

The Coleshill School

Coventry Road, Coleshill, Birmingham, B46 3EX

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- Over time, students, particularly the more able, have not made the progress expected of them given their starting points, especially in mathematics.
- Boys have not achieved as well as girls and students supported through the pupil premium have not done as well as their peers.
- The quality of teaching has not been consistently good enough to ensure that all groups of students make good progress. This is especially true in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always set challenging tasks for students to make sure that they make good progress.
- Teachers' marking does not always help students to improve their work.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Many students in the sixth form have not made enough progress in a number of subjects.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that teaching and students' achievement have improved enough to be good.
- Improvements since the last inspection have not been fast enough to ensure that all groups of students do as well as they could.

The school has the following strengths

- There have been recent improvements in teaching and progress, particularly in English.
- There are examples of good teaching across a range of subjects.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are attentive in lessons and work hard. They behave sensibly around the school at all times.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high quality.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are very well catered for.
- The management of teachers' performance is thorough and leaders and governors ensure that no one is rewarded for poor performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons taught by 30 different teachers and one higher level teaching assistant. Eight lesson observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with three groups of students about their learning in lessons and their safety at the school. Inspectors also listened to some students read.
- Meetings were held with three governors, including the chair and vice-chair, the executive headteacher of the local teaching school which is supporting the school, and middle and senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s review of its performance, its plans for improvement and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at students’ work in lessons and analysed a sample of students’ books.
- Inspectors looked at the 31 responses to the staff questionnaire and analysed the 136 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents (Parent View).
- Views of parents and staff were also taken into account in phone calls and letters to the inspectors.

Inspection team

Denise Newsome, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephen Daniels	Additional Inspector
Steven Caldecott	Additional Inspector
Susan Hickerton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school became an academy on 1 August 2011.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is lower than average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Less than one fifth of students are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care). This is lower than the national average.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend Solihull College for all or part of their education.
- The Arthur Terry Learning Partnership, whose executive headteacher is a national leader of education, is supporting the school.
- Through the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership, the school is also receiving support from specialist leaders in education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics, so that it is consistently good and that all groups of students make at least good progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers have higher expectations of students of all abilities and challenge all students to make expected and better than expected progress
 - ensuring that marking and assessment systems are consistently applied across the school so that students can regularly make amendments and improvements to their work following feedback from teachers and other adults
 - making sure that all teachers check students' performance carefully, especially that of boys and those students supported by the pupil premium funding, to spot any underachievement.
- Improve the impact that leaders and managers, including governors, have on improving teaching and achievement, by:
 - ensuring that the recently introduced systems for checking students' progress are used effectively by all staff and that the information that is obtained from these checks is well understood by staff, leaders and governors.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students arrive at the school with broadly average attainment. From their relative starting points, attainment and progress in English and mathematics have not been consistently good over recent years. Record GCSE results in 2012 were not sustained in 2013.
- In 2013, boys did not do as well as girls and students eligible for the pupil premium funding achieved less well than their peers. This was especially true in mathematics where they were, on average, two thirds of a GCSE grade behind their peers. In English the difference was a third of a grade but attainment in English dropped significantly overall in 2013.
- The proportions of students making expected and better than expected progress in English and mathematics fell below national averages for students of all abilities in 2013. There was a big gap between students making better than expected progress nationally and those at the school in both subjects.
- More able students have not made the progress that they should have done in a range of subjects. Not enough students have achieved the top grades in GCSE examinations.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement because not enough students have been successful in their A level courses, particularly at the higher grades. The new head of sixth form has ambitious and appropriate plans to improve outcomes for the students. The work that has already been marked related to sixth form courses shows that these plans are already having a positive impact.
- Inspection evidence, supported by robust data provided by the school, indicates that current students are making better progress than those who have recently completed their examinations. External checks on the school's achievement information have confirmed its predictions.
- Since September 2013, progress in English, in particular, has been rapid. Results in English are expected to show above average attainment and progress, including for students making better than expected progress. The results of some assessments that have already been completed and will contribute to the final GCSE grades, show that every student in Year 11 has achieved above their target grade in the assessed piece of work.
- Attainment in mathematics is confidently predicted to be much higher than in 2013. Progress is still slower than that seen nationally, but much improved on previous years. More than half of the Year 11 students have already achieved a grade C or above in mathematics. The school is no longer routinely entering students early for mathematics.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are also now making better progress than they have done previously as a result of detailed planning to meet their specific needs and effective use of additional adults in the classroom to support them. The Guided Learning Centre at the school provides intensive support, good teaching and challenging work where high expectations are securing good outcomes.
- The school has adopted a range of effective strategies to make sure that boys are doing as well as girls. These strategies are working and the gaps in attainment and progress for boys and girls are predicted to be very small in 2014.

- The rate of progress of students who are supported by the pupil premium funding is also improving in all year groups. This is because the money has been spent mainly on additional staff who work with students in small groups and individually to make sure that they make accelerated progress.
- Year 7 'catch-up' funding is focussed on supporting students' reading skills. The weakest readers have made impressive gains in their reading because they have been part of special extra reading groups which have concentrated on helping them understand their reading better.
- Students who receive part or all of their education off site, take courses that are well matched to their interests and abilities. This means that they are able to get appropriate qualifications that help them carry on in education or training after they leave school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement in the main school and the sixth form because it does not consistently help students make good or better progress. In some subjects, such as mathematics, it is too variable and not enough is good or outstanding.
- In some lessons, students are not challenged to achieve at the highest levels. Learning is held back because students sometimes mark time as they wait for others to catch up after completing work that does too little to extend their thinking or deepen their skills and understanding.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to students, although very effective in some classes, lacks consistency across the school. Not all teachers provide clear enough advice for students about how to further improve their work. Teachers do not always make sure that students follow up this advice by applying it and showing their teachers that they have understood.
- Marking is consistently good in English and as a result students are now making good progress.
- Learning is effective when teachers make sure that students know what they need to do to be successful in the lesson. For example, in a science lesson where students were learning at a blistering pace, a wide range of exciting activities which were assessed by students themselves combined with highly informative marking ensured that students made outstanding progress.
- Teaching in English is never less than good. Lessons have a clear and organised structure to them, and teachers are skilled in asking questions which require students to think deeply about their responses to improve their knowledge and understanding. There are high expectations for the work that is produced and students respond well to these expectations. As a result students are making at least good progress.
- Individual support from additional adults in the classroom is good. This is reflected in the improvements in the progress of students with special educational needs.
- Students show consistently positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn and happily work on their own, in groups or as a whole class. Even when the teaching is not good, students nearly always work hard and show interest in the lesson. The school is a positive place in which to learn.
- A scrutiny of students' work, records of their progress over time and lesson observations in the sixth form, confirms that teaching in the sixth form requires improvement because, although plans are in place to tackle underachievement, attainment is not high enough and students'

progress is not yet good enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour is good because they demonstrate consistently good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. They are polite, well-mannered and helpful and behave well in lessons, around the school and at break and lunchtime. They get on well with each other and are happy at school.
- Students dress smartly, come to school prepared for learning and take a pride in the presentation of their work. There is very little litter around the school site.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say that they are taught well about how to be safe on the internet. They understand risk and have a very good understanding of different forms of bullying.
- Students have a very good sense of right and wrong and demonstrate these values around the school and in lessons. For example, in a Year 8 history lesson, students were able to sensibly discuss the morality issues around Nazi Germany showing good attitudes to this thought-provoking topic.
- Students say that there is very little bullying at school and if any bullying does happen, the staff deal with it with quickly and effectively. They know that they always have an adult they can talk to about a problem. The introduction of the 'ambassador' system means that each student is issued with a card with a dedicated number on it to call to talk to someone if they are being bullied.
- Students are well looked after by the school because of the good systems that the school has in place and because staff who have responsibility for student welfare do a good job. A parent told inspectors that "the school is concerned about the pupil as an individual, catering for their every need".
- The school's caring and welcoming atmosphere is reflected in the positive relationships between staff and students and between students themselves. This contributes to the typically positive learning atmosphere in lessons.
- Sixth form students are universally positive about their experiences at the school. They particularly like the fact that they are now part of mixed age tutor groups and have a greater responsibility for looking after younger students in the school.
- Attendance is above the national average. Improvements in attendance have been brought about because of effective links between the school and parents and carers and a reward system. Pupil premium money has also been used to give practical help to some students who have had attendance issues by, for example, issuing bus passes. Punctuality at the start of the day and to lessons is good.
- The number of fixed term exclusions that the school does is below average. There have been fewer fixed term exclusions this year than in each of the previous two years.
- The vast majority of parents agree that their children are safe and that behaviour is well managed at the school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders and managers have not yet ensured that achievement and teaching are consistently good or better across the school.
- Until very recently, senior leaders have done too little to improve teaching and students' achievement sufficiently. The school has not been active enough in checking on those groups of students who could be doing better, particularly boys, the more able and those supported by the pupil premium.
- Senior leaders and leaders responsible for subjects are now using new systems for collecting information on students' progress effectively to check how well different groups are doing. This very useful information is not being consistently used by all teachers however, to provide work that challenges students of different abilities.
- Senior leaders know the school well and there are appropriate plans in place to secure the necessary improvements. They acted quickly after the 2013 examination results. Some new staff appointments were made in English, mathematics and science and to the senior leadership team and the changes that were made have already had a positive impact on teaching and achievement.
- The judgements that senior leaders make about the quality of teaching are accurate and they are clear about the exact areas that need improvement. The systems that are in place to manage the performance of teachers are effective. No one is rewarded for poor performance based on student achievement information.
- Teachers at all levels are offered regular training and development so that they can improve their teaching. This training is linked to the targets that they have been set related to their performance and the school's priorities for improvement.
- The school has adapted its curriculum to make sure that it better meets the needs of the students. For example, all Year 10 and 11 students now do at least one GCSE in science and most do two or three. Students are now encouraged to take more academic courses if they are appropriate for their abilities and interests. The school has also increased the amount of time that students study mathematics in order to improve achievement.
- The school has greatly improved its arrangements for ensuring all students receive clear and helpful careers advice and guidance. The success of this is evident as less than 1% of students who left school last year did not go into education, employment or training.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for. A particular feature of this is the school's wide range of partnerships with local, national and international schools and organisations including voluntary groups and businesses.
- The leadership of sixth form requires improvement because achievement and teaching are not yet good. There are appropriate plans in place to secure the necessary improvements to the sixth form. There are signs that outcomes are starting to improve but it is too early for them to have had a full impact.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are exemplary.

■ The school is receiving good support from the local teaching school and there are agreed plans in place to formalise this partnership to ensure its continuity. The support of the executive headteacher from the teaching school as well as other key staff appointed to leadership and teaching posts has had an immediate positive impact. This support is the reason why there have been recent rapid improvements in teaching and achievement at the school since the last examination results.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are committed to the school and have an accurate picture of students' achievement. Regular full governing body and other committee meetings focus sharply on areas where the school needs to improve and governors expect and receive good information from school leaders on achievement and teaching in particular.
- Governors are fully informed about the quality of teaching at the school and have acted quickly and decisively when that quality has not been good enough. They hold the headteacher strongly to account for the outcomes of the school and are prepared to have challenging conversations with staff where necessary. No teachers are rewarded for poor performance.
- Governors have a good awareness of how extra funding, such as that for students eligible for the pupil premium, is spent and expect to be given regular and up to date information on the impact of such spending.

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	136986
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	442590

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	739
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dewi Jones
Select	Mark Rhatigan
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2012
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