

Deansfield Community School, Specialists In Media Arts

Deans Road, Wolverhampton, WV1 2BH

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement at Key Stage 3 and mathematics is inadequate across the school. Too many students underachieve.
- Recent improvements in attainment and progress in GCSE English and mathematics are not secure. Students with special educational needs on school action, and those eligible for the pupil premium and 'catch-up' funding, still make too little progress.
- Teaching is inadequate. Too much requires improvement. There is little outstanding teaching, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers' assessments of students' progress at Key Stage 3 are not always accurate. Consequently, they do not always plan work which fills gaps in students' learning. Teachers do not give students sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- Provision in the sixth form has not been cost-effective and will close shortly.
- Behaviour in lessons is not consistently good enough. Where teaching fails to challenge students sufficiently they quickly become bored.
- Students' spelling, handwriting and grammar are often weak. Students have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills in English and mathematics in other subjects.
- Students do not receive their full entitlement to all subjects in the National Curriculum, or in religious education.
- Leaders, including governors, have an overly positive view of the performance of the school and have not taken quick enough action to check on or improve teaching and achievement.
- The school has not drawn up a school improvement plan.

The school has the following strengths

- The work of the Amber Centre has been effective in improving the behaviour of the students it caters for. There have been no exclusions for at least three years.
- Students with hearing impairments are well supported in the specially resourced provision for students with special educational needs.
- Students are kept safe and this has been a priority during construction work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons taught by 23 teachers, including four that were observed jointly with senior leaders. They also observed breaks and lunchtimes and visited the Deaf Resource Base.
- An inspector was shown around the school by two students who have hearing impairments to find out their views of the school. A British Sign Language interpreter joined the inspector on this tour to interpret what the students were telling the inspector.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders and subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with four groups of students in meetings, as well as in lessons and around the school at breaks and lunchtimes.
- The inspection team were unable to consider the views of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, as only six replies were received. Inspectors analysed the 66 responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire.
- A variety of information was analysed about examination results, students’ progress, their attendance and behaviour and other aspects of students’ personal development and achievement. The inspection team also viewed a range of documents, including reports written on school self-evaluation and records relating to safeguarding of students.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school’s view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Denah Jones, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Sajid Gulzar

Additional Inspector

Christine Bray

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and has only 15 students in the sixth form. The sixth form will close on 31st August 2014 and the school will then re-open as an 11-16 school. There are currently no students in Year 12.
- The school is undergoing a period of change, as there is a new school building being built on the same site. This is restricting the use of some outside areas, and some subjects have had to be relocated to different areas of the building. This is inevitably causing disruption for staff and students. The new building is due to open from September 2015 and there are plans for the school to be re-named, at that time, to St Matthias School with its specialism in media arts being phased out. A new school uniform will be introduced from September 2014, in preparation for this change.
- There have been significant changes in staffing, with 30 members of staff leaving the school in summer 2013. Some were not replaced to reduce staffing costs.
- About two-thirds of the students are White British. The remaining third of the students are mainly from Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Indian and Caribbean backgrounds. About 15% of students in the school speak English as an additional language, which is just above the national average.
- Almost two-thirds of students are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement is much larger than the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action is similarly high. In Years 9, 10 and 11, almost half of the students in each year group have special educational needs.
- The school has a 'Deaf Resource Base', which currently caters for four students.
- There are 12 students who attend alternative off-site provision at facilities at Orchard, Braybrook, Midpoint, Re-entry, Nova Training or Wolverhampton College.
- Year 13 students attend courses at other post-16 providers in the area: Moreton School, Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Sports College, Moseley Park and Heath Park.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that it is at least good for all students by making sure that all teachers:
 - make accurate assessments of the levels students are working at, especially at Key Stage 3
 - match work to the different ability levels in their class so that it is neither too easy nor too difficult for students especially those on school action
 - regularly tell students how they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work
 - help students to improve their literacy and communication skills through telling them about errors in spelling or grammar and supporting them to improve their handwriting.
- Make sure all students make at least good progress, so that the standards they reach,

particularly in English and mathematics, are sustained at a level which is at least equal to national averages by ensuring that:

- the work that is planned for students in Key Stage 3 recognises what students can already do and builds on this
- students are given opportunities to develop their skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics and to use these in other subjects
- students who receive support from teaching assistants or other adults are not reliant on this support but develop the ability to think really hard about their work.

■ Improve leadership so that all students achieve well by:

- making sure that all students receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and religious education, and that school leaders recruit subject specialist teachers to teach humanities subjects
- providing support for all students who have weak literacy skills so that they are identified early, and an effective support programme is quickly put into place
- carrying out frequent checks on the quality of the school's work by observing teaching more frequently and using information on the progress made by students to inform judgements on the quality of teaching over time
- developing a more effective system for checking on the progress being made by students, so that clear information can be provided to school leaders to enable them to identify and take action where progress is slow
- making sure there is a school improvement plan which has been shared with all staff and which is regularly updated
- ensuring that pupil premium and Year 7 catch up funding are having a sustained effect on improving progress for the students who are entitled to these resources.

■ Continue to build on the improvements that have already been seen in attendance to ensure it remains above the national average by:

- monitoring closely the attendance of all students including groups such as disabled students and those who have special educational needs or who are supported by pupil premium funding
- working more closely with parents, carers and external agencies.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Students join the school with attainment that is, on average, very low in English and mathematics. Their subsequent achievement is inadequate because students do not make the progress they should at Key Stage 3. In mathematics at Key Stage 4, some groups of students are underachieving, including less-able students and those supported at school action.
- Recent improvements in attainment and progress at Key Stage 4 are not secure. Evidence in students' books and their performance in lessons indicate these results will not be sustained. The school's data for Key Stage 3 suggesting improvements, particularly in mathematics, are not convincing and teacher assessments are inaccurate.
- The school was unable to provide information to show accurately the progress being made at Key Stage 3 by particular groups of students, such as disabled students or those with special educational needs.
- In 2013, there were improvements in the overall progress made by students in mathematics at GCSE to values similar to national averages. The small number of more-able students, based on their ability when they started in the school, made slow progress. There was also a wide variation in results for less-able students in mathematics, with 10 students being more than two grades below their expected progress 'target'. Evidence seen by inspectors suggests this variation and underachievement are set to continue for 2014 in mathematics.
- Progress rates in GCSE English have exceeded national figures since 2012 and about half of Year 11 made exceptional progress in 2013. However, information provided by the school suggests progress in English in 2014 will not be as strong next year and that results will fall.
- The school's policy of 'early entry' has prevented some students from demonstrating good progress. In English, students who have already attained a grade C or higher have had no opportunity to work towards the higher GCSE grades during Year 11. In mathematics, middle and high ability students were not taught the more difficult topics that would have enabled them to attempt the harder examination paper and attain a higher grade in Year 11.
- Those eligible for pupil premium support make too little progress. The pupil premium funding has been used across the whole school rather than directly for those eligible for this support. It has, for example, provided a range of visits, and additional teachers to reduce class sizes in English and mathematics. In 2013, eligible students made better progress in English and mathematics than other students in the school. In the same year, the attainment of students eligible for free school meals was broadly similar to that of other students. However, there is clear evidence that the gap in their attainment and other students is likely to widen for 2014, with students eligible for free school meals attaining less well than others by almost a whole GCSE grade in English and in mathematics.

While disabled students and those with special educational needs made broadly the progress expected of them at GCSE in 2013, there was significant underachievement for those at school action in mathematics. Students at school action continue to underachieve.

- Attainment in humanities subjects has been variable, but is consistently low in geography. There are not currently enough specialist teachers of humanities in the school to teach all the humanities lessons on the timetable, and many lessons are taught by English teachers.
- Students achieve success in a variety of work-related learning courses and further improvements

are indicated for 2014. These courses, and those offered through off-site alternative provision, effectively meet the needs of less-able students and provide opportunities for them to make progress into post-16 courses at other providers.

- In September 2013, all students in Years 7 to 10 took a test to find out about their literacy levels. About a quarter of students in each year group were found to have a reading age which is well-below their actual age. Not all of these students are given support to improve their reading. No information was provided to show what difference this support is making if any.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is not having sufficient impact on improving achievement for those entitled to this funding. In 2012/13 just five out of 23 students had caught-up with their peers.
- For the very small number of students in the sixth form, indications are that they will be successful in their chosen courses and make progress which is broadly in line with their starting point on entry to the sixth form. Virtually all courses being studied are taught off-site through other providers in the area.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Inadequate teaching over time has led to students making very slow progress over Key Stage 3 and then relying on 'quick fixes', such as early- and multiple-entry for examinations and intensive booster work, to accelerate progress and to catch-up for GCSE.
- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching within subjects. Better teaching was seen at Key Stage 4 where some teachers are skilled in making sure students achieve well and can make rapid gains in their learning.
- Too much teaching is not yet good enough to make sure that students develop a deeper understanding of topics and can apply their knowledge to other subjects or new areas.
- Many teachers do not use the information they have about what students know, understand and can do in order to plan activities that will fill any gaps in learning, build on what students already know and challenge them with new or more difficult work.
- Students become bored very quickly in lessons where they are asked to copy work off the board or to carry out repetitive tasks designed to keep them on task rather than making them think.
- On occasions, teachers over-estimate their students' capabilities and move learning on too quickly. Teachers' checks on learning occur too infrequently, so they cannot identify where further support may be needed.
- Most teaching assistants support students well and patiently explain work again, often re-phrasing explanations and asking questions to make sure students find the answer out for themselves. On some occasions, the guidance they offer is excessive, preventing students from making mistakes and learning from them.
- Marking varies in frequency and quality across the school, and within subjects. Inspectors saw examples of books that had not been marked for several months. Students sometimes do not know what they are doing wrong or how to correct their work but are just told to work harder, listen more carefully, underline headings or follow instructions.
- When teachers tell students a grade for their work, this is sometimes overly-generous and does not accurately reflect the GCSE standard required for this grade. This inaccurate information is

unhelpful for students but also for leaders at all levels, who consequently, are unable to identify patterns of underachievement accurately and plan ways to accelerate progress.

- Support for literacy varies considerably. Some teachers correct spelling or grammatical errors and ask students to write out sentences using the advice given. In some classrooms, technical language and key words are displayed, and teachers make reference to these during lessons. However, these are exceptions rather than the rule; in general, support for students' literacy across the curriculum is weak.
- Exceptional progress is made by students when teachers pinpoint exactly where there are gaps in learning, set individual targets and check on learning as students work towards their target. This was seen to very good effect in dance, drama and some science lessons.
- It was not possible to observe any sixth form lessons or Year 11 lessons during the inspection due to external examinations or courses having been completed. Inspectors talked with a small sample of students in Year 11 and Year 13 who told inspectors they had noticed teaching is improving since they started in the school but were concerned about the frequent changes of teachers in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Behaviour in lessons varies too frequently as a result of weaknesses in the quality of teaching. When students become bored they do not always concentrate or participate fully in the lesson. In contrast where they have enough to do, they work well together and enjoy their lessons.
- The 'Amber Centre' provides good support for students at risk of exclusion and helps them in improving their behaviours; consequently there have been no school exclusions for at least three years.
- Information provided to inspectors shows that behaviour is improving as there is a reducing number of unacceptable behavioural incidents being logged. Leaders do not use these logs well enough to analyse patterns of poor behaviour.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- Students who met with inspectors told them they know of a very small number of students who have been bullied. They know, however, that they should tell an adult and some said they would go straight to the headteacher and tell him because he would make it stop.
- Students know that racist and homophobic language is wrong as they have learnt about these issues in personal, social and health education. They told inspectors they had occasionally heard students using this language and knew they would be punished for this.
- Attendance has been consistently low for each of the last three years and places the school in the bottom 10% of schools nationally for attendance. Strategies to improve attendance are now starting to show the early signs of impact and information provided to inspectors indicates that current attendance is likely to be in-line with the national average.

- Construction work taking place on the school site is causing daily disruption and frequent changes in access routes around the site, and occasions where classes are moved, often at short notice. Students handle these inconveniences well and move quickly between lessons, encouraged by teachers. Whilst the construction work is taking place, emergency evacuation procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure routes remain clear. Students and staff are kept safely away from the construction site by secure fencing.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- School leaders have been slow to drive improvements in teaching and have, in the past, been reluctant to address weaknesses in teaching through managing the performance of teachers.
- Records of checks on the quality of teaching show that although teachers are being observed more often, improvements are slow. There is still too much variability in the quality of teaching within subjects and across the school. Insufficient use is made of information on pupil progress in making judgements on the quality of teaching.
- Self-evaluation processes are not carried out on a regular cycle or in a consistent way. Reports written for governors are overly descriptive, and are not based on robust evidence. This leads to an inaccurate and over-generous view of the quality of the work of the school.
- There is currently no school improvement plan, although school leaders have started to discuss the key actions necessary to move the school forwards. As there are no shared and agreed priorities for improvement. Some subject leaders are developing their own systems for the monitoring of progress data, for example, rather than this being led in any strategic way. This is leading to confusion and is unhelpful for school leaders in monitoring progress at a whole-school level.
- School leaders do not have an accurate picture of the standards students are reaching in their work, particularly at Key Stage 3. In English, marking and levels are checked across all teachers and classes. However, this is not happening in any consistent way across other subjects.
- Students do not receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. Students told inspectors that in Year 11, not all students have lessons in physical education or have opportunity to experience other forms of exercise or health related fitness. There are no lessons in religious studies at either Key Stage 3 or 4 and students do not have opportunity to learn about Christianity or other faiths, beliefs or cultures. There is no daily act of collective worship or opportunity for reflection elsewhere in the timetable. Plans are in place to address this for September 2014.
- A lack of a whole school policy, or strategy, to improve literacy skills means that students are not being taught the skills they need to make progress in literacy with sufficient urgency. No lessons are currently being taught in information communication technology, either as a separate subject or within other subjects. Students are therefore not being taught the necessary skills in reading, writing or communication to enable them to be successful in the next stage of their education, employment or training.
- Not enough is done to engage with parents and carers, either to seek their views or to involve them and students in the development of the school.
- Pupil premium funding has not had sufficient impact in raising the achievement of those it is

intended to support. It has been used to fund initiatives such as whole-school rewards for attendance and academic achievements, and also to appoint an on-site educational psychologist and a Young Carers Support Group. There are good support systems provided through 'Student Welfare' the 'Achievement Centre'. The 'Deaf Resource Base' provides access to a range of support including audio equipment. Teaching assistants have all received training in signing to enable them to provide a high level of care and support for the small number of hearing impaired students.

- Before the first monitoring visit takes place, the school should not appoint any further newly qualified teachers in addition to those already appointed to start in September.
- There is little capacity amongst leaders at all levels to improve this school. The headteacher is determined to improve the school and talks enthusiastically about the opportunities that will be available for students as they move into the new building. However, there is much work to do before that and the headteacher has been pre-occupied with the building project. Other senior leaders have been entrusted to continue the school improvement work, but do not have the ability to do this without guidance from their leader.
- The local authority has not provided effective support and challenge to help the school to tackle its weaknesses and to improve over time. A 'light-touch' support programme has been provided as the local authority's risk assessment, based on performance data, has not given rise to any concerns. The local authority's representative working with the school changed in September, with the current officer working with the school since then. The main focus of support has been in relation to the new building programme. The headteacher appreciated the support given by the local authority's human resources department in the staffing restructure that took place prior to the start of this academic year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Some governors have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support for the headteacher. They know about the difference being made through the pupil premium funding but did not know how the Year 7 catch-up funding was used, or with what impact.
 - In the last year, governors have supported the headteacher in checking the performance of teachers to make sure this is rigorous. This has resulted in significant staff turnover which was necessary to tackle underperformance and to improve the quality of teaching in the school.
 - They are aware of some of the challenges facing the school but have an overly positive view of the work of the school due to being given inaccurate information from teacher assessments. Governors know nothing about Key Stage 3 progress or attainment as none of this information has been shared with them.
 - Governors ensure that all requirements related to safeguarding are met in full and regularly reviewed.

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	104387
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	442646

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	514
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	15
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Inston
Headteacher	Dean Coombes
Date of previous school inspection	05 October 2011
Telephone number	01902 556400
Fax number	01902 556401
Email address	deansfieldcommunityschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

