

# Wilsthorpe Community School

Derby Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 4WT

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
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

- Leaders have not been sufficiently effective in raising achievement in the sixth form or in science, a key subject.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Academic standards and progress are below the levels expected and students have not always followed the courses most appropriate for them. They do not always have the skills to manage and organise their own work effectively.
- Standards in science have not improved enough in the last two years. Progress in science has been below the levels expected.
- Students do not achieve as well as they could. Although results at GCSE and overall progress in English and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection, this is not consistent across other subject areas and for all groups of students.
- The quality of teaching is not good enough to promote good achievement. It still varies too much across subjects and key stages. As a result not enough students make good progress.
- Leaders and governors do not have an accurate picture of the school's performance.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders have improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Achievement has improved for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged students and the most able.
- Behaviour is good in this calm and friendly school. Students show respect for each other, for their teachers and for their school. This is helped by strong promotion of students' social and moral development.
- Students show a good knowledge and understanding of important aspects of staying safe.
- Strong working relationships with local primary schools result in as smooth a move to secondary school as possible.
- Extra help for pupils who join with limited literacy skills is particularly effective. Reading is promoted effectively throughout the school.
- Parents value all aspects of their children's education. The hard work of the school and governors to build positive relationships with all parents has resulted in improved attendance and reduced exclusions.
- Students benefit from a wide range of sporting activities, including local and regional competitions, and physical education is of a high quality.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons across the school, including in the sixth form. Seven of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team looked at students' work in their books and folders.
- As well as conversations in lessons and at social times during the inspection, discussions were held with three groups of students about the quality of their educational experience and the standard of behaviour in the school. The inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 102 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and considered the 56 responses to a staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered responses by parents to recent questionnaires from the school.
- The inspection team examined: the school's own information on students' recent and current progress; the school's evaluation of how well it is doing and its records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance; documents resulting from monitoring visits to the school following its previous inspection; and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Richard Boswell, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Andrew Phillips	Additional Inspector
Helen Booth	Additional Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Wilsthorpe Community School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It has a sixth form partnership with The Long Eaton School, Nottingham, in order to provide a wider range of sixth form subjects to its students.
- The very large majority of students are from White British backgrounds.
- About a quarter of the students are disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those previously known to be eligible for free school meals). This proportion is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, at around one fifth, is below average.
- The school has received support from a National Leader of Education at Chellaston Academy, Derby.
- There have been a large number of changes in staffing since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- Some sixth form students go off site to attend courses at The Long Eaton School, Nottingham.

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, and thereby raise achievement, by:
  - ensuring that teachers in all subjects have the same high expectations for all students, including those students with lower starting points
  - setting work at the right level of difficulty for students of different abilities.
- Raise achievement in the sixth form by:
  - providing students with the appropriate skills to manage their own work, for example in research on the internet and in taking notes in lessons
  - ensuring all students are suitably matched to their courses, so they finish them successfully and are well placed to make choices in continuing their education, training or employment.
- Raise achievement in science by:
  - ensuring that all students show a strong understanding of fundamental concepts, exploring them in depth, before moving on to new topics
  - providing a stimulating science curriculum in Key Stage 3, that intrigues and inspires students to ask questions about the world around them.
- Improve leadership and governance by taking a more realistic view of the school's position, rapidly putting the school's plans into action and by careful monitoring of their progress, especially by subject leaders.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although leaders have moved the school forward since the previous inspection, they have not made rapid enough improvements in the sixth form or in science to raise students' achievement in these key areas. The improvements made to the quality of teaching have not yet had an impact across all subjects, key stages or groups of students.
- The headteacher has been well supported by governors in making many of the significant changes that were identified in the previous inspection report. The school has made a considerable number of appointments of new teaching staff and leaders. This new team, under the headteacher's energetic direction, share his ambitions for the school. Parents are also very positive about the school's leadership. The work done thus far demonstrates the capacity to bring about further improvement.
- In evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school, senior leaders and governors correctly identified that the sixth form requires improvement. Their evaluation of the consistency of the quality of teaching in certain subject areas has not been as realistic.
- The school now uses a more rigorous system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. In the last 18 months, the headteacher, supported by governors, has tackled issues of underperformance. The programme of 'teach meets' and 'learning clinics' provides increasingly effective training for teachers and helps to share best practice.
- The school is further developing its detailed system for assessing and tracking students' progress. This system is familiar to, and appreciated by, both students and parents.
- Although the science curriculum requires further improvement, particularly in Key Stage 3, the headteacher has shown desire to develop a range of subjects that matches students' abilities and interests. The option of a work-related course in motor vehicle studies and an academic course in archaeology in the sixth form reflect this. High-quality physical education and broader opportunities for competitive sports are much enjoyed by students. Good teaching of numeracy and, particularly, literacy skills across the curriculum helps to emphasise reading and a love of literature. Close links with local primary schools, including the running of a 'summer camp', ease the transition to secondary school.
- The use of brief, daily snippets of television news promotes lively debate in morning registration. These 'windows on the world' are combined with visits to a variety of places of worship and of cultural interest. Visitors come to the school from a range of different ethnic communities, ensuring that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Students also have an understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and the different forms that this might take. This focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports students' good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The work that the school does in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is apparent in the improved progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, as well as disadvantaged students. The school monitors the attendance and progress of sixth form students taking courses in a neighbouring school. While the school offers independent and impartial careers guidance from Year 8, Year 7 students participate in the 'Aim Higher' programme, making visits to local universities.
- The school has made good use of advice from monitoring visits following the previous inspection and has developed a mutually supportive partnership with a National Leader of Education in a secondary school in a neighbouring local authority. The local authority has provided additional support and guidance when requested by the school and this has contributed to improvements in English and mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governors have responded well to the recommendations made in the previous inspection report, and are now more effective. More visits give them a first-hand knowledge and understanding of the work of the school, including the quality of teaching. They support the headteacher in celebrating good teaching and, more recently, in tackling underperformance. They ensure that staff are clear about the

links between pay rises and students' achievement.

- Governors' increased knowledge of performance data makes them better able to support and challenge not only the headteacher but also other school leaders. However, governors have an overly optimistic view of the school's impact on pupils' progress and attainment. They fulfil their statutory duties with regards to safeguarding and are effective in helping to promote tolerance and preparing students for life in modern Britain. Governors make sure that parents know who they are and that they are available, for example during parents' evenings.
- The governing body manages the school's finances with care and expertise, for example by checking the spending of the pupil premium funding and the funding to help Year 7 students who need to catch up in literacy and numeracy.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Students are happy in this friendly and hard-working school. They enjoy their lessons and understand the importance of their education for their future lives. Older students are clear about the improvements they have seen in behaviour in the school. There is little low level disruption in lessons and the relationships between students and staff are strong and positive.
- Students show a pride in their school and a respect for the environment that is evident in the absence of litter and graffiti. They are delighted to point out their work in the colourful displays that fill the school. Parents, staff and governors recognise the positive impact of the school's ethos on students' moral and social development.
- The school deals effectively with occasional challenging behaviour and case studies show that students with behavioural difficulties continue to make progress.
- The school works very effectively with parents and external agencies to improve the attendance of all students, and rates of absence and exclusions from school have fallen. Attendance is now above average and students are punctual for the start of the day and for their lessons. The attendance of sixth form students studying off site is also carefully monitored.
- The school listens to the views of all students from the sixth form to Year 7, and the school council is an active and respected agent for change in the school.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students report that they are safe and are looked after well, both in school and on educational visits.
- Students understand about all of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that bullying is rare and that, if it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Unkind or discriminatory language is not tolerated and students are clear that homophobic, racist or extremist comments are unacceptable.
- Safety in lessons and activities is good. For example, students on the motor vehicle studies course in the sixth form work towards a health and safety certificate. Visitors to the school are checked and monitored as appropriate.

## The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although there have been improvements in the quality of teaching, students' achievement can still be limited by their choice of subjects. Sometimes work set for students is too easy or too hard.
- Teaching in science does not always provide students with a clear understanding of the fundamental

concepts and laws behind scientific knowledge. This means that they are not then well equipped to move on to more complex topics, for example when moving from studying science in Key Stage 3 to taking it up at GCSE.

- While teachers encourage students to manage their own time and their own work in the sixth form, they do not always give them the tools with which to do the job. Some students are not given enough support in the organisation of their folders and their use of study time. They also do not get enough guidance on developing study skills such as checking the reliability of their sources when researching on the internet.
- The quality of teaching in English and mathematics has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers make regular reference to more advanced analytical skills in the classroom. This provides a good level of challenge for the most able.
- Teachers' planning always takes into account the needs of disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Support staff play an important role both in the classroom and in one-to-one support for these students. Teachers are also aware of disadvantaged students in their classes and ensure that additional support means that there are no barriers to their learning. This is resulting in gaps in achievement narrowing between these students and others.
- Students and teachers show a mutual respect and this helps to create mature attitudes to learning. The marking of students' work is thorough and systematic. Students understand teachers' assessment of their work and they are set homework that offers an appropriate level of challenge for all students.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Overall, students on academic courses in the sixth form have not made good progress since the previous inspection. There is also considerable variability in performance between subjects.
- Students on work-related courses have made better progress in recent years and the sixth form met the government's minimum standards for achievement in 2013.
- Since the previous inspection students have made progress in science that is below the level expected. The proportion of students gaining the highest grades has also been below average. Very recent changes in staffing and leadership have yet to result in significantly improved outcomes for students currently in the school. However, students say that they now enjoy their science lessons and the new leader of science has undertaken a comprehensive review of the subject area.
- While the proportion of students making expected and more than expected progress in English and mathematics from Year 7 to Year 11 has improved in the last two years, this has not been consistent, year on year, for all groups of students. For example, the proportion of students exceeding expected progress in mathematics improved in 2013, but declined in 2014. In English, students with lower starting points did not make the expected progress in both 2013 and 2014.
- Overall standards at GCSE are now broadly in line with the national average and the progress of students currently in the school shows improvement in most subjects. This is largely as result of improvements in the quality of teaching and the students' good attitudes to learning. From a slower start in Year 7, those in Key Stage 3 and moving into Key Stage 4 are making more rapid progress. Students do particularly well in physical education, and all students who took the GCSE in 2013 achieved A\* to C grades.
- The most able students are making increasingly effective progress in English from Year 7 to Year 11. In mathematics they made good progress in 2013, although this was not as strong in 2014. Standards are improving for the most able, although the proportion of students achieving the highest grades at GCSE or in the sixth form has yet to rise above the national average. The school has used early entry to GCSE examinations in recent years in order to motivate its students and the most able have attained as well as similar students nationally.
- The disadvantaged students make similar progress to other students in the school. In 2013, the last year

for which there is national data, the gaps between these students and other students nationally in English and in mathematics were equivalent to half a grade at GCSE. The gaps in school, in both subjects, were nearly a whole grade. However, these gaps, both nationally and in school, narrowed from the previous year as a result of the school using pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one and small class teaching for these students.

- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are catered for more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection. These students now make better progress in English and mathematics. More regular monitoring of the reading ages of students allows for better identification and tracking of their needs and progress.

### The sixth form provision

### requires improvement

- The school's track record of academic achievement in the sixth form is below average. Students' performance in different subjects is not consistently good, including that of the most able students. Not enough students continue their academic studies from Year 12 to Year 13, particularly in science subjects. Achievement in academic subjects is not as good as in work-related subjects.
- Leaders have a realistic view of the performance of the sixth form. Nevertheless, leadership and management require improvement. Leaders have not always ensured that students are entered for the most appropriate courses. Until very recently, the practice of students taking both level 2 and level 3 courses has not helped them to achieve well at either level. It is too early to judge the success of the changes now made to entry arrangements, although the partnership with a neighbouring school provides opportunities to study a wider range of subjects.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is not consistently good across subjects and courses. Students do not have a 'toolkit' of study skills that they can use to manage their own learning across their subjects, such as internet research and note-taking.
- Sixth form students are role models of good behaviour for younger students. They learn about keeping safe, including personal security on the internet, as they prepare for their lives beyond school.
- The very small number of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, and disadvantaged students, usually make similar progress to other students. Sometimes it is much better, because expectations are now higher for this group of students than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Students say they enjoy their time in the sixth form and that staff are knowledgeable and helpful regarding careers and higher education choices. An increasing number go on to take courses at university.
- Sixth form students play an active role in the life of the school and take on responsibilities for mentoring younger students. Those who take the popular course in motor vehicle studies are well prepared for employment and are equipped with the appropriate health and safety training.

## 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>	112935
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	450867

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>	746
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pam Ashley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jonathan Crofts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 972 9421
<b>Fax number</b>	0115 946 1974
<b>Email address</b>	info@wilsthorpe.derbyshire.sch.uk

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