

# The Archbishop's School

St Stephen's Hill, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7AP

## Inspection dates

22–23 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 requires improvement. It is not good because

- The students' progress, particularly in English and mathematics, is not yet good enough. Opportunities for students to practise their skills in reading, writing and mathematics are not being fully developed in lessons. As a result, students' attainment at GCSE is below where it should be.
- Teachers do not plan sufficiently for the progress of all their students. This means that some students do not make the progress that they should be making in lessons.
- Teaching skills, such as the effective use of questioning and the setting of appropriate homework, are not being consistently well used.
- Some lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour because the work students are given is not challenging enough.
- Leaders do not always analyse the school's strengths and weaknesses with sufficient rigour and accuracy. The information that they get from their current analysis is not being used fully to identify what the school needs to do to improve.
- The sixth form requires improvement. The achievement of students in the sixth form is improving but it is not yet good.
- Parents do not have a sufficiently clear picture of how well their child is doing in school. A new system of reporting has had insufficient time to make an impact.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and governors are ambitious for the school and share a vision for its future success. Governors are skilled and knowledgeable and offer appropriate challenge and support. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and standards in several subjects are now above national averages.
- Students behave well around the school, are courteous and respectful.
- The promotion of the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and helps to ensure that it is a harmonious and cohesive community.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 39 lessons, six of which were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. They also looked at the quality of teachers' marking and the extent to which this was helping students to improve.
- Inspectors met with three groups of students to discuss their experience of school, and particularly their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors discussed with a number of teachers the training and support they have received and the extent to which this was helping them improve their teaching.
- Inspectors met with nine members of the governing body, including the Chair, and groups of school leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed a number of documents including: minutes of meetings of the governing body; safeguarding procedures; behaviour and attendance records; documents relating to school self-review and improvement; and the school's records on performance management and teaching and learning.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of 124 responses to the Parent View survey and 21 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Graham Tuck, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Lyons

Additional Inspector

Angela Podmore

Additional Inspector

Roger Fenwick

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-size secondary school.
- A little over one in ten of the school's population is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided for children in local authority care, children of service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. This proportion is about half the national average. There are no children from service families currently on the school's roll.
- There are 33 students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium, which is provided by the government to support those students who have not previously reached the expected levels in English and mathematics.
- One in ten students is from a minority ethnic group, which is a little less than half the national average.
- A little under 8% of students are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action: this proportion is below the national average. A little over 14% are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs which is well above the national average.
- Eight Year 11 students attend a course in catering at the Abbey School. This is so that they can follow a subject of particular relevance and interest to them.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the percentage of students attaining five or more A\* to C in English and mathematics to at least in line with the national average by 2014 by improving the quality of teaching, ensuring that:
  - in lessons, teachers use assessment information to fully engage and challenge, resulting in good behaviour and favourable progress for all groups of students
  - teaching skills such as the use of questioning and the setting of appropriate homework are developed and applied consistently in all lessons
  - new policies for literacy and numeracy are fully applied across the school so that all students can use their skills in reading, writing and mathematics to make better progress.
- Ensure that in their planning, leaders are more sharply focused on using their knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses to identify what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards.
- Ensure that the new reporting system provides the school's parents with a clear picture of how well their child is doing and what they need to do to make further progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students join the school with levels of attainment that are below national figures. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, including in English and mathematics, mean that their progress is not yet good enough and as a result the proportion attaining five or more A\* to C passes including English and mathematics remains below average.
- More able students do not make consistently good progress across the school because teachers do not always ensure that there is sufficient stretch and challenge for these students in lessons. As a result, the percentage of top grades awarded at GCSE is well below national figures.
- In the sixth form, there is too much variability in students' achievement in different subjects because teaching is not consistently good across the school.
- Improvements in teaching have meant that in a number of subject areas the percentage of students attaining A\* to C grades has risen to above the national average in 2013. In English literature and drama, standards have been high for the last three years. These improvements are also being felt in the sixth form where the school's 2013 results suggest higher levels of achievement.
- In the 2012 GCSE examinations, students supported by the pupil premium attained at about a third of a grade below all other students in English and mathematics. However, their rates of progress were similar to those of all other students in the school and well above those for similar students nationally. The school has made effective use of pupil premium funding through a variety of initiatives including small group teaching in English and mathematics.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are supported well in class. Their parents are highly involved in their children's learning and this enables them to progress as well as other groups of students. Effective use is made of Year 7 catch-up funding to help those students who qualify for it to improve their reading and writing skills.
- Students from a minority ethnic background make similar progress to that of all other students in the school.
- The eight Year 11 students who follow a course at another school for a few lessons a week achieve well and make good progress.
- There were no students entered early for GCSE examinations in the 2012–2013 academic year.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Not all teachers make good use of the assessment information that they have on their students to plan the variety of challenging activities that will help them to make good progress. In some lessons, the planning is too rigid and the teacher fails to monitor the learning and adapt activities accordingly. Opportunities are missed to support students' learning further through the consistent setting and marking of high quality, relevant homework.
- Questioning is not always used effectively to assess what students understand or to deepen their thinking around a subject. On these occasions students are given insufficient opportunities to reflect on each other's ideas or to justify their thinking, and teachers look for and accept too simple answers.
- There is insufficient focus on developing students' skills in reading, writing and mathematics in subjects across the school. When this is done effectively, for example in a Year 8 history lesson where students were encouraged to write paragraphs using a clearly understood technique, progress is often good and sometimes outstanding.
- The majority of lessons are characterised by extremely positive relationships between the teacher and the students. Where the teaching is well planned, this leads to high levels of engagement. For example, in a very effective religious education lesson on the nature of Christian marriage, students demonstrated a genuine desire to extend their knowledge and

understanding of complex social issues. They participated enthusiastically in group-work activities and engaged in discussions that were purposeful and challenging.

- Teachers display good subject knowledge and in the best lessons this helps students to make excellent progress. For example, in an outstanding home economics lesson, the teacher's clear and enthusiastic explanation helped to give the students confidence as they prepared for an assessment piece.
- The marking of students' work is generally thorough with teachers' comments that explain to students what they need to do to improve. Where this is most effective, teachers provide students with time to act upon this advice. On occasions, however, students are provided with insufficient opportunities to act upon the written feedback and therefore the impact of this feedback on their progress is more limited.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who demonstrate a warmth and enthusiasm for their role and work effectively alongside classroom teachers.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- In a significant minority of lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for students to engage with their learning or the work provided lacks structure and challenge. On these occasions, the poor behaviour of a few interrupts the learning and students fail to make good progress.
- Where behaviour is poor in lessons, teachers do not always manage this well. As a result, the poor behaviour persists.
- Students behave well at breaks and lunchtimes, as they move between lessons and in assemblies. They are polite towards each other and towards staff and visitors. These positive attitudes are reflected in the school's low rates of exclusion and high and improving attendance figures.
- Where the teaching is good, and work is carefully matched to the students' needs, students participate well in such activities as group discussion and independent work. For example, in a Year 7 form period, students were asked to discuss their understanding of the word 'trust'. They did so politely, taking turns to contribute, listening attentively and respecting each other's ideas and opinions.
- Behaviour across the sixth form is good. Sixth form students take an increasingly active role in working with younger students in the school, for example in helping to coach at an after-school rugby club.
- Students feel safe in school and when attending lessons at another school and speak knowledgeably about risks that they might encounter such as cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is infrequent but if it does occur, the school deals with it effectively. The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View agree that their child is happy and feels safe in the school.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- Leaders do not always evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses with sufficient accuracy and rigour and therefore priorities for improvement have not been clearly established. As a result, the pace of improvement has not been rapid enough.
- The school's judgements on the quality of its teaching are overly optimistic and so weaker teaching has not always been tackled effectively: too much of the school's teaching still requires improvement.
- A revised development plan now provides a much clearer picture of what the school needs to do to improve and effective systems have been established to more reliably gauge the quality of teaching and the impact that this is having on students' progress. As a result, the quality of

teaching is now improving. Pay rises are linked to the targets set for teachers and the progress of the students that they teach.

- Almost 40% of the parents that responded to Parent View did not feel that they were well informed about their child's progress. A new system introduced by school leaders has not yet had sufficient time to bring about the necessary improvements.
  - The headteacher is ambitious for the school and its future success. He is determined that the school will provide for the needs of its students as well as it possibly can. Senior and middle leaders, a number of whom are new to post, have successfully shared with staff their commitment to raising students' achievement and this has helped to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and the school's use of assessment data. Staff morale is high, as demonstrated by an exceptionally positive response in staff questionnaires.
  - The school's curriculum is well matched to the needs of many of its students with a full range of traditional academic subjects. As a result of an extensive review, the school has decided rightly to increase the number of vocational courses offered at Key Stage 4 and to extend the curriculum offer in the sixth form. Policies for the development of students' skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum have still to be fully implemented.
  - The school is very effective in promoting students' spiritual, moral and cultural development. In assemblies, students are encouraged to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and time is set aside for thought and reflection. A wide variety of trips, visits and special events such as plays and concerts make an important contribution to the life of the school. Participation rates for after-school activities are high.
  - The school is a harmonious community and there is a commitment by leaders at all levels to promote equality of opportunity.
  - Safeguarding arrangements, including those for students who attend some off-site provision, are thorough and meet requirements.
  - The local authority is providing effective support for the school, for example in helping to review the quality of its teaching and by developing the skills of school leaders in the effective use of data.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Members of the governing body make an effective contribution to the school's leadership and are clear about what needs to be done for The Archbishop's to become a good school. They bring to their roles a range of expertise in areas such as education, finance and leadership and have supplemented this with appropriate training which means that they are able to ask challenging questions of the school's leadership team, for example in the way that the budget supports priorities for school improvement. Through their committees and regular visits to the school, they have developed a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the achievement of students compared with other similar schools. They recognise that neither is yet good enough. Governors have an oversight of the school's performance management processes and ensure that pay progression is linked to good teaching. They are relentless in holding school leaders to account for the way that pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding is allocated and the impact that this is having on students known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care. Governors ensure that safeguarding and child protection procedures meet statutory requirements.
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## 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>	118898
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	426553

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	855
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	140
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Philip Wells
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Liddicoat
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01227 765805
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