

The Vyne Community School

Vyne Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 5PB

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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 school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' achievement has not been good enough for some time, particularly in English and mathematics. Too few, including those who are most able, make better than expected progress.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium achieve less well than their peers, although their progress is accelerating.
- The lack of continuity of staffing in science has meant that some students have had several different teachers, including significant period of supply cover and therefore have not made the progress they should have.
- Some of the initiatives are too recent to have had a full impact on improving achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Standards, including in English and mathematics, are improving rapidly across all year groups.
- Leadership of the provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs is outstanding. Consequently, these students now achieve very well.
- Students say they feel safe in their school and their behaviour around the school is very good.
- Students' attitudes towards learning are good. They want to achieve well and have high expectations of themselves.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection; most is now good and some is outstanding. Teachers have positive relationships with students and set high expectations for what they can achieve.
- Strong pastoral leadership ensures that all students are now very well supported to achieve well.
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the right things have been put in place to raise standards in the school.
- The very strong senior leadership team shares the headteacher's vision for the school. Consequently, this is a rapidly improving school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, nine of which were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also conducted two learning walks with subject leaders observing parts of a further six lessons.
- Inspectors observed an assembly, met with groups of students, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Additionally, the Lead Inspector held a telephone conversation with a second representative of the local authority.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, members of the school’s middle leadership team and a group of teachers.
- Inspectors took account of the 70 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of the 51 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed students’ behaviour at social times and at lesson changeover. They also looked at work in students’ exercise books and progress data and tracking for all year groups, the school’s self-evaluation of its performance and the school development plan.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school policies and documentation in relation to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance, performance management and governance.

Inspection team

Caroline Dearden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gordon Jackson	Additional Inspector
Keith Homewood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Vyne Community School is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The previous substantive headteacher left the school in March 2011 and the school was led and managed by two interim headteachers until the current headteacher took up post in September 2013.
- There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection in March 2012; 90% of teachers have either joined the school or had role changes during the last 18 months. This includes members of the leadership team, three of whom (including the headteacher) have been appointed in the last year.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, those with parents in the armed services and for students known to be eligible for free school meals, is higher than average.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school offers specially resourced provision for students with speech, language and communication difficulties. Twelve students are currently on roll in a specialist unit which is on the school site.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend off-site provision. Providers include Basingstoke College of Technology and local work placements.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching of science by making sure that lessons are consistently taught by teachers who have good subject knowledge and who are therefore able to support students to make good progress and achieve well.
- Improve achievement further to ensure that a greater proportion of students, including those who are most able, make better than expected progress and that gaps between the achievement of those eligible for the pupil premium and their peers close rapidly by:
 - making sure that all students have opportunities to identify how and why to improve their work for themselves before teachers show them what to do or provide them with the correct responses
 - making sure that the excellent practice in marking and feedback typical in many subjects is shared for the benefit of all students across the whole curriculum.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2013 a below average proportion of students left the school having attained five GCSE grades at A* to C with both English and mathematics included. Variability in students' learning and progress, principally in mathematics, contributed to the difficulty in maintaining an upward trend in this key measure of attainment.
- Information provided by the school demonstrates that achievement is rising at a rapid rate for all groups of learners and forecasts for 2014 and 2015 indicate that the school will achieve standards significantly above the government's floor targets in each of these years. School data also show that progress is similarly strong for all students currently in Key Stage 3. However, too few students make better than expected progress and this includes those who are the most able.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs now achieve well because their needs are exceptionally well known. Information provided by the school demonstrates that these students are making better progress than similar students nationally.
- Students with profound speech, language and communication difficulties who attend the specialist unit on site make good progress.
- Students who are eligible for the pupil premium are very well known by their teachers and by school leaders. Although the gap in attainment between these students and their peers was approximately two GCSE grades in English and mathematics in 2013, they are now making better progress and attaining standards closer to those reached by other students.
- The Year 7 'catch-up' funding is used to provide good support for students to develop their literacy skills.
- Some students were entered early for their mathematics GCSE in 2013. This strategy enabled the school to precisely target the interventions necessary to improve overall progress and achievement in this subject. Current information indicates that standards in mathematics are likely to be at least in line with national figures for progress and attainment in 2014.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is now good and there are examples of outstanding teaching. This is largely due to the determination of school leaders to appoint highly capable teachers to replace the significant number who have left the school since the last inspection.
- A very small proportion of teaching still requires improvement. However, appropriate support and development are in place to help these teachers to develop their skills.
- Relationships between teachers and students are good; teachers know their students well and have high expectations of them. This is helping students to be ambitious and to want to achieve the highest grades.
- Students who learn more slowly or who need additional support work effectively with teaching assistants and alongside their teachers. Teachers also consistently use strategies such as specific seating plans, targeted questioning and precise marking and feedback so that they can support students more easily in lessons.
- Students are well motivated in lessons and enjoy opportunities to develop their own ideas. For example, in an English lesson, Year 11 students rose to the challenge of devising questions for others in the class to explore in order to fully understand the persuasive writing techniques used in a non-fiction text. Students' aspirations in this lesson were very high and, because leadership of English is strong, effective teaching, high expectations and excellent attitudes to learning are consistent across the subject.
- Students' written work is marked regularly and thoroughly. The majority of teachers provide very effective feedback to students to explain what they need to do to improve their work. However, although this excellent practice is typical in many subjects it is not consistent across

the entire curriculum, most notably in BTEC science.

- Support staff work well with departments to ensure that strategies for supporting students with additional needs are understood by teachers. This enables teachers to plan lessons to help students make the progress they should.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. Behaviour in lessons is typically very good and students have positive attitudes towards learning which contribute strongly to the purposeful atmosphere in classrooms. Students are proud of their school and keen for it to be viewed positively by the local community.
- Students say that behaviour has improved dramatically during recent years and most notably since the appointment of the current headteacher, of whom Year 11 students said, 'We don't know how he has done it but he has.' This view is upheld by teachers, one of whom commented, 'The change over the last eighteen months has been magical.'
- During lesson changeover students move around the school sensibly and safely. The school site is litter and graffiti free. At social times, students are courteous to one another and engage in mixed gender and age conversations or activities such as ball games. They are punctual to lessons and consequently there is no loss of learning time.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say that they feel safe and they know the actions they need to take to minimise risks and keep themselves safe. This includes use of social networks and of the internet. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers believe that their children are safe at school.
- Students have good understanding of the different forms of bullying and, although it is rare, when it does occur it is dealt with quickly and effectively by school staff. This view is endorsed by the majority of parents and carers.
- The development of students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural skills is a strength of the school. This is promoted by students' participation in a wide range of school events, clubs and activities that are timetabled to take place during the daily after-school 'enrichment time'. Trips to local and national places of interest and cultural events are well supported and good use has been made of some of the pupil premium money to enrich the curriculum and ensure equality of opportunity for all students.
- Attendance has improved steadily and is now above average.
- In-school provision for vulnerable students and very strong pastoral leadership has reduced fixed-term exclusions significantly to now be below average.
- Students in Key Stage 4 who follow alternative education off site attend regularly and complete their courses successfully.
- The school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a strong and resilient leader whose passion and commitment to the school are shared by staff, students and governors. He is very well supported by a skilled senior leadership team and effective middle leaders, all of whom are clear about their roles and responsibilities and of how they are held to account. Consequently, the work of leaders at all levels is having a positive impact on raising standards of achievement for students currently at the school.
- The majority of the 51 responses to the staff questionnaire were very positive. Only a small number disagreed that behaviour is good or that the school is consistently well led and managed.
- The leadership and management of teaching are very strong. There is an accurate view of the overall quality of teaching and where professional development is needed. The impact of this is

helping to ensure that the proportion of consistently good and better teaching is rising.

- There are increasing examples of outstanding elements of teaching and learning that can now be more widely shared as examples of best practice through the school's Teaching and Learning Communities and through the weekly 'sharing of good practice' briefing. As one member of staff who has been at the school for a number of years commented, 'We are a team again.'
- As a number of middle leaders have been appointed within the last 18 months coaching and mentoring by more experienced practitioners and close working with other local schools have been used effectively to strengthen leadership at this level. This is especially true of the leadership of mathematics which is improving quickly to impact on improving progress in the subject for all groups of learners currently at the school.
- Key aspects of the school's provision in relation to behaviour management and the tracking of students' progress have been developed within the last year. School leaders have worked effectively to introduce initiatives which have had a positive impact on the pace of change, on greater accuracy of monitoring and on more rigorous tracking of students' progress. However, some of these initiatives are at a developmental stage and have yet to have full impact on increasing standards of achievement.
- The curriculum is kept under review to ensure that it meets students' needs. The options process has been revised to provide increasing opportunities for students to study the subjects they enjoy regardless of ability.
- The school's self-evaluation is honest and both strengths and areas for development have been accurately identified. This includes recognition of the need to ensure consistent teaching in science by teachers who have the level of subject knowledge required to support students to make good progress.
- Communication with parents has been improved and is now strong. This is also true of communication within the school and with outside agencies.
- Strong pastoral leadership and leadership of provision for students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs ensures that these students are well known and that discrimination is not tolerated. As students commented, 'We are like a family; we look after one and other.'
- The local authority has provided effective support to the school. This has been especially relevant in the review of the headteacher's performance, in the monitoring of the quality of teaching and in managing the transition from interim to substantive headship.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors speak with pride about the school. They have a clear and accurate view of the quality of teaching and of students' achievement and behaviour. They have undertaken a range of training which they have used to help them use data adeptly to pinpoint issues and to challenge school leaders on the quality of outcomes. Governors have a wide range of experience and skills that ensure effective support for school leaders. They monitor the use and impact of the pupil premium funding and of the Year 7 catch-up fund on raising standards and progress for eligible students. Key governors have allocated members of staff with whom they have established links in relation to development and improvement of the school. The governing body therefore has a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and of where further improvement is needed. Governors apply the revised performance management policy to ensure that salary progression is strongly linked to the quality of teaching, and students' progress and achievement. The governing body has provided very effective support to the school during a period of major change. It is evident that this challenge and support has been significant in helping the headteacher and senior leaders to drive school improvement.

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	116440
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	428902

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	482
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bruce Newlands
Headteacher	Mark Kingswood
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2012
Telephone number	01256 473003
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