

Wentworth High School

Wentworth Road, Eccles, Manchester, M30 9BP

Inspection dates 25–26 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
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 good school.

- Standards are rising rapidly across the school. By the end of Year 11, the proportion of students attaining five or more good GCSE and equivalent qualifications, including English and mathematics, is just below average. This represents good progress over time.
- Achievement is typically good in all year groups. Students with disabilities and special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language make particularly good progress, due to well-targeted, expert support.
- Teaching is good, with some outstanding practice. Students are provided with interesting and motivating experiences in which they can do their best.
- Arrangements to keep students safe are outstanding. Students say how much they feel part of 'one big family'. Behaviour is good, within a climate of mutual respect across the school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a range of exciting experiences. House events and daily tutor group arrangements comprise students of different ages.
- The headteacher, governors and key leaders and managers exude high expectations. They drive improvement relentlessly. As a result, teaching is improving strongly, achievement is increasing, and more students are keen to learn and eager for success.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough students yet make more than expected progress in English and mathematics throughout the school.
- Some of the most able students do not achieve as well as they might to reach the highest GCSE grades.
- A minority of teaching still requires improvement. This is especially so where the progress that students' make is not checked carefully enough, and the work set for them is too easy.
- The impact of teachers' marking to improve students' work is variable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 35 different lessons, of which two were joint observations. In addition, the inspection team observed adults working with students in small groups around the school, particularly supporting students with disabilities and special educational needs, as well as those at an early stage of learning English. Inspectors also visited one assembly and a number of tutor groups.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students, governors and school staff, including senior and middle managers. In addition, a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority took place.
- Before and during the inspection, the seven responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were reviewed. Inspectors also evaluated parental and students' responses to recent school questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on current students' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of governors' meetings, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at students' work in lessons, and analysed a sample of Year 11 English and mathematics books in detail.

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marcia Harding	Additional Inspector
Peter Cox	Additional Inspector
Alan Parkinson	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students receiving support through the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after.
- The proportions of students supported through school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are below those found nationally.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage; others come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, especially from Bangladesh and the Yemen.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is close to twice the national average.
- The on-site Barrier Free Unit caters for the needs of disabled students and those with medical conditions. The school has also recently opened on-site provision for a small number of students on the autistic spectrum.
- The proportion of students who start and leave the school after Year 7 is above average.
- All students are educated on the school's site. None is entered early for GCSE examinations.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of staffing changes, including the appointment of some new leaders and managers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of students making more than expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11, and improve the achievement of some of the most able students across all subjects, by:
 - constantly meeting students' changing needs, and not assuming that initially planned activities will always provide sufficient challenge
 - providing the most able students with opportunities that deepen their thinking and learning.
- Eliminate the minority of teaching that still requires improvement and promote more that is outstanding by:
 - ensuring high expectations of what all students can achieve, and provide sufficient opportunities for students to exchange ideas and views to deepen each other's understanding
 - providing hard enough work and challenging experiences that encourage students to apply themselves and give of their best
 - ensuring all adults systematically check students' progress, and provide constant feedback about how well they are doing, so that they learn at an even faster pace
 - improving the consistency with which teachers' marking has an impact on students' subsequent work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The proportion of students attaining five or more GCSEs grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is just below average. This means that, over time, students make good progress, given their generally well-below average starting points. As a result, their achievement is good.
- By the end of Year 11, students make at least good progress in English. In mathematics, increasing numbers achieve well throughout the school, with a similar proportion making more than expected progress, as seen nationally. Opportunities are missed by some teachers, in both subjects, to take stock of students' changing needs, to provide even more challenging activities, and promote even higher outcomes.
- The vast majority of students achieve well across most subjects in Years 7 to 11, especially in vocational and applied subjects. Inspection evidence shows that many students develop confident speaking and listening skills, read fluently, and write enthusiastically in different scenarios, and for different audiences. Students' mathematical skills are equally well developed, and used to good effect in science and technology.
- In general, the most able students achieve well, although not enough yet go on to attain the highest GCSE grades in all subjects. This is because they are not always stretched sufficiently in all subjects to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- All other groups of students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, and disabled students and those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is because their specific needs are astutely identified from the outset, and additional support is of a good quality. Of particular note is the range of expertise, made successfully available, for the increasing numbers of students whose first language is not English, for those on the autistic spectrum, and for those benefiting from Barrier Free provision. As a consequence, these groups of students also achieve well.
- The achievement of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding is rising across all years. As a consequence, the margins between the progress that they make in English and mathematics in relation to their peers are closing. Over time, they attain approximately two thirds of a GCSE grade lower than their peers in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11. There is good impact of additional support, made available through pupil premium funding, on students' reading, writing and numeracy skills, in all years.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well, ensuring that all groups of students have access to good teaching, and providing good support for those at risk of falling behind. For example, pupil premium and Year 7 'catch up' funding has been used to provide more one-to-one specialist teaching in English and mathematics, and to enhance students' confidence through bespoke mentoring. It has also supported the purchase of new resources to boost students' reading and spelling skills. As a result, the attainment of students involved in these initiatives has increased at a fast pace.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is improving strongly, and is usually good across Years 7 to 11, with some outstanding practice. As a result, most students make good progress and achieve well.
- Across the school, teachers are conscientious and committed. They have good subject knowledge and readily share their expertise with one other. The vast majority have high expectations, plan interesting activities and enjoy positive relationships, so that most students are eager to learn.
- A range of stimulating activities and experiences enthuse students across the curriculum. For example, Year 11 physical education students were empowered to develop a sequence of practices to improve short passing with the instep, in football. At the same time, opportunities were fostered for peers to evaluate improvements in passing skills, using independently devised

criteria. Similarly, Year 9 English students showed a readiness to analyse the language used by a First World War soldier-poet, to describe the desolation of the trenches and the horrors of the Western Front, motivated by compelling contemporary photographs, and an inspiring DVD.

- Students' understanding is regularly checked by most teachers, with astute oral feedback that has a notable impact on the quality of learning. Increasingly, opportunities are provided for students to discuss and question. In scenarios that require accurate mathematical understanding, teachers in many subjects ensure students are confident when measuring and calculating, and when representing key data in different graphs and charts.
- The teaching of students on the autistic spectrum and those benefiting from Barrier Free provision is especially strong. This is because adults, who support these students, use their specialist expertise well to achieve a good balance of challenging activities and bespoke support. School-based staff, and external consultants, are also deployed to good effect to develop the English language skills of the growing number of minority ethnic students.
- A minority of teaching still requires improvement to ensure students apply themselves as well as they might. This is especially the case where students are provided with the same work regardless of how well they are doing, and where some teachers and teaching assistants do not check sufficiently students' progress, missing opportunities to adapt activities to meet changing needs. In particular, there is scope to extend and deepen the thinking of the most able. Occasionally, pupils are not given enough time to develop their ideas fully.
- Students' work is increasingly marked with helpful comments that point out what they have done well and what they need to do next. Some teachers' comments do not always lead to enough improvement in students' work. This is because students do not always take heed of teachers' suggestions, and missed opportunities are not always rigorously followed up.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students typically describe school as 'one big family', and say how much all adults go out of their way to support them. They are particularly positive about the roles they are afforded as anti-bullying ambassadors and school council members, emphasising the extent to which peers are keen to look out for one another.
- Parents say how well the school looks after their children, and that they are happy to attend regularly.
- The school's mission statement 'Vibrant, Inclusive, Proud' is embodied in the strong relationships between adults and students, and between students and their peers. For these reasons, bullying of any kind is rare. Students are confident that adults will always be at hand to help, should they experience difficulties.
- House activities, daily tutor group experiences involving students of different ages, older students mentoring younger peers, and visitors from local authority services, all contribute towards students' good understanding of the different types of bullying, including homophobic- and cyber-bullying, and how to keep safe.
- The behaviour of students is good. They take pride in wearing the school uniform, ensure that graffiti and litter are rare, and navigate sensibly the narrow corridors and tight stairwells of the old buildings. During break and lunchtimes they socialise in an orderly manner, showing positive regard for one another.
- Students' attitudes to learning are increasingly positive. In most lessons, they show a real desire to participate. The hard work of staff is paying off in promoting high expectations and students' self-worth. Nonetheless, where teaching still requires improvement, and does not create sufficient interest or challenge, students do not persevere and concentrate as well as they might.
- Attendance is rising and is now average. The proportion of students who are persistently absent is lower than seen nationally. Exclusions from the school have fallen over time, and are equally low. As a result, there are very few students who do not continue into education, training or employment at the end of Year 11.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has galvanised the work of all staff since the previous inspection, and inspired rapid improvements in teaching, learning and achievement. She is aspirational on behalf of all students, and is determined to improve their life chances. She has effectively managed recent changes in staffing, and promoted a 'can do' ethos in which all students feel valued.
- Senior leaders, and other key leaders and managers share the same commitment. Their efforts are paying dividends. There is a wave of optimism and confidence spreading throughout the school. As a result, the quality of teaching is now good and improving strongly, and students' achievements are rising across all years.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders know that they are yet to ensure that all teaching is good. As such, the school improvement plan is focused on addressing the minority of teaching that still requires improvement, as well as securing more students making better than expected progress, and attaining the highest GCSE grades.
- Staff demonstrate high levels of respect for students and colleagues, and ensure safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- The school embraces a range of partnerships with local outstanding schools, specialist and national leaders in education, to support its drive for the highest quality education. Well-targeted support from the local authority has boosted the accuracy of teachers' assessments of students' progress, and leaders and managers' checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The performance management of staff is robust. Individual teachers' targets are appropriately challenging, and appraisal procedures ensure that professional development opportunities are matched closely with identified needs. Training increasingly draws on the expertise of staff within school, as well as those from other schools, and national organisations. It has particularly enhanced the work of middle leaders, who display high expectations and confidence in holding others to account. The headteacher makes the right decisions about teachers' movements up the salary scale, on the basis of robust information about their quality of teaching, and its impact on students' learning.
- The school knows its students well, and successfully removes barriers to learning. As a result, all have an equal opportunity to succeed. Overall margins between the performance of students in receipt of pupil premium funding and their peers are closing. Disabled students, those with special educational needs, including those on the autistic spectrum, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language are thoroughly integrated into school life. Students' experiences are all the more rich for the talents they are enabled to showcase.
- The school's curriculum is good. It meets students' needs increasingly well. Arrangements to support the move from primary to secondary school, especially for those whose literacy and numeracy skills are not as well developed, are effective. The number of academic courses is increasing, and the range of successful vocational opportunities is well matched to students' aptitudes.
- The wide range of sporting, musical and performing events, and extra-curricular activities make strong contributions to students' personal development. Business enterprise experiences, army residentials, the Private Peaceful day, the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and Young Enterprise opportunities, all enrich students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. These aspects of the school's work underpin a constant promotion of equality of opportunity, and intolerance of any discrimination should it arise.
- Parents and carers are supportive of the school. A high proportion indicates they would readily recommend the school to other families.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Through regular visits to the school and the focused work of the 'standards' committee, governors have clear insight into the quality of teaching, learning, and achievements of all students. Minutes of governing body meetings show governors are increasingly confident in challenging the senior leaders about all aspects of the school's work.
 - Governors have perceptive discussions about the value of spending decisions, in particular the

allocation of pupil premium, and Year 7 'catch-up,' funding. For example, they have authorised small group teaching and additional time for teaching assistants to enhance students' reading, spelling and mathematical skills – all with success.

- Governors receive detailed information about the salaries of all staff and decisions about teachers' applications for promotion. As a result, governors have a good understanding of the effectiveness of the management of teachers' performance throughout the school.

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	105982
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	434106

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	683
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Hamnett
Headteacher	Heather Aaron
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2013
Telephone number	0161 7894565
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	wentworth.highschool@salford.gov.uk

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