires improvement, particularly in mathematics, teachers do not take enough account of students' different abilities in each class when setting work for them. A lack of challenge in some lessons means that students, particularly the most able, are not achieving as well as they should. Their skills in questioning students and extending their learning are not yet effective. For example, teachers sometimes accept simple answers to questions rather than probing more deeply to challenge students to think, to discuss and explain their answers.
- In some lessons, including those where teaching observed by inspectors was inadequate, teaching does not motivate or challenge students well enough. The pace of these lessons is too slow. Teachers do not give students enough opportunities to work on their own or to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning. These factors mean that some students do not actively engage in their learning. Their attitudes, particularly of boys, are not always good, which shows in a lack of interest in their work.
- The consistency and quality of marking and feedback is variable. Leaders have identified this as an improvement priority. Some work in different subjects such as English, history and modern foreign languages is marked regularly and students have helpful comments on what needs to improve, reference to their targets and how well they are moving towards them. However, in other work, and notably in mathematics, marking is not helpful enough. Students are overly praised for sub-standard work, do not know how to improve their work and are not given enough opportunities to respond to teachers' requests to repeat or to improve work.
- Teaching places a strong focus on developing students' literacy skills and the value and enjoyment of reading. Students are given a good range of opportunities to practise their reading skills across the curriculum subjects. Opportunities for students to use and apply their numeracy skills, as part of work in other curriculum subjects, however, are less well developed.
- Virtually all teaching is characterised by positive relationships between the teacher and the students and students themselves feel well supported, saying that the staff are ambitious for them.
- There is some good and outstanding teaching in the school in a range of subjects. Outstanding teaching and learning was seen in French, Spanish, English, art, science and physical education. In the better lessons observed, teachers had high expectations of what students could achieve. Lessons are planned to take account of the different needs of students. High levels of participation resulted in confident, enthusiastic students demonstrating a thirst for learning. Leaders do not ensure this better teaching is shared well enough across the school.
- Effective support is provided in most lessons for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, which enables them to integrate well and make good progress. These students are very positive about the support they receive.
- As a result of leaders' actions and stronger systems to monitor the quality of teaching, teaching is improving strongly. Teachers now place a better emphasis on planning work that meets the needs of different student groups, particularly to ensure that the achievement of boys, the most-able students and those known to be eligible for free school meals improves.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because students' attitudes to learning are too variable. In lessons where the pace is slower, students' interest wanes. Some students, particularly boys, are either too passive or inattentive, and a few engage in low-level disruption.
- Since the previous inspection the school has developed a robust behaviour policy which has had an extremely positive impact on behaviour. There has been a notable reduction in the number of exclusions.
- Students' behaviour around the site is usually good. Students are proud of their school and say that in the main they enjoy their education. They are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. The school has rightly focused on raising awareness of all forms of bullying, including derogatory language associated with disability and sexual orientation. Restorative justice is used effectively to address any problems in relationships or bullying. As a result students are confident that they feel safe and well looked after in school.
- Students' awareness of safety is high across the school. Internet safety is rigorously managed and students are made well aware of the dangers of social media and the internet.
- Attendance has steadily risen over the last three years and is above average. The proportion of persistent absentees has fallen and is below national figures.
- Parents are very positive that their children are safe and well cared for.

**The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders' actions to improve teaching and achievement in mathematics have not been taken as quickly as they could have been.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of what needs to be improved and how this can be done. They have an accurate view of the school's performance although, in the past, their judgements on the quality of teaching have sometimes been too generous.
- The headteacher has restructured the senior leadership team and there is now greater clarity to each role. The leadership team has also been strengthened by a new deputy headteacher and two new assistant headteachers. Pastoral leaders have a good track record of improving behaviour and attendance. The leadership of the provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good and this reflects in students' good achievement.
- Systems to track students' progress have improved and this information is now used more effectively to pinpoint underachievement. Different groups of students, including those for whom the school receives the pupil premium, are now tracked more closely. This means that leaders are now able to identify when students are not making enough progress, how this can be remedied and provide support more swiftly to enable them to get back on track. As a result students are beginning to make better progress. This demonstrates the school has the ability to improve further.
- Leaders have now established stronger systems to check on the quality of teaching. Training, support and, more recently, robust challenge is provided for teachers to improve their practice. Teachers are ambitious to improve and work enthusiastically with other teachers to develop good practice. However, the good and outstanding practice in school has not yet been shared widely enough.
- Heads of departments are increasingly more clear about their responsibility for holding teachers to account and know that they themselves are held to account for the success or otherwise of their departments. Past inaccuracies in teachers' assessments are being addressed so that the school has a more accurate understanding of how well students are doing although there is more to be done.
- The range of subjects and courses has been designed to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of students of all abilities. All staff are aware of the need to ensure better challenge for the most-able students and the need to involve boys more actively in their learning.
- The school has robust systems in place to guide students as they move into higher education or

employment.

- The school is working to provide an equality of opportunity for all students by narrowing the gaps in achievement, ensuring the curriculum meets the needs of all abilities and striving to ensure that teaching improves across all subjects. Some remaining variations in the achievements of different groups of students mean that the school's efforts to promote equality of opportunity are not yet fully successful.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development adequately by providing a good range of trips, visits and special events and a wide choice of extra-curricular activities.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority is providing extra support to help improve teaching and achievement in English. However, more needs to be done to address the weaknesses in teaching and students' achievements, particularly in mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors demonstrate a good awareness of the school's priorities and are aware of where it needs to do better. They know that the focus on better teaching and achievement must be unrelenting and accept that, in the past, they have not been as critical as they should have been when challenging the school to improve. Governors have undertaken training recently on their strategic role so that they are in a stronger position to offer both support and challenge.
  - The governing body knows how pupil premium funding is spent but is less clear on the impact of this spending. The governing body is aware that there are still weaknesses in teaching and requires all subject leaders to report on achievement over the year. Governors ensure that teachers' performance is linked to salary progression.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119751
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426189

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	694
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rob Foster
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Barton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01695 625191
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