

Ken Stimpson Community School

Staniland Way, Werrington, Peterborough, PE4 6JT

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

- Students' progress is not yet consistently good across the school and, in 2013, they did not attain as well as expected in GCSE examinations in English and a number of other subjects.
- Effective support is not always provided for students who are at risk of underachieving including those who are eligible for extra support through special government funding as well as high and middle ability students.
- The setting of students' targets is inconsistent across subjects and too many students are not meeting their targets in both Key Stages 3 and 4.
- In some lessons students lose concentration and their behaviour deteriorates because they are set work that is not interesting enough.
- There are too many classes where teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of behaviour or presentation of work, match the work to students' ability or use marking to help students to improve their work.
- Leaders are not fully aware of the number of teachers who require support. Hence, the training of teachers has not been fully effective in eliminating teaching that requires improvement.
- Subject leaders are not consistently implementing school policies or fully effective in checking the quality of teaching and providing support to teachers in their subjects.
- Leaders and governors have not yet ensured enough sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and students' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The senior leaders are taking action to tackle underachievement so that the school is on a well-planned journey of improvement.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs plus students who speak English as an additional language generally make good progress.
- The sixth form is good. Staying on rates are higher than at the time of the last inspection. More students are achieving well and progressing to higher education or training.
- There have been improvements in the attendance and uniform of students. Most students feel safe and secure in the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons, four of which was seen jointly with members of the leadership team. Inspectors also undertook brief visits to seven further classes.
- Discussions were held with the principal, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the Governor’s curriculum committee, representatives from the local authority, senior leaders, staff and groups of students.
- Inspectors took account of the 97 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 52 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors examined a range of evidence, including the school’s analysis of its own performance and resulting school strategic plan, the systems to track students’ progress, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at staff performance information, safeguarding documentation and a wide range of examples of students’ work.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Devonish	Additional Inspector
Kewal Goel	Additional Inspector
Michael Stanton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school in the northern part of Peterborough and serves students mainly from the local community as well as an increasing number from across the city.
- The school is housed in modern buildings which were constructed in the 1980's and further extended in 2007. The school has extensive grounds and playing fields.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds although the proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- An average proportion of students are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- A high number of students join the school in different year groups throughout the year.
- A small number of Year 10 and 11 students take work-related courses at the Peterborough Regional College.
- The school has an expanding sixth form and is part of a consortium with a neighbouring school. A small number of students attend the consortium school for one of their advanced level courses.
- 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?

- Ensure that teaching is good or better by making sure that all teachers:
 - provide students with work that they find interesting and which keeps them well focused on their studies
 - plan work that is at the right level for different groups of students and adjust it in lessons if students find it too easy or too hard
 - use marking and feedback effectively to show students how to improve their work and achieve their best possible grade
 - have high enough expectations of students' presentation of work and focus on learning.
- Ensure that a greater proportion of students make good or better progress in Key Stage 3 and 4 by:
 - providing all students who are at the risk of underperforming with effective support, including those students who are eligible for pupil premium funding
 - ensuring that the systems for setting students' targets are consistent across different subjects and that more students are making sufficient progress to achieve their target grades
 - developing strategies to accelerate the progress of high and middle ability students, particularly in English and subjects that make higher demands of students' literacy.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders, managers and governors by:
 - making sure that all teachers who require support are identified and that the coaching and

- sharing of good practice are more effective in improving the teaching across the school
- ensuring that all subject leaders consistently implement school policies and are more effective in checking and improving the quality of teaching in their subjects
 - making sure that progress on the school strategic plan is monitored more robustly to check that it is leading to sustained improvements in students' achievement and the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students' achievement requires improvement because their progress is not always good and they have not attained as well as might be expected since the last inspection. Although there are clear signs of better progress this year, it is inconsistent across the classes at present. Nor have students made sufficient progress to compensate for past underachievement or to demonstrate sustained good progress.
- Not enough students reach high enough grades at GCSE level in all subjects to demonstrate good progress. Although students start at the school with below average standards, too many students do not make enough progress during their time at school.
- The percentage of students who gain five A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics is well below average and has declined over the last two years. More students are capable of gaining higher grades in art, English, food technology, French, geography and history.
- Too many students did not make expected progress in English because the quality of teaching was too variable. A large number of middle ability students did not make enough progress in English and literacy based subjects, such as history and geography. The school identified that more-able students, particularly girls, were not being sufficiently challenged to achieve higher grades in GCSE. However, standards in mathematics, music and Italian are broadly in line with the national average which represents good progress for many students.
- Teachers have not always identified underachieving students quickly enough, or given them fully effective additional support. The school is now making greater use of the systems for tracking students' progress and providing better support for underachieving students, including any who join the school late with gaps in learning. The school is presently addressing the progress of less-able students in Year 7 and 8 effectively, through the 'catch-up' programme.
- The system for setting students' targets is inconsistent across the school and evidence in students' books indicates that too many students are not meeting their targets in Key Stages 3 and 4. Although more students are now making the progress they should in most subjects, teaching is still too variable so too few are making better than expected progress. More demanding attainment targets are now set for all students. Although it is too early to assess the full impact of this change on students' progress, it has led to higher expectations which have particularly supported the improvement in the progress of boys.
- The school has not consistently used additional funding to effectively narrow the gap between the achievement of students eligible for the pupil premium and the other students. Students in Year 11 known to be eligible for pupil premium attained on average at least one grade less in English and close to two grades less in mathematics last year compared to others. Better tracking of these students' performance now indicates that this year both the progress and attainment of these students across the school are improving.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well in many of the AS and A level subjects, as well as work-related and level 2 courses. The school is now more active in advising students to select the most appropriate course in the sixth form. Predictions for the current year suggest that more students are on track to attain the higher grades than in previous years.
- The majority of disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress. School action students made particularly good progress last year due to the effective

work from other adults who help them overcome barriers to learning. Students who speak English as an additional language also make good progress and tracking records suggest that the majority of these students are achieving well in their present classes particularly when they have developed their proficiency in English.

- There is an improving trend in student progress although it not yet consistent across all subjects. Teacher predictions for the current Year 11 suggest that more students will make expected progress in their subjects including English and mathematics, and an increasing number are in line to exceed expected progress which could represent good progress from their starting points.
- The school's policy this year is to enter selected students early in GCSE English and mathematics which has built confidence and raised expectations. These students are now aiming for improved grades in the summer examinations. The small numbers of Key Stage 4 students who now take work-related courses through Peterborough Regional College benefit from the practical approach to learning and gain college certification.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching varies too much across the school to be good overall, and students do not make consistently good progress across different subjects. Although there is some good or better teaching in most subjects, there are still too many lessons where teaching requires improvement, based on students' progress in lessons and in their books.
- Not enough teachers use information about what students already know to set work at the right level for students' different abilities. Some students are not challenged enough because the work in lessons is sometimes too easy for them, while others are held back in their learning because the work is too hard and they need more guidance and support.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of the students in terms of the presentation of their work. Exercise books and folders are sometimes untidy and students are not always encouraged to pay enough attention to handwriting and general appearance of their work.
- Similarly, expectations of behaviour are too low in some classes when there is too much social chatter and insufficient concentration on work. In some lessons, students lose concentration and their behaviour deteriorates because teachers' expectations of behaviour are too low and they are set work that is not interesting enough.
- The marking of work is inconsistent and written feedback does not always provide enough guidance to students on how to improve their work and gain the higher grades. Although the school has implemented a new marking policy, this is not always used consistently by all teachers. Marking was exemplary in some classes with regular, detailed teacher comments on areas for improvement but this was not replicated across the school.
- There are examples of good and outstanding teaching across the school. In these lessons the students show considerable enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration because they are given a range of interesting and relevant activities. A number of teachers are very skilled at asking questions to engage the students, check understanding and extend their thinking.
- Teaching observed in the sixth form was good and most students were achieving well in their subjects. The small teaching groups are helping students gain individual attention and learn within a supportive environment. Students are confident to answer questions, take a full part in the learning and review their progress. For example, Year 13 students made good progress in

English as the teacher asked probing questions to ensure students reflected on their work and knew exactly what to do to gain better marks in their examinations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. In too many lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4, students lose concentration and become restless when they find the work dull or too difficult. Some teachers do not expect students to give the work their full attention resulting in students making limited progress in their learning. However, the majority of students typically behave well in lessons and around the school. Some students still require support in developing better attitudes to learning so that they become more confident to work on their own without constant guidance and supervision.
- The school has integrated a number of students with challenging behaviour who are well supported and are not allowed to disrupt the learning of the other students. There has been a reduction in the number of exclusions over the last year and student services ensure that excluded students have a smooth transition back into school.
- Students generally get on well with each other and enjoy coming to school. Students adhere to the revised uniform regulations and respect their learning environment. Sixth formers embrace the opportunities to act as mentors to the younger students. New students are welcomed and settle quickly into the school.
- There are very few instances of bullying. Pupils, parents and carers say that any unkind behaviour such as name-calling or teasing is usually dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils develop a satisfactory awareness of the different forms of bullying such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to sexual orientation, gender, race and disability.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Governors make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding fully meet current national requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. Students across the school feel safe and display a good understanding of the issues relating to safety. They talk confidently about how they would keep themselves safe in a variety of situations such as when using the internet or talking with strangers. Senior students confirmed that the school provides them with helpful information on sex education and the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- Leaders have effective strategies to raise attendance and reduce persistent absence. Attendance has improved over the last year and is now broadly average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although there is evidence that this is becoming a better school, there is still more work to do in sustaining the positive signs of improvements in students' progress and eliminating teaching which requires improvement. The school strategic plan, although based on a broadly accurate assessment of the school, has not been used robustly enough to secure improvements.
- The principal and senior leaders have introduced more rigorous procedures for monitoring the progress of the students and the quality of teaching and learning. However, they have yet to sustain improvements long enough to raise teaching, and hence students' progress, to consistently good levels.
- Leaders have recently eliminated inadequate teaching but there is still too much teaching in the school that requires improvement. Leaders were not fully aware of the inconsistency in students'

attitudes to learning or that more teachers require support in managing their students and keeping them motivated to learn. There is an imaginative programme of professional training for teachers but this has not led to a sufficient reduction in the amount of teaching that requires improvement.

- The school is active in supporting heads of subjects so that they are more effective in ensuring improvement in their subjects. However, a number of these leaders are still reliant on the direct support of senior leaders and are not yet fully confident in checking teaching and supporting teachers to improve. Not all heads of subjects are consistently implementing school policies.
- The new systems for setting performance targets for teachers are more demanding so that teachers are now held fully accountable for the progress of their students and have targets to improve their teaching. However, few performance targets identify managing behaviour as an area for improvement.
- The school provides a coherent programme for all students. There is a good range of academic and vocational subjects available at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. All students are provided with comprehensive careers education to help them make informed choices. A wide range of outside visits and extra-curricular activities increase students' enjoyment and experience of school. All these experiences contribute well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The sixth form is well led and is improving rapidly. Leaders have been active in ensuring that students have better guidance on the selection of their study programmes and have introduced more robust systems to track progress and provide additional support for underachieving students. As a result, more students are remaining on their courses and progress is better this year.
- The parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about the school. Staff share their enthusiasm and loyalty to the school. There is a strong commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all.
- The school is well supported by the local authority and external consultants who work closely with the school. The education adviser has been involved with helping the leadership with long term planning, tracking student progress and developing strategies to improve the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good awareness of the school's strengths and some areas for improvement. The principal ensures that governors have a broad understanding about the quality of teaching and about students' achievement. This allows them to make objective decisions on pay increases. They have ensured that the school has taken appropriate action to tackle inadequate teaching. Governors now oversee and challenge the use of the pupil premium funding to ensure that it is spent more effectively to support eligible students. Governors are involved in monitoring progress and holding leaders and staff to account. However, they have not been fully effective in monitoring key actions and initiatives in the school's strategic plan to ensure they lead to sustained improvements in teaching and achievement.

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	110882
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	441992

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1044
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bridget Holland
Principal	Richard Lord
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2012
Telephone number	01733 765950
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