

The Coseley School

Henne Drive, Coseley, Bilston, WV14 9JW

Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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 standards students reach in English and mathematics and the progress they make in mathematics are not yet in line with national averages. Standards in history, geography and design and technology lag behind those in other subjects.
- The achievement of boys, although improving, still lags behind that of girls.
- Not all teachers set work that ensures that students of all abilities make the progress of which they are capable.
- Not all teachers regularly check students' understanding during lessons and adjust what they are doing accordingly.
- Students do not regularly act on the feedback teachers give them when they mark their work.
- The accuracy of assessment, although much improved, is not yet completely reliable in every subject.
- Not all students have attitudes to learning that help them do as well as they are capable of in every subject and with every teacher. This is sometimes because lessons fail to hold their interest and attention.
- Leaders in charge of some faculties and subjects are not yet having sufficient impact on the quality of teaching and students' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Students eligible for pupil premium funding are now doing better and the gap between how well they are doing compared to students who are not eligible for the funding has narrowed significantly.
- Students attend school more regularly and fewer students are excluded because of poor behaviour. This is the case for all types of students.
- The senior leadership team has successfully brought about improvement in all areas of the school's work since the last inspection.
- Members of the interim executive board are very well informed. They ask school leaders searching questions and provide the school with strong support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 29 lessons, 12 of which were joint observations with leaders in charge of faculties and subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, subject and faculty leaders, staff, students, a representative of the local authority and two members of the interim executive board.
- In the absence of any response to the online Parent View questionnaire, inspectors took account of the school's own evidence of parents' views about the school.
- Inspectors observed students around the school at break and lunch times and were taken on a tour of the school by a small group of Year 7 students.
- Inspectors scrutinised school data on how well students are doing and the standards they reach, the minutes of meetings of the interim executive board, the school's development plans and evaluations of its performance.

Inspection team

Gwen Coates, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Patrick Walsh

Additional Inspector

Alicia Welsh-Kuligowicz

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and the number of students on roll has been falling steadily.
- Most students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and the proportion for whom English is an additional language are below average.
- Over 40% of students are known to be eligible for free school meals; this is well above average. These students form the majority of students eligible for pupil premium funding, which is additional funding provided by the government for looked-after children, students known to be eligible for free school meals and students with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of students supported at school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- A small number of students attend a range of vocational courses at Dudley College, motor vehicle courses at Timkin and construction courses at EDS Stourbridge.
- There have been significant changes to staffing at every level since the last section 5 inspection.
- Following the last inspection, an interim executive board replaced the previous governing body.
- Since the last inspection, the school has joined a co-operative learning trust in partnership with Hillcrest School, Dudley College, the Cooperative College and the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is typically good by making sure that:
 - teachers regularly check students’ understanding of work and adjust lessons so that all students make at least good progress
 - lessons holds the attention of all students, particularly boys, and lessons are planned with tasks that are at the right level of difficulty for all students to make good progress
 - students respond to teachers’ written feedback comments by making corrections and improving their own work.

- Improve the achievement of students by making sure that:
 - the progress they make, and the standards they reach, in English and mathematics are at least in line with national averages
 - boys do better and reach higher standards in examinations
 - the standards students reach in history, geography and design and technology improve.

- Improve students’ attitudes to learning so that all students are keen to learn in all lessons, regardless of subject or teacher.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure:
 - leaders in charge of faculties and subjects bring about the level of improvements in teaching and students’ achievement seen in the strongest faculties and subjects
 - assessment is accurate in those subjects where this is not yet secure.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Actions taken since Easter 2013 have led to strong improvement in how well the current Year 11 students are doing compared to Year 11 students last year. The percentage of students making the progress they are capable of in English is now in line with the national average. The percentage making similar progress in mathematics has improved but is still below the national average. The proportion of students doing better than expected is also improving.
- As a result of improving progress, the proportion of students expected to gain five GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and mathematics, in summer 2014 is predicted to improve strongly, although it is still expected to be below the national average.
- Improvements are evident not only at the grade C/D boundary but also at higher grades because more-able students are now doing much better in both English and mathematics. While the standards students are predicted to reach in almost all subjects has increased, the increase is not as much in geography, history and design and technology.
- Early entry for GCSE is no longer used in any subjects.
- The school's own data, including predictions about standards, are supported by extensive external monitoring and moderation to ensure their accuracy.
- All groups of students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those for whom English is an additional language and disabled students and those who have special educational needs are doing much better.
- Boys and girls are doing better and girls' performance is now at least in line with the national average. Boys are performing below the national average and the gap between girls' and boys' performance is too wide.
- Students who attend off-site provision make good progress and most achieve success in their chosen vocational courses.
- The gap between the achievement of students eligible for pupil premium funding and those who are not eligible is closing rapidly. School data indicates that, in English, eligible students are about half a grade behind their classmates and about three quarters of a grade behind in mathematics. This is a significant improvement on the position in summer 2013 when validated data indicated eligible students were more than a grade behind in English and more than one and a half grades behind in mathematics.
- Students identified for Year 7 'catch-up' support are doing better; reading ages and levels reached in English of students who join the school with below-average attainment have improved. These students are also doing better in mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not enough teaching is typically good and not enough ensures students of all abilities do as well as they are capable of.

- Where teaching is less than good, students are not expected to respond to teachers' feedback comments in their books and do not correct or improve their own work.
- Some teachers plan a single task for all students; with the result that some students find the work too hard and do not complete it, and some find it too easy and become bored. Some students, especially boys, lost concentration in lessons where they did not find the work interesting.
- Some teachers do not check students' understanding during lessons. Thus they do not have a clear picture of how well students are learning, and do not adjust their lessons to take account of this.
- Clear and more regular data on how well students do ensures all teachers are better informed about the performance of individual students and groups of students in their classes.
- Teachers have good subject expertise and, where teaching is good, they use this, and the good data available, to plan and deliver interesting lessons that include tasks that enable all students, regardless of their ability, to do well. Their work is often supported well by teaching assistants.
- Students know their target grades. Teachers assess students regularly and provide regular feedback on students' work. Their feedback explains what is good about a piece of work and what could be improved. Where teaching is good, teachers focus well, regardless of the subject, on developing good literacy, numeracy and other social skills.
- In a Year 7 lesson on developing literacy and reading skills, students had very good support from teaching assistants. The fast pace of delivery and the links between different tasks resulted in students being keen to learn, maintaining their concentration, working hard and making good progress in developing their skills.
- In a Year 10 religious education lesson about Jewish attitudes to God after the Holocaust, the teacher asked searching questions that encouraged students to think hard about the topic. The lesson involved tasks that stretched students of all abilities. Students gave thoughtful answers that showed not only good knowledge and understanding but also how well they were able to consider different points of view and be aware of sensitive issues.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. The conduct of students around the school and in lessons is generally good, and they are orderly and prompt in arriving for lessons. However, the attitudes and behaviour of a small minority of students still requires improvement.
- Not all school rules are consistently applied; for example, although some students have permission to take food out of the dining hall, other students sometimes take food out and this leads to a small amount of litter in the area; although most students look smart, some students wear their school uniform in an untidy manner.
- Students whose behaviour means they are in danger of being excluded benefit from being placed in the Inclusion Unit where they can work in a quiet and calm environment, well supported by dedicated staff who help them to achieve success in their studies and to go back into normal lessons.
- The proportion of students not allowed in school for a short period because of poor behaviour

and the number of these who re-offend have been significantly reduced. The number of incidents where teachers have difficulty with student's behaviour in lessons has reduced considerably.

- These improvements are due to a range of effective strategies introduced since September 2013, including a new behaviour policy. Students say there is some low-level disruption in some lessons but that this is increasingly rare. One student said that, 'Learning is better in school now because the new system means behaviour is better.' The new system encourages students to have pride in the school and includes greater involvement of parents in setting behaviour targets.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. All national requirements for safeguarding are fully met in this school.
- Students feel safe at school and know there are always adults to help them. They understand different types of bullying and what to do if they are bullied or know of someone who is being bullied. They say that peer mediators and prefects are helpful. They note that, on the rare occasions when bullying does occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Students who face difficult circumstances are well supported in the school. The caring attitude of staff, the effective systems in place and the strong links with external agencies, enable these students to continue their education and to gain success.
- For those students who study off-site on college courses and other alternative provision, their attendance, behaviour and progress are checked regularly and there are no safeguarding concerns.
- There has been notable improvement in students' attendance since September 2013, although the percentage is still below the national average. The percentage of students who are away from school for long periods has fallen significantly but is still above the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Improved leadership and management mean there is now better capacity to maintain the pace of improvement evident this year. Senior leaders want students to do well and they work to raise achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Teaching staff are fully supportive of school leaders. One teacher said, 'This is a much better school that focuses much more on teaching and learning and on the good use of data to identify underachieving students.'
- Good systems are in place to check how well students are doing. The systems ensure that underachievement is spotted quickly and suitable help is provided to ensure that students improve.
- Regular and accurate assessment, and good systems to check the accuracy of assessment, are now in place. This is the result of extensive external support. It ensures that leaders can be confident about the reliability of data on how well students are doing and the standards they are reaching. However, there remain a few subjects where further improvements in the quality of assessment are still required.
- Leaders in charge of faculties and subjects get good support from senior leaders and also from

external sources, where this is appropriate. They want their students to do well and are clear that, as one said, 'We owe it to our students to give them the best education we can.' Most are very effective in bringing about improvement in teaching and achievement in their specific areas. However, this is not yet the case for all, which is why attainment continues to lag behind in some subjects.

- Leaders make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching, which is checked regularly. Good training and support for teachers builds on information about strengths and weaknesses in teaching. As a result, there is plenty of evidence of individual teachers improving the quality of their teaching; for example, from requires improvement to consistently good.
- The interim executive board has agreed a clear system for assessing teachers' and leaders' performance which now means that staff must demonstrate how their work improves the achievement of students if they are to move up the salary scale. School records show that the number of teachers being rewarded in this way has reduced considerably as a result of this more rigorous system.
- Rigorous systems ensure that subjects and pastoral areas are regularly reviewed to check their quality. Leaders' judgements about the strengths and weaknesses of the school are accurate and detailed, and indicate their clear understanding of the need to continue to work hard on improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of students.
- There has been a clear and effective strategy to ensure students eligible for pupil premium funding and those for whom the school receives Year 7 'catch-up' funding do as well as possible. A new member of the senior leadership team has a specific responsibility for promoting the improvement of this group of students; literacy and numeracy coordinators have been appointed; and there is a good level of staffing in both English and mathematics. Such strategies indicate how leaders ensure that every student has the same chance to succeed.
- The curriculum meets the needs of students well and includes a wide range of academic and vocational opportunities, including off-site provision. There are plenty of out-of-school cultural and sporting opportunities to appeal to all students, as well as revision classes, additional support and extended GCSE and AS studies. A range of opportunities promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students receive helpful information, advice and guidance about their options after Year 11. The school keeps detailed data about where students go after Year 11 and this indicates students have a good range of post-16 options available to them.
- External support from members of the cooperative trust, consultants, senior examiners and the local authority, has been used very well to help the school improve.
- The school engages with parents and gains information about their views. Parents have a positive view about the work of the school and are confident that the school keeps their children safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the interim executive board are very well informed about how well students are doing and about the quality of teaching. They know how pupil premium funding is used and its impact on achievement. They contribute fully to discussions about teachers' performance management. They ask searching questions and ensure that leaders keep focused on improving 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	103857
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	432623

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	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	721
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	John Freeman
Headteacher	Amanda Elwiss
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2012
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