

# Calderstones School

Harthill Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 3HS

**Inspection dates** 25–26 November 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Progress in mathematics, although showing an improvement in 2014, is not yet consistently strong.
- The quality of teaching varies across the school and does not always move students' learning on at an appropriate rate for their ability.
- The standards of achievement of students in the sixth form, both at A level and in vocational pathways, are below average when compared with national figures.
- The marking of students' work is inconsistent and does not always enable them to understand how to improve.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher's leadership and management of the school are good. Leaders have brought about improvement in key areas including securing consistently high levels of progress in English, narrowing of the gap between disadvantaged students and their peers and improvements at AS level.
- Practices to safeguard students are good and students feel safe in school. The work of the pastoral team and the links with outside agencies are very effective.
- There is a highly inclusive approach to all school activities and a very wide variety of opportunities promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Standards achieved by students in English are very high.
- The behaviour of students is good and they interact well with each other and with adults.
- Relationships and joint working with the local community are very strong and enhance the provision for students.
- Links with partner primary schools and the transition arrangements are effective.
- Enrichment activities for students in the sixth form are extensive.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, including four joint lesson observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors also visited morning tutor time and an assembly.
- Inspectors looked closely at samples of students’ written work across a range of subjects and year groups.
- They observed students’ behaviour around the school and at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, five groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chair of the finance committee, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: the school development plan; the school’s summary of its own performance; data relating to students’ attainment and progress; information on attendance; documents and records about behaviour and safeguarding; documents relating to progress meetings; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning and of performance management of staff, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors carefully analysed the 104 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 52 questionnaires which were completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Julie Yarwood, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Paul Chambers

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Gary Kelly

Additional Inspector

Osama Abdul Rahim

Additional Inspector

David Thompson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Calderstones School is a larger-than-average secondary school with a sixth form.
- In most year groups, there are almost twice as many boys as girls.
- The proportion of students who are disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. Students come from a diverse range of ethnic heritage backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The school offers a very small amount of alternative provision for students in Years 10 and 11, in conjunction with the City of Liverpool Community College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection and took up post in September 2012.

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

- Build on sixth-form students' recent strong performance at AS level to ensure that the achievement and outcomes at A level and in vocational programmes improve and are at least in line with national figures.
- In order to secure good progress, continue to improve the quality and consistency of teaching across the school, including in mathematics, by ensuring that:
  - teachers provide work which is appropriately challenging for all students
  - teachers assess students' learning in lessons more effectively before moving them on to the next stage
  - marking is consistently completed and enables all students to be clear about how to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for where she wants the school to be and, working closely with senior leaders, has established an inclusive culture of shared learning, where teachers are held to account for students' success.
- As a result of their work, leaders have brought about improvements in key areas. They have secured consistently high levels of progress in English. They have also used the pupil premium funding effectively to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged students and to narrow key achievement gaps between this group and others. There are early, but positive indications of improving outcomes in mathematics and at AS level in the sixth form.
- The school's analysis of its own performance is self-critical and honest, and recognises accurate areas for continued improvement. Good leadership of learning and teaching involves regular visits to lessons, lesson observations, work scrutiny and the sharing of good practice. Teachers are positive about the in-school opportunities for professional development that help them to improve their practice.
- Tracking of students' progress information is rigorous and is used by the senior leadership team to tackle and challenge underperformance. Leaders hold regular progress meetings with middle leaders and teachers, where the performance data of students, groups and subjects are carefully analysed and actions to secure improvement are identified and subsequently implemented. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equal opportunities, ensuring that all groups of students have the same chances of success.
- Senior leaders are improving, at pace, the quality of middle leadership. Middle leaders vary in their experience but all recognise their crucial role in driving standards forward. They are actively involved in monitoring the quality of learning and teaching in their areas. They are held to account well for students' progress and there are effective management systems to support their work. These systems include line management and heads of department meetings.
- Appropriate curriculum pathways are in place to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of students. The curriculum is broad and balanced and, for students aged 11 to 16, is made up mainly of traditional academic subjects and a small number of vocational subjects offered at Key Stage 4.
- The curriculum in the sixth form consists of a broad range of academic AS- and A-level subjects along with some Applied A levels. School leaders have recently taken the decision to remove the offer of wholly vocational subjects due to performance in these areas being below the standard expected and therefore not providing good career progression routes.
- Opportunities provided by the school support good relations and the active promotion of fundamental British values. There are many avenues for student leadership and the school council members are democratically elected by the students. The rich multicultural diversity of the student population is a significant factor in preparing students for life in modern Britain.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school and is enhanced by close collaborative working with the local community. Students are knowledgeable about faiths other than their own and make use of the 'faith room' provided by the school. Spiritual reflection is encouraged through a regular 'thought for the day' in morning tutor time. The curriculum is significantly enhanced by an impressive extra-curricular offer including clubs, trips, visits and cultural opportunities.
- The school has close links with its partner primary schools and runs a summer school for students in Year 6. This is very well attended and enables a smooth transition into Year 7.
- Impartial careers guidance is provided by the school to help students to make appropriate choices in terms of their next steps. This is complemented by additional career guidance in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Guidance for students entering the sixth form has improved and helps to ensure that students enrol on the most appropriate post-16 courses.
- The school meets well its statutory requirements for safeguarding students, including for the very small number accessing off-site alternative provision. The attendance, progress and behaviour of students attending this provision are very closely tracked and monitored.
- The local authority provides good support for the school and understands well its strengths and areas for development. Local authority officers have provided valuable training for the governing body on understanding and analysing school performance data.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors' good understanding of data contributes to their accurate view of the strengths and areas for development of the school and they provide effective challenge and support for the headteacher and senior leaders.

- Members of the governing body are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Heads of department are regularly asked to present information about their subject areas to governors' committee meetings so that governors' understanding is enhanced and they are able to ask pertinent questions about performance. Governors are linked to departments but this area of work is as yet at an early stage.
- Governors are very clear about their statutory duties, particularly in the area of safeguarding, including keeping students safe from the risks of extremism and radicalisation.
- Governors have a good understanding of how the school uses performance management to reward good teaching, tackle underperformance and accelerate improvement.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students conduct themselves in a generally courteous and respectful manner and are polite towards each other, staff and visitors to the school.
- The school has recently implemented new behaviour policies based on rewards and sanctions, which are being used consistently by teachers and are fully understood by students. Although behaviour records show there are occasional instances of poor behaviour and low-level disruption to learning, these are becoming rarer as the new processes take effect.
- Student attendance is broadly in line with national averages and there are effective systems in place for tackling non-attendance. The school is working hard to ensure that students are punctual both to school and to lessons, and there is a high staff presence at the start of the school day and between lessons to support this.
- The rates and patterns of exclusion are slightly above national averages but are reducing as a result of the proactive work undertaken by the school. This work includes close liaison with parents as well as clear in-school sanctions and rewards for positive behaviour.
- Incidences of bullying are rare. Students' awareness and understanding of potential discriminatory and derogatory behaviours and language are good. There is open discussion and debate in many subjects, in particular in personal, social and health education (PSHE), through tutor time and in assemblies, to raise awareness of issues.
- The behaviour and safety of the very small number of students who attend alternative provision are carefully overseen.
- Sixth-form students are positive role models for younger students in promoting appropriate behaviour and attitudes.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The policies and procedures for safeguarding are strong.
- Students say that they feel safe in school. This is endorsed by the majority of parents who completed the online parental survey and by the staff questionnaire.
- As a result of the high levels of information provided by the school, students know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations and they are fully aware of bullying in all its forms.
- Systems for identifying, recording and reporting any serious incidents are effective and the role of the pastoral teams in keeping students safe is a strength of the school. Staff work effectively with outside agencies to secure appropriate support for vulnerable students.
- The school highlights potential dangers and sensitive topics are handled well. Talks and speakers have informed students about the risks associated with, for example, domestic violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The learning mentors who work in the community and in the school are instrumental in highlighting the risks of extremism, drug awareness and substance misuse.

## The quality of teaching requires improvement

- In many subjects, including in mathematics, the quality of teaching varies and is not yet consistently good. Some teachers provide low-level work which is too easy; others miss opportunities to check students' learning, for example through wider questioning, before moving on.
- In mathematics, teaching enables students to answer routine questions, but is less successful at preparing

them to solve problems or tackle questions that are presented in an unfamiliar form.

- The quality of marking is uneven. Most teachers provide feedback which focuses on how students' work could be improved, and students are beginning to respond to teachers' comments. Not all marking, however, is sufficiently regular or detailed and, as a result, students are not always sure about how they could improve their work. Expectations for the presentation of work vary from teacher to teacher and the progress of some students is hampered by poor-quality handwriting.
- Where students learn well, teachers monitor students' responses in lessons carefully and use this information to adapt their teaching so that students' learning is taken forward effectively; they give appropriate attention to students with different abilities and ensure that all groups of students are suitably challenged; they provide the most able students with challenging work which enables them, for example, to express their ideas in an extended way.
- Inspectors saw several examples of teaching which engages students effectively and is pitched at a level that enables them to make at least expected progress.
- Teachers know their students well and form strong relationships. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour and establish a positive working environment.
- Good teaching in English, supported by work in humanities subjects, ensures that students learn effectively about different literacy strategies. As a result, students make good gains in their writing skills. Students are encouraged to read, both in English lessons and in their tutor time, and there are opportunities for paired reading to support development in this skill.
- Not all teaching gives sufficient emphasis to overcoming students' reluctance to use language that is new to them, such as subject-specific vocabulary.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are well supported, especially with their communication skills and, as a result, make good progress in general. Students for whom English is an additional language benefit from targeted support which enables them to achieve well.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students start school with prior attainment broadly in line with national levels. While students secure above-average attainment in some subjects by the end of Year 11, in others it is in line with averages.
- In mathematics, up until the most recent set of examination results, some progress measures for students from their starting points were significantly below national levels. Data show that, in 2014, the proportion making expected progress in this subject was broadly in line with national levels. The percentage making better than expected progress dipped significantly in 2014. Inspection evidence indicates that, although there are signs of positive improvement, achievement in this subject area is not yet consistently strong.
- Progress made by students from their starting points in English is strong and improving. The proportion of students making more than expected progress in English has increased and information collected on inspection indicates that this is significantly above national averages.
- In 2014, girls made slightly better progress than boys in English but both boys and girls made better than national levels for expected progress in this subject. In mathematics, a slightly smaller proportion of girls than boys made expected progress.
- The gap in expected progress from starting points between students known to be supported by the pupil premium and their peers has closed very significantly in English. The progress gap for this group of students in mathematics is closing but at a slower rate than in English.
- In 2013, the standard attained by disadvantaged students at GCSE was approximately one grade lower than their peers in school in English and two thirds of a grade lower in mathematics. When compared to other pupils nationally, the standard attained by the group was approximately half a grade lower in English and two thirds of a grade lower in mathematics. In 2014, the in-school gap in attainment in English narrowed but it widened in mathematics.
- Students for whom English is an additional language make good progress from their starting points in most subjects.
- Data indicate that, as a result of targeted intervention, disabled students and those with special educational needs now make very significant progress from their starting points in English. Progress for this group of students in mathematics is improving but at a slower rate than in English.
- Higher-ability students make generally good progress from their starting points. Evidence seen on inspection highlighted this in particular in art and in English.
- Alternative provision for a small number of students provides appropriate support for their overall achievement and their progress is carefully tracked by the school.

- Although there have been strong improvements at AS level in 2014, standards of performance in the sixth form are not yet good. The performance at A-level and in vocational subjects over time has shown a deficit in terms of progress from students' starting points and in their attainment when compared with national averages. Results for students resitting English and mathematics GCSE in the sixth form show good levels of conversion to grades C and above in English but poor levels in mathematics in 2014.
- The gap between disadvantaged students and their peers in the sixth form is approximately two thirds of a grade at A level and in line with others in vocational pathways; the performance of this group of students in 2014 at AS level in academic subjects was broadly in line with other students.
- Early or multiple entry at GCSE is no longer used by the school.

### **The sixth form provision**

### **requires improvement**

- The standards of achievement of students in the sixth form at A level and in vocational pathways are below national averages.
- The headteacher has taken decisive action to strengthen the leadership of the sixth form to ensure that students' achievement is thoroughly tracked and underachievement is now identified early. As a result, clear improvements have been seen in achievement at AS level in the latest set of examination data. The impact of the new approaches has yet to be seen in A-level and vocational performance measures.
- Historically, the school has adopted a very inclusive approach towards recruitment into the sixth form but this meant that students were not always placed on the most appropriate courses. As a consequence, the drop-out rate at the end of Year 12 has been high but this has shown an improvement in the most recent academic year.
- Teaching requires improvement. Where learning is most successful, teachers provide students with a range of activities to develop their understanding and deepen their knowledge, making good use of the time available. Occasionally, the pace and challenge are not aligned closely enough with the needs of the students and learning is not as successfully accelerated.
- Students are provided with extensive and impressive enrichment programmes to support them in moving to their next destinations and to enhance their future life chances. The programme includes lectures, visits to universities, work placements, volunteering and sports leadership opportunities.
- Almost all students who begin courses in Year 13 complete these and the majority are ready for, and move on to, higher education.
- Attendance is very good and students make a very positive contribution to the ethos and life of the school, supporting staff and younger students effectively.

## 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>	104698
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	453385

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1492
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Woods
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Russell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 7242087
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 7290093
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@calderstones.co.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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

