

St Luke's Science and Sports College

Harts Lane, Exeter, EX1 3RD

Inspection dates 30–31 January 2014

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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- St Luke's is a good school with outstanding leadership, where students make good and consistent progress in relation to their below-average starting points.
- The drive for excellence shown by the leadership and management of the school is outstanding because their actions are strongly improving teaching and accelerating students' learning.
- Teaching in most subjects is good, with some that is outstanding.
- The college's specialism in sport contributes exceptionally well in developing students' performance, personal skills, confidence and self-esteem.
- Students very much enjoy school life in the happy, positive atmosphere. They take immense pride in their achievements and those of the college.
- The college takes particularly good care of the most vulnerable students and prepares them very well for life beyond school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Students show high levels of respect throughout the school through the tolerance and care modelled by staff. Students are friendly, polite and well mannered.
- The governing body works very closely with the headteacher and has established a clear vision and ethos to move the school forward.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although it is improving well, there is not enough outstanding teaching overall.
- Achievement in mathematics is improving well but is not as high as that in English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 45 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of additional visits to assemblies, tutorial sessions and carried out short visits to classrooms across a range of subject areas.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair and other members of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke to students in lessons, at break and at lunchtimes. They also spoke to three groups of students representing all year groups in the school. They also spoke to prefects about their role in school.
- Inspectors listened to a group of Year 7 students read.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, and statistical information about students' progress, achievement, behaviour and exclusions. They scrutinised the work of students.
- Inspectors looked at the school's documentation relating to the management of the work of staff, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, lesson observations, the safeguarding of students and governance.
- Inspectors took into account the 51 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and 76 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Christine Young, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Butler	Additional Inspector
Teresa Gilpin	Additional Inspector
Joseph Skivington	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Luke's Science and Sports College is an average sized, mixed, 11 to 16 Church of England Voluntary Controlled secondary school, serving the city of Exeter.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage and the percentage of students from ethnic groups or whose first language is not English is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is above average. (This is additional money allocated by the government for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families).
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported by school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school is designated as a specialist Science and Sports College
- The school is a member of the Local Area Partnership in Exeter and a member of Partners in Excellence in Learning.
- The school has Teaching School status.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision through 'Skills Force' and 'Running Deer' in Exeter.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress for secondary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the overall quality of teaching to that of the best by:
 - sharing the existing outstanding practice effectively across the school to enable all teachers to deliver lessons that are good or better
 - planning lessons that are consistently closely focused on meeting the individual needs of students, in particular in mathematics.
- Ensure that higher ability students achieve their full potential by:
 - teachers having high expectations for students and providing work that is challenging and demanding in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students coming into the school in Year 7 have significantly lower levels of achievement than those found nationally. Despite this, they make at least good progress and leave in Year 11 with results that are in line with the national average. This represents good progress over their time in school and most students do significantly better than predicted from their Key Stage 2 results.
- Students make significant progress in English, media, humanities, core-science, physics, statistics, physical education and religious education. In their GCSE examinations in 2013, students' results demonstrated that achievement improved rapidly especially in English, humanities and sciences. Evidence from the current Year 11 performance indicators shows that achievement continues to improve at a rapid rate. Although attainment is lower in mathematics evidence from the school's most recent tracking indicates that this is improving rapidly.
- Early entry for GCSE is used for students in Year 11 in English and mathematics. Students are given the opportunity to re-sit the examination again in the summer to improve their grades. Gifted and talented students who achieve the higher grades in mathematics are given the opportunity to take an additional GCSE course in statistics or further mathematics. GCSE results from early entry already indicate that a significant number of students have already achieved the higher grades in English and mathematics.
- The school identifies students who join in Year 7 with weaknesses in literacy and numeracy. They provide very good catch-up sessions for these students and their improvement in reading is particularly strong. The school's literacy programme is well embedded into the curriculum and has had a direct impact on students' significantly improving literacy levels.
- A small number of students attend alternative curriculum placements for one day a week. They are very successful and achieve extremely well. Students are engaged in working in the community with 'Skills Force' and 'Running Deer'. Students have successfully developed greater confidence and self-esteem through raising their aspirations and preparations for future life.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress and expectations are high to ensure they progress at the same rate as other students. They receive targeted support, excellent care and encouragement to help them succeed.
- The school is using the pupil premium funding very well to provide targeted support for students. This includes additional coaching and extra resources. This support is very effective in English where the gap in performance between those known to be eligible for free school meals and their classmates is decreasing rapidly and is now equivalent to one GCSE grade. However, in mathematics the gap in performance is only now narrowing at the same rate through the changes made by the senior staff.
- The sports specialism is a real strength of the school. It provides a high quality sports enrichment programme that enhances the curriculum and creates a challenging and competitive environment. This enables students to participate, perform and lead in sport. The school runs a gifted and talented Sports Academy which enables students to train with professionals in order to compete at county, regional and national levels.
- The school has Youth Sport Trust Gold Partner School Status and is a Health and Well-Being School in partnership with the School's Health Education Unit.
- The school's commitment to developing international links is outstanding. Students studying modern foreign languages take part in visits to France, Spain and Italy; teachers have visited Peru and Nigeria and have set up valuable links that provide students with opportunities to develop their languages skills and broaden their cultural understanding.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of almost all teaching is good or outstanding. Teachers know the needs of their students in detail and plan learning activities accordingly. The best teaching is characterised by high expectations of students and relationships that are always highly positive. Making even more use of outstanding teaching in the school as a model for further improvement already features in school forward planning.
- Outstanding teaching in art enables students to receive individual coaching to maximise their chances in the forthcoming GCSE examination. As a result all students understand the requirements for each grade, discuss them effectively and aspire to reach the higher grades.
- Expert questioning challenges students to think deeply and to develop mental resilience. For example in a Year 7 geography lesson, students were investigating the weather and climate. Students used writing frames and vocabulary lists to develop the story of rain. Detailed discussion broadened their understanding and the challenges set by the teacher, and resulted in high quality work being produced by all students.
- Teachers routinely use information on students' progress well to plan to challenge students and build on their prior learning. As a result, activities are well sequenced, imaginative and stimulate students' curiosity. Students are encouraged to learn from each other and work happily together.
- The high quality marking commentaries used by teachers have a big impact on students' progress. Students often enter into a two-way dialogue with their teacher which enables them to understand what they have to do to improve their work and what they need to do to make better progress. This dialogue also recognises the insight shown by students in the quality of their responses.
- Teaching assistants intervene effectively and play an important role in supporting the learning of different groups of students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs, so that the students are able to make the same progress as others in the class.
- More-able students are not always given sufficiently challenging activities and this leads to them making good rather than outstanding progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour is consistently good. There is real warmth and respect in many relationships between staff and students built upon Christian values which underpin the school's ethos. This caring and nurturing approach is evident in the school's provision for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Attitudes to learning are good overall. Where teaching is outstanding, students have excellent attitudes to learning and are keen to make rapid progress. They develop resilience, drive and confidence. Their enthusiasm is an important factor in their good and sometimes outstanding achievement.
- Students' positive attitudes make a good contribution to their learning. They collaborate effectively in class activities and discussion, listen well and respect the views of others. Some articulate their ideas confidently and others are developing these skills. Through interacting with the teacher they develop a greater depth of understanding and learn effectively.
- Students' attitudes to learning are occasionally less positive when they are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their learning. Nevertheless, most students maintain focus and concentration even when teaching is less than outstanding.
- The school has effective systems for managing students' behaviour and provides excellent pastoral support. There are established and well-monitored procedures for ensuring the good behaviour and safety of those students who attend off-site provision.
- The school has worked tirelessly to improve attendance and has succeeded in reducing the rate of absences. However, the school needs to find further ways of working with a few

families to reduce some students' levels of persistent absence. Exclusions have steadily reduced over the past three years. There are no permanent exclusions.

- Students use the school facilities in a mature and responsible manner, for example lunching together in social groups and enjoying time together without the need for high levels of adult supervision.
- The school's work to keep students' safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe at school and that bullying is rare. They have a very good understanding of how to deal with issues of safety, including e-safety. There are clear procedures in place where students can report any concerns about problems.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and the senior leaders is one of the key factors in the school's growing success and its strong capacity to sustain further improvement.
- Formal systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are embedded and challenging. The feedback from observations is clear and acted upon. Performance management informs the ongoing training programme for all teachers.
- A commitment to equality is demonstrated in the excellent provision for students who are disabled or who have special educational needs or who are at risk of not doing as well as others due to disadvantage or difficult circumstances. The Brunel Centre, which supports students to manage physical impairments, empowers students to be able to reach their potential within an inclusive mainstream school.
- Pupil premium funding is being used successfully to give students extra support in English and mathematics, which includes one-to-one support, small group work and focused learning sessions. The school closely monitors the effectiveness of this funding and can show that the gap is narrowing every year between eligible students and others.
- Senior and middle leaders are thoughtful, analytical and effective and have the support and loyalty of staff and students. They have a very clear and accurate view of what the school needs to improve further. The constant improvement of teaching is at the heart of all development planning.
- The school's status as a teaching school provides many opportunities for developing the skills and expertise of existing teaching staff.
- The leadership of the school's sports specialism is outstanding. The school is very successful in its management of an outstanding extra-curricular sports provision for students not only in school but also across the city of Exeter.
- The school's commitment to working with Partners in Excellence has enabled the school to share good practice in raising standards in schools and to promote cross-cultural partnerships and exchanges.
- The vast majority of parents hold the school in high regard and are well informed about their children's progress. Parents particularly appreciate the ways in which the school helps them to support their children's education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school is excellently served by an extremely committed governing body. Working closely with the headteacher, it has established a clear vision to accelerate the school's improvement.
 - The governing body has an accurate understanding of the performance of all groups of students. Governors know about the quality of teaching and ensure teachers' performance is monitored closely and successes are appropriately rewarded with pay progression. They have the capacity to hold all staff, including the headteacher, to account.
 - Governors manage the school's finances thoroughly and can describe how the funding is spent, including additional funding to support students known to be eligible for the pupil premium.

- The governing body ensures all statutory duties are maintained, including effective systems to ensure the safeguarding of children.
 - Governors have a programme of professional and personal development, which contributes significantly to the high quality of their work.
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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

Unique reference number	113550
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	441001

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Voluntary controlled
School category	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	960
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Teresa Stewart
Headteacher	Mark Pinchin
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2010
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