

# Belvidere School

Crowmere Road, Shrewsbury, SY2 5LA

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Students in all year groups achieve exceptionally well and significantly above the national averages by the end of Key Stage 4 in a number of subjects, particularly in mathematics, science and humanities. This is as a result of outstanding teaching in these subjects.
- Although attainment and progress levels fell in English in 2012, the results for 2013 show that achievement in English is now well above the national average and current information shows it is set to improve further.
- Teaching is consistently good and frequently outstanding. In almost all lessons, teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to plan work that is challenging and gives students opportunities to work independently. Feedback to students is good but occasionally written feedback could be more informative.
- Students from different groups, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs, and those who receive additional funding, make excellent progress because of the additional well-tailored support they receive.
- Students' behaviour around school and in lessons is excellent. They show high levels of respect for staff and each other. They have very positive attitudes to learning which are reinforced by the high expectations of staff.
- The curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection and now meets the needs of students well. The rich variety of extra-curricular activities and educational visits in this country and overseas have a very positive impact on students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have high aspirations for the school and provide excellent leadership. All staff share their commitment to improve the quality of teaching and provide the best education for all students.
- The governors are well informed and committed to improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement. They have always been supportive and are now increasingly challenging senior staff to improve standards within the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 part lessons, five of which were observed jointly with senior staff. A number of other lessons were visited briefly to sample the quality of marking of students' work, and their progress over time.
- Inspectors examined students' books, talked to students about their work and heard them read in lessons. They observed other aspects of the school day including assembly, tutor time, students' behaviour at break and lunchtime, and students' arrival and departure from school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and other leaders, a cross-section of staff and four groups of students. In addition discussions took place with five representatives for the governing body, including the Chair of Governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 74 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, three letters from parents and carers, two telephone conversations with parents and 54 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A wide range of documents were reviewed including the school's own data on students' recent examination results and current progress, its self-evaluation and development plan, information about the work of the staff linked to training arrangements, checks on teaching, students' behaviour and attendance, the safeguarding of students and details of governance.

## Inspection team

Ann Behan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Thomas	Additional Inspector
Timothy McGuire	Additional Inspector
Kerin Jones	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds. There are very few students from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for students who are eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority, is broadly average.
- Approximately fifteen percent of Year 7 and 8 students benefit from the nationally funded catch-up programme.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- 12 students attend part-time vocational courses provided by Walford and North Shropshire College, and County Training in Shrewsbury.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for secondary schools, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Enable an even higher proportion of students to make outstanding progress across all year groups and subjects by:
  - providing further opportunities for students to work independently to research ideas and deepen their understanding
  - extending the exemplary marking seen in some books to all subjects so that written feedback clearly indicates what students have done well, gives guidance on how to improve, and provides opportunities for students to reflect and act upon the advice they receive.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students enter the school with literacy and numeracy levels that are broadly average. As a result of excellent teaching, attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 has been above the national average in many subjects, and significantly so in mathematics, science, and humanities.
- Achievement in mathematics has been consistently outstanding. In 2012 and 2013 the proportions of students making and exceeding expected levels of progress in mathematics were significantly above national averages. Current assessments show that achievement is continuing to improve.
- Achievement in English has not been as strong as in mathematics. In 2012 there was a dip in the proportion of students making expected progress so that it was in line with the national average. However, there has been a rapid improvement and in 2013 the proportion making and exceeding expected levels of progress was significantly above the national averages. Current assessments show that achievement is continuing to rise rapidly in this subject.
- The attainment and progress of the more-able students in mathematics and science are significantly above national averages and improving rapidly in English.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding to provide additional support. As a result, eligible students attain significantly better than similar students nationally in mathematics, and in line with similar students in English. In 2012 eligible students' attainment in mathematics and in English was approximately one and a third grade lower than other students in the school. However, 2013 results and current assessments show that this gap is narrowing.
- In 2012 disabled students and those who have special educational needs in Year 11, did not progress as well as others in school. However, in 2013 progress improved to be similar to other students because the school provides additional support to meet their specific needs. They benefit from one-to-one teaching, small group work, and effective in-class support from teaching assistants.
- The very small number of students who are from ethnic minority backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language, make similar progress to other students in school because of the specific, well-matched support they receive.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is being used to provide excellent intervention strategies to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of those students who are eligible. As a result these students are progressing well and the gap between them and others in their year group is narrowing.
- Until this year the school has entered selected students for GCSE early in mathematics. This has had a positive impact on results and many students have gone on to achieve higher grades at the end of Year 11.
- Students who attend off-site, part-time vocational courses are monitored closely and make similar progress to their peers.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching in the vast majority of lessons, across different year groups and across all subjects, is at least good and very often outstanding. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to plan challenging lessons that motivate and engage students in their learning so that they make at least good, and in many cases outstanding, progress. However, just occasionally in some lessons, students are not given enough opportunity to work independently or in groups to experiment and research topics and ideas for themselves.
- In the very best lessons, teachers plan activities which encourage students to work things out for themselves and use effective questioning to develop students' thinking skills. This was seen in a Year 9 mathematics lesson where students worked collaboratively to compete with others to solve problems on percentages. The pace of learning was fast, students discussed and debated ideas and the teacher skilfully used questioning to gauge understanding and challenge students to do better. They thoroughly enjoyed their learning and made outstanding progress
- Most teachers mark work to a high standard, give students clear guidance on how to improve, and provide them with time to reflect and respond to the advice they have received. However, occasionally written feedback is not detailed enough and students are not given specific enough advice on how to improve.
- The school has detailed policies to promote literacy and numeracy across the curriculum which are applied extensively across the school. Students are encouraged to read for pleasure and many subjects provide excellent opportunities for students to practise their speaking and extended writing skills.
- Teachers plan well to meet the needs of disabled students and those with special educational needs. They make good use of teaching assistants who work alongside them and who provide well-targeted support for individuals and groups, leading to very successful learning and progress for these students.

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

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Students are friendly and polite and show respect towards one another and towards adults. Relationships in lessons are very good so that students respond positively to their teachers and work well together in teams and groups. These positive attitudes contribute significantly to the students' outstanding progress.
- Students say they feel safe and well cared for. They are taught about the advantages of healthy living and the adverse effects of alcohol and substance abuse. They are aware of different kinds of bullying including racist and homophobic behaviour and cyber-bullying. They told inspectors that bullying is rare, and on the very few occasions that it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff.
- Attendance has improved and the school has worked hard to provide support for specific students and their families so that the proportion of students who have high absence levels is reducing.
- Exclusions were above the national average in 2012 but they have reduced significantly because of more rigorous systems that have been introduced to manage behaviour. Students were very positive about the way teachers reward good behaviour and thought the sanctions that were in place for unacceptable behaviour were fair and consistently applied by staff. The very effective pastoral system and the positive support given to vulnerable students have reduced the number

of repeat offenders for exclusion.

- Students' attendance at courses off-site is excellent. The school liaises well with the providers to check students' attendance and behaviour, and to ensure they are benefiting from the alternative provision
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, and all of the staff who completed the questionnaire, believe that the school cares for students well, deals with bullying effectively and that students' behaviour is at least good.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher and the senior leadership team. They have worked hard to raise achievement and improve teaching and are very well supported by the staff who share their commitment to high standards and improvement.
- Staff morale is high. All the responses to the staff questionnaire were positive. One teacher wrote, 'The school is an extremely positive learning environment. Everyone works hard to achieve the best possible for every pupil.' A member of the support staff wrote, 'I love my job, I feel valued and part of the team. The children are lovely.'
- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governors, have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have very detailed, well evidenced self-evaluations covering all aspects of the work of the school linked to detailed, well measured, plans for improvement.
- Subject and pastoral leaders are excellent role models for the staff that they manage. They set high standards and monitor closely the work in their areas. They have made significant contributions to improvements in school.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems for the quality and effectiveness of teaching are rigorous and well established. Joint observations with members of the senior leadership confirmed the accuracy of the school's evaluation of teaching.
- Performance management is robust and is linked closely to high-quality professional development. There is strong collaboration between departments so that good practice in teaching and leadership and management are shared across the school.
- Since the previous inspection, much has been done to improve the curriculum. It has been revised to ensure all students receive their entitlement in RE, and opportunities for students to learn about different religions and cultures have been significantly enhanced. The curriculum is now strong in breadth and depth. This includes a whole school approach to improving literacy and numeracy. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through an extensive range of enrichment activities and after-school clubs, through assemblies and through well planned tutor time.
- Strong partnerships contribute to the effectiveness of the school. There are close links with the local primary schools, local colleges and businesses that aid students' progression at different stages of their education, and students are given excellent independent advice about the requirements for future education pathways and careers.

- There is a positive relationship between the school and parents and carers. The school regularly seeks their opinions about how well it is performing, and the parents and carers who responded to Parent View were overwhelmingly pleased with the education provided by the school and would recommend it to others.
- The school is totally committed to equal opportunities for all students and in being fully inclusive. Funding for students who have special needs, those eligible for pupil premium and the Year 7 catch-up programme, is used extremely well to provide additional support in English, mathematics, small group and individual work, and to ensure that these students, as well as others in school, are given extra support to complete homework and to take part in extra-curricular and cultural activities.
- The local authority provides light touch support but retains a close relationship with the school. It has provided training for staff and governors and regularly produces reports for governors about the effectiveness of the work of the school.
- Arrangements for ensuring safeguarding of students meet statutory requirements, including risk assessments for students who are educated off-site.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is totally committed to providing the best education for students in the school and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Governors are increasingly well informed and bring a range of skills and expertise to their roles. They have received training in analysing data so that they can compare the performance of the school against other schools nationally. They are becoming better informed about the quality of teaching and use this knowledge to support the headteacher in performance management reviews and the pay progression of staff. They are clear that pay awards are linked closely to high quality teaching and students' achievement. Governors manage the resources of the school well. They adhere to best value procedures and monitor the effectiveness of provision closely. A good example of this is the way they assess the impact of the use of pupil premium and catch-up funds on the progress of eligible students.

## 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>	123570
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	413454

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	808
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chela Anders
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Johnstone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01743 235073
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