

Chilwell School

Queen's Road West, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 5AL

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement throughout the school is good.
- The proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades, including in English and mathematics was above average in 2014.
- Students make good progress in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, because teaching is good.
- Teachers' secure subject knowledge and carefully considered questioning are common factors in students' good progress.
- The sixth-form provision is good. As a result of good teaching and leadership, students achieve well.
- Behaviour is good and students interact well with one another. They feel secure and safe, because they are consistently cared for and supported well.
- Attendance has risen to above average overall, due to the higher expectations of the school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good and contributes to their good personal development.
- Effective leadership has led to consistently good teaching and achievement across the school.
- The governing body oversees the school's work very effectively, particularly in the strategies they use to ensure that teaching and achievement continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While narrowing, the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs, compared to other students, have not been closed. This is particularly so in mathematics.
- Faculty leaders are not checking consistently enough how well teachers in their faculties are planning and marking work. Consequently, they are not able to challenge some teachers to do better and, hence, enable all students to achieve even better.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 40 lessons. Eleven of these were observed jointly with the headteacher, or with individual members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors talked with many students informally during the two days and spoke formally with four groups of students. They observed students at break and lunch times and during registration periods and an assembly. One inspector watched a group of students being supported with their learning.
- Meetings were held with senior and faculty leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including information about the achievement of the different groups of students in the school and an overview of the quality of teaching and learning. They checked the school's improvement plan, looked at examples of the students' work, checked records of their behaviour, attendance, and exclusions, and read the minutes of governing body meetings.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took into account the 56 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 29 responses given by staff to the Ofsted questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Carol Owen	Additional Inspector
Russell Ayling	Additional Inspector
Beverley Mabey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of average size, compared with other secondary schools.
- Most students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A few Year 10 and 11 students are educated off-site at places such as Wheelbase and E2E, to enable them to study courses that they enjoy and will gain qualifications in.
- The school has worked closely with Toothill Academy until recently.
- Most sixth-form students have been educated at the school throughout Years 7 to 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by making sure that:
 - faculty subject leaders check the work of staff in their subject areas consistently and challenge and support some teachers who need to plan and mark more effectively
 - staff make even better use of special funding and resources, such as the pupil premium, to ensure that disadvantaged students and those with disabilities and special educational needs attain as well as others, including in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The very good systems implemented by the headteacher to monitor the school's performance have quickened its progress in becoming a good school and its ability to improve further. The effective governing body adds to the school's capacity to improve.
- The headteacher is supported very well by the deputy headteacher, whose major responsibility is management of teaching and learning. His overview of the quality of teaching and students' work over time is meticulous and shows clearly the degree of effectiveness of individual teachers, the support they need, and the impact of that support.
- Teachers' performance targets reflect the school's strong focus on teaching and learning. The staff find the individual support and training they are given by senior and faculty leaders very helpful in developing them into more effective teachers.
- The roles of senior leaders match closely the school's priorities. Information about pupils' progress is analysed thoroughly, in order to identify key areas for improvement accurately.
- As a result of the school's careful evaluation of its effectiveness and clear identification of where improvements are needed, standards are rising and students' progress is quickening. This is also the case in the sixth form. The gaps in achievement between different groups are narrowing.
- Faculty leaders check progress thoroughly through their comprehensive analyses of data about students' progress. However, some leaders' checks on teaching do not always give a precise enough picture of its quality. In particular, they do not know if work is pitched at the right level and where marking is inconsistent and so they cannot always tackle teachers about this.
- The governors ask for and receive detailed information from the faculties about the use of pupil premium funds. The use of funds has been effective in English, where the gap in attainment between disadvantaged students and others has closed, but this has not been the case in mathematics.
- The curriculum takes into account the different needs of students and their career ambitions. Literacy is a successful focus throughout the school, particularly for those students who are not reaching the levels expected for their age lower down the school. The support they receive ensures that they make good progress and achieve well by the time they leave Year 11. Assessment systems are being considered carefully, in response to changes nationally on how students are to be assessed.
- At Key Stage 4, students who take vocational courses, or attend alternative provision, achieve well. The school checks their attendance and progress assiduously to ensure that they make good progress.
- Careers information and guidance is carefully planned from Year 8 onwards. As a result, students can make informed choices about the best courses for them at Key Stage 4 and develop the skills to gain employment, such as writing letters of application for a job. Year 11 students receive balanced information about the options open to them after Year 11.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is supported well throughout the school, through its routines and values. Students have opportunities in a range of subjects to learn about different ways of life, the beliefs of others, and their responsibility to be good and fair citizens.
- Students enjoy opportunities to develop new skills and to discover their talents, through a variety of lunch and after-school clubs, such as dance, keyboard, and crafts.
- School leaders work well with partner schools to improve the quality of education on offer. For example, they have worked with a local outstanding school, Toothill Academy, to improve the quality of teaching.

- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements.
- The local authority knows the school well and has offered very specific support, including strengthening the governing body and in helping the staff to narrow the gap in attainment between different groups of students.
- Parents are well informed. Already this academic year, the school has hosted a variety of information evenings. The parents' forum provides a genuine voice for parents to influence the school's development, such as through discussing its improvement plan and school policies. Most parents support all aspects of the school's work. They value the regular communication between home and school.
- The governance of the school:
 - The governing body has an impressive knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and is able to use this to steer the school forward.
 - All governors undertake regular training to update their skills. This includes safeguarding, for which there is a named, responsible governor.
 - Although the governors receive detailed and comprehensive information from the headteacher, they find out much for themselves, through links with faculties and inviting staff to governing body meetings.
 - They understand data about the progress of the students and insist that it is simple and shows an accurate picture over time of how well the school is progressing.
 - Their oversight of teachers' performance and whether individual staff should receive a pay rise is rigorous. Each request is considered in detail, before a pay rise is awarded, to ensure that it is merited. At the same time, the governors are supportive of the staff and their commitment to the school.
 - Detailed financial records are kept, so that the governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's spending.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of the students is good. They get to lessons on time, are ready with the right equipment, and settle down quickly.
- Students wear their uniforms smartly and also keep the learning and eating areas tidy. Around the site, they conduct themselves in an orderly manner.
- Students behave sensibly in most lessons, with most of them showing a desire to learn. When teaching is less effective, a few students chatter and get restless. Almost all teachers respond quickly to this, so that learning does not slow down as a result.
- Students are tolerant towards each other, modelling British values. Younger students feel that they are helped and supported by older ones, including sixth-form students, who help some of them with their reading. Year 7 students say that the older students are particularly kind to them as they find their way round the site.
- A small minority of students do not behave according to the high expectations of the school. The new behaviour learning unit is proving effective in addressing such behaviour and in reducing exclusions, with almost half of the students involved not repeating the misbehaviour.
- Attendance has risen to above average. The attendance of disadvantaged students is improving due to the help they are given by the learning mentor and their better understanding of the link between attendance and progress. Students who had particularly low attendance are being supported to improve their attendance and, as a result, rates of persistent absenteeism have reduced significantly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. This extends to the sixth form and to those students who learn off-site.
- The site is safe and the school provides a friendly, supportive environment, in which students feel safe.
- There is some 'falling-out' and a little bullying, which students say is dealt with effectively. The school looks very dimly on any unkind behaviour and does not tolerate any words or actions that cause students concern. Students say that they can confide any worries, including about bullying, to any member of staff.
- The curriculum incorporates teaching about situations that are unsafe. Students speak particularly confidently about dealing with cyber-bullying and how to protect themselves from the potential dangers of being on-line. They show a good understanding, relative to their age, of a range of risks, such as bullying due to religious prejudice and homophobia.
- In teaching, assemblies and through its ethos, the school promotes tolerance for others and respect, whatever a person's beliefs, sexual orientation, race, or disability.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching leads to good progress over time, including in English and mathematics.
- Students know what they are meant to learn and teachers remind them regularly. Most teachers expect a great deal from the students. The students respect them for this and get through a lot of work in lessons. In an English lesson, a teacher's high expectations, very secure subject knowledge, combined with a clear structure to learning and very careful questioning, resulted in students' sophisticated analysis of a text.
- Some classrooms provide a powerful environment for learning. For example, in textiles, the students achieve well in a beautifully presented classroom which motivates them to produce high-quality work.
- Throughout the school, there is a good focus on improving students' literacy skills. Teaching highlights key words regularly, including in science and history. Support staff focus on specific gaps in students' literacy and numeracy and, as a result, students make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Very often, work makes students think hard and concentrate. Questioning is often very probing and keeps students on their toes. Even in groups of similar abilities, teaching often takes students' skills into account very accurately, so that they can achieve their potential. Teaching, however, is not always at exactly the right level for the different levels of abilities represented in the classes to ensure that all students achieve as well as they should.
- Some marking is very helpful in driving students' progress, but other marking, even in the same subject, can be inconsistent in the quality and regularity of information and advice it provides. Teachers do not always ensure that students do the corrections they are told to do.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The standards that the students achieve by the end of Year 11 have improved over the last two years and have risen from average to above average. The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is now above average.
- The proportion of students making expected and better than expected progress in English and mathematics through the school is above the national average. There has been a significant improvement in the rates of progress in English because of good-quality teaching.

- Students' standards in a range of subjects have improved throughout the school, including in science.
- Students join Year 7 with average levels of prior attainment. Most make good progress through Key Stage 3 in English, mathematics and science.
- Most groups achieve similarly well throughout the school. Boys' standards have improved from last year, but girls' standards have risen at a faster rate so that the gap remains in 2014. However, for student currently in Year 11, there is no gap between boys' and girls' achievement.
- There is an improving picture in the attainment of disabled students and those who have special educational needs. However, progress is not yet good over time because, until recently, interventions were not sufficiently sharp.
- Pupil premium funding is spent mainly on raising literacy and numeracy levels and in making sure that disadvantaged students have equal opportunities to other students. The gap in the achievement of disadvantaged students compared to others is closing overall. It is not narrowing quickly enough, however, particularly in mathematics, where the gap has widened a little to one and a quarter grades. The gap has narrowed in English to three quarters of a grade. The appointment of a senior teacher to oversee the achievement and well-being of disadvantaged students is ensuring a more strategic approach.
- The most-able students learn well, from the evidence in their books, in a range of subjects. In English, the most-able students do better than nationally in achieving the highest GCSE levels. In mathematics, they were below average last year, with a target to catch up this year.
- Until this year, there has not been a clear strategy for the spending of catch-up funding, which is provided to help those students who do not achieve the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, to do so by the end of Year 7. This has been corrected. As a result, those students are now making better progress.
- Those students educated off-site, sometimes because of behavioural issues, usually manage to complete their courses, with notable successes, including in gaining employment.
- After Year 11, most students join the sixth form, or go into further education or training.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Most students who join the sixth form have attended the school in Key Stages 3 and 4 and stay on into Year 13.
- The majority of students have achieved at least a C grade in English and mathematics when they join Year 12. Those who have not reached this level re-take the required examination in Year 12 and almost all achieve at least a C grade.
- Most students join the sixth form with below average standards overall, although the standards are rising to average now as Year 11 results continue to improve. The sixth form has changed its emphasis to offer a more academic curriculum, which is now showing success in the good achievement of the students. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Department of Education study programme in the breadth of learning and experiences that it provides.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. From their individual starting points, students make good progress. This is because the leadership and management of the sixth form is good and has been strengthened by the appointment of an assistant leader of the sixth form.
- Students have a very good awareness of the need to stay safe and how to stay safe. The school's safeguarding arrangements ensure that measures are in place to keep them safe in school.

- By the end of Year 13, students reach average standards. At the end of Year 12, standards are rising quickly and are above average, indicating a further increase in A level attainment next year.
- Students are guided well in their learning and study skills. They have tutorials very regularly and their learning is monitored carefully. They are provided with a range of careers information and guidance, so that they can make well-informed judgements about their futures.
- Teaching is good. Students are encouraged strongly to take responsibility for their learning. They enjoy and benefit from learning for themselves from a wide range of resources. Marking is a little variable in the quality of information it provides.
- Sixth-formers play a full part in the life of the school and, by doing so, extend their personal and interpersonal skills. They act as student ambassadors and sports leaders, provide support to primary school pupils, and have a charity committee. They have their own council.
- Students' attendance is good, reflecting their mature approach to their education and futures.

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	122854
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	441945

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	849
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Munro
Headteacher	Ian Brierly
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2012
Telephone number	0115 9252698
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