

# Lavington School

The Spring, Market Lavington, Wiltshire, SN10 4EB

**Inspection dates** 8–9 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher is a very effective leader who, with the support of senior leaders, has brought about rapid improvements in achievement and in the quality of leadership since the previous inspection.
- Excellent leadership has also ensured significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Leaders at all levels are relentless in their drive to improve students' progress, achievement and well-being.
- Students' achievement is good across a range of subjects, including English. In mathematics, it is outstanding.
- Teaching overall is good and much is outstanding. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and set tasks that are interesting and well matched to students' abilities.
- Students consistently demonstrate outstanding attitudes towards learning. They have a thirst for knowledge and enjoy their learning.
- Students' behaviour around the school and in lessons is excellent. They are very polite and courteous towards each other, staff and visitors. Their pride in their school is evident in the way they present their work and in the absence of litter and graffiti.
- There is an exceptionally strong and successful focus on ensuring that students are safe and well cared for.
- Governance is a strength of the school and underpins the rapid improvements in teaching and leadership.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Students' progress and achievement in English are not yet as good as they are in mathematics. Homework does not always challenge students to improve their learning.
- Students' responses to their teachers' marking are sometimes brief or unrelated to the subject. Consequently, marking does not always help students to make the progress they are capable of.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 25 lessons, 18 of which were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of further short visits to lessons and scrutinised students' work in their books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, other members of staff, members of the governing body and with groups of students. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with the school improvement consultant.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: information on students' achievement; the school's evaluation of its own work; information and records relating to safeguarding and child protection; and records relating to the monitoring of teaching and to behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors took account of the 122 responses to the online Parent View survey and 53 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Caroline Dearden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lesley Greenway	Additional Inspector
John Edgar	Additional Inspector
Roger Garrett	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Lavington School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It converted to academy status in January 2011..
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The number of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requiring extra help at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked-after children and for students known to be eligible for free school meals, is much lower than the national average.
- A small proportion of students have a parent or carer in the armed forces and are eligible for support through additional funding.
- A small proportion of Year 7 students are eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding.
- A very small number of students attend vocational courses at Wiltshire College.
- A small number of students were entered early for GCSE mathematics this year.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school works in partnership with other local schools in the West Wiltshire Alliance to share good practice and to moderate and standardise students' GCSE coursework.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the overall quality of teaching to outstanding so that more students, especially in English, make rapid progress by:
  - making sure that students know how to use their teachers' marking and feedback to help them develop the quality and content of their work
  - ensuring that homework consistently challenges students to take the next steps in their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good progress in most subjects and information provided by the school indicates that, overall, standards have risen and are likely to be above average this summer.
- Achievement in mathematics is excellent. The proportion of students who exceed expected progress in mathematics is above national figures.
- In 2013, the percentage of students achieving five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was broadly in line with national figures. Since then steps have been taken to strengthen the leadership of English. This has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and consequently students now make good progress. Inspectors' evaluations of students' work and current progress confirm that the school's predictions of improved performance in English this summer by Year 11 students are well-founded.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make better progress than similar students nationally. Their needs are well known to staff and therefore the effectiveness of the support they receive is very good.
- In 2013 students eligible for additional funding attained approximately half a grade lower than their peers in English and one third of a grade lower in mathematics. Information provided by the school indicates that these gaps will remain for 2014. However, the number of eligible students is exceptionally small. In other year groups students in receipt of support through additional funding make similar progress to their peers and gaps in achievement are closing.
- Children from service families make very good progress to achieve well across most subjects.
- The school receives Year 7 catch-up funding for a small number of students and uses it wisely to provide additional literacy lessons. This is having a very positive impact on raising standards of students' reading and writing.
- The school's approach to developing students' literacy is carefully planned and coordinated very effectively across the school, and is contributing significantly to the school's rising standards.
- A small number of Year 11 students have been entered early for GCSE mathematics. All students achieved grades higher than their targets. All continued to study mathematics and statistics.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because students' progress and achievement in English are not yet as good as in mathematics.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Teaching is having a strong impact on progress. Teaching is of at least good quality across a range of subjects and with different ability groups.
- There is a very positive climate for learning across the school. Relationships between students and teachers are very strong and students understand what is expected of them. For example, Year 7 students believe that they make good progress and learn fast in all subjects because teachers give them targets to achieve on a lesson-by-lesson and term-by-term basis.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which they use well to pitch lessons at the right level and to make learning activities interesting.
- Teachers work well with their colleagues and with other teachers in the West Wiltshire Alliance to develop their skills and expertise. This helps them to devise and implement support for underperforming students which is both appropriate and timely.
- There is a high level of consistency in teachers' marking, often providing useful information to students about how to improve their work. However, teachers do not always make clear to students how they are expected to respond to feedback and consequently some responses are brief and unrelated to the subject. As a result, marking does not consistently have enough impact on improving students' work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support disabled students and those who have special

educational needs well in lessons. Teaching assistants are used effectively to provide expert support with specific needs.

- Students say that homework is regularly set. However, students say that they find some homework irrelevant. Evidence in students' exercise books shows that not all homework challenges students to develop their learning; consequently, some does not support students to make very good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They arrive promptly to lessons, are well prepared and ready to learn, consistently demonstrating a thirst for knowledge. Work in exercise books is very well presented, signifying students' pride in their work.
- Conduct in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Students are unanimously polite and courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors. There is a complete absence of litter and graffiti around the school site.
- In almost all lessons students' attitudes towards learning are exemplary. Low-level disruption is extremely rare.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. All students say that they feel safe. This view is endorsed by parents and carers.
- Incidents of bullying are very rare and students say that they are mainly related to girls falling out with one and other. Students are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly by school staff. Many parents and carers commented that they have no knowledge of bullying within the school. Incidents of racism or homophobia are exceptionally rare because students are effectively taught about the hurt such behaviour can cause.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above average. The number of students who are persistently absent has fallen over the last two years and is now well below average.
- The very few students who attend off-site provision attend regularly and behave very well.
- Fixed-term exclusions have historically been very low. The improving strength of pastoral leadership is ensuring that the use of this sanction continues to diminish. The school provides very well for students with behavioural difficulties joining from other schools. These students integrate with their peers, receive appropriate help and support and therefore remain in education post-16.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher demonstrates very strong leadership of the school. He is very well supported by his senior team and by governors, all of whom share the same vision for all students to receive an excellent education. This excellent leadership has resulted in the school making very rapid progress since its previous inspection.
- The work of the school's Teaching and Learning Leadership Team ensures that the arrangements for monitoring and managing teachers' performance are exceptionally strong and that support is rapidly provided when teaching is not good enough. There is a secure link between teachers' pay progression and the progress made by their students. If necessary, effective procedures are implemented to address underperformance.
- Senior leaders, supported by governors, have not rushed to appoint teaching staff following mid-term or late resignations. They have sensibly employed temporary staff until first-rate, well-qualified teachers can be recruited.
- Middle leadership is now very strong. High-quality leaders of English, science, modern foreign languages and special educational needs have recently been appointed. Consequently, students now make at least good progress in these areas.
- Pastoral leadership has been significantly strengthened with the appointment of five year group

leaders in place of the previous three key stage leaders. Communication with parents and carers is strong and students' progress is rigorously tracked and monitored. Support sessions, which are timely and appropriate, help students to make good progress, attend regularly and behave very well. The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes opportunities for students to follow courses which meet their needs. The recently introduced additional literacy lessons in Key Stage 3 are having a very positive impact on raising standards of students' reading and writing.

- Opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are integrated into all aspects of the school's work. Consequently, there is genuine equality of opportunity, typified by the seriousness with which school leaders consider the views of students, staff and parents and carers.
- The school has made very good use of support from the school improvement consultant to improve the use of data to check the performance of students and this is leading to accelerated progress. Teachers are able to quickly spot any underachievement and take action to support any individual students at risk of slipping behind. As a result, all groups of students achieve well.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, believe the school to be well led and managed and would recommend it to other parents and carers. This view is endorsed by staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is a strength of the school. Governors recognise the significant developments since the last inspection and are highly ambitious for the school to continue on a journey of improvement. Governors use their skills and expertise to work with senior and middle leaders, thus achieving a breadth and depth to the leadership of the school. Through the work of committees, and by using their excellent understanding about how to use information about students, governors are rigorous in holding the school to account for improving standards of achievement, the quality of teaching and the impact of middle leaders. They have an in-depth understanding of the school's finances, including the appropriate allocation of additional funding. They fulfil their responsibilities with regard to keeping students safe exceptionally well. Governors are involved in the performance management of teaching staff. They understand how and why support for teachers is implemented and therefore know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle underperformance.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136389
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	431677

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	703
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Wilkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martin Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01380 812352
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