

Maidenhill School

Kings Road, Stonehouse, GL10 2HA

Inspection dates 9–10 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students' achievement is not yet good. The proportion gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is below average. The proportion of students making expected progress is also below national figures.
- Achievement in some subjects, including mathematics and science, is improving too slowly.
- Some students with special educational needs do not achieve as well as they could.
- Some of the most able students do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that all students make good progress. Some of the work set is not challenging enough, particularly for the most able. As a result, some students are not motivated by tasks and this can slow their progress.
- The school does not ensure all parents are involved in their children's education.
- Some subject leaders are not yet effective in using the school's systems for improving learning.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress is improving, particularly in English. Those taking GCSEs in 2015 are making more rapid progress in English and mathematics than the previous group. The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students and others has narrowed consistently in English.
- Students are proud of their school. Their conduct is respectful and orderly.
- Standards of safety are exceptionally high. Students know how to keep themselves safe and seek help. Parents are confident their children are very well cared for.
- Leaders, including governors, have started to take effective action to ensure that teaching and progress have begun to improve. They have created an environment in which all students feel valued and understand the importance of education in their future success.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons and two tutor sessions over the two-day inspection. A number of observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with students from all year groups. Inspectors also met with three governors, senior and middle leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 46 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses from staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised students' books and a range of documents provided by the school, including its improvement plan, self-evaluation, safeguarding and recent achievement data.

Inspection team

Venetia Mayman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sue Cox

Additional Inspector

Peter Thomas

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Maidenhill School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are of a White British heritage.
- The proportion of students who speak English as a second language is well below average.
- There are more boys than girls, but this has reversed in the current Year 7.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding to support students known to be entitled to free school meals and children who are looked after) is slightly above average.
- A small number of students attend Stroud College part time. A small number of students attend Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision on a temporary basis. This provision is a local authority maintained Alternative Provision school.
- The proportion of students arriving and leaving during the course of their secondary education is well above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up improvements in teaching so that the improvements in English and literacy are reflected in rapid progress by students in all subjects by:
 - ensuring that every teacher helps students to aspire to the highest level of success, particularly the most able, by setting challenging tasks that motivate the students
 - making sure that all teachers use questioning effectively to check understanding and extend students' learning.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that all subject leaders are fully involved in driving school improvement by using the school's systems for improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Develop effective strategies for involving more parents in their children's educational success and the work of the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a determined, rigorous and resilient leader. She and her senior team are now working well and this has helped to secure the recent improvements in achievement. They are increasingly effective in laying the groundwork for students to make the most of their future opportunities.
- Very accurate and effective checks ensure that there is a targeted programme for improving teaching so that more is now good. There is now good leadership of teaching and secure capacity for the school to continue to improve.
- Improvement planning is based on information on students' progress, which is gathered frequently. Leaders have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school has been effectively supported by Gloucestershire local authority. A comprehensive programme of support, including coaching of teachers and middle leaders, reviewing governance, teaching, progress and provision for students who are disabled or have special educational needs, has contributed to the improvements that have begun to take place.
- Leaders ensure that performance management of teachers is rigorous and that this is reflected in the amount teachers are paid. The school leaders are increasingly effective in making good appointments.
- Overall, subject leadership has improved since the previous inspection. The leadership of English and of student support is a particular strength. The system for grouping students in 'communities' is well led and students express respect for, and trust in, community leaders. New leadership of mathematics and of the learning of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is beginning to have a positive effect on progress of these students.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and well matched to students' needs. Students enjoy the wide range of additional activities available after school, particularly the sporting opportunities. Leaders effectively promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students enthusiastically speak about the good attitudes staff and other students display. 'When you come into the school in Year 7 you feel part of a team, not an individual alone.' 'I am glad I came to this school, you feel like a person, not a number.'
- Equal opportunities are ensured and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The school has worked hard to improve students' awareness of the wider world and has gained the International Schools Award. Students show respect and tolerance, they are beginning to widen their understanding of the variety and richness that make up modern Britain.
- There are opportunities for student leadership and a school council. However, some students in Key Stage 3 express a view that they do not know much about what the school council does or how effective it is.
- Careers information, advice and guidance are effective, as shown by the consistently high numbers of students moving on to employment, education and training. The school works with local businesses, colleges and universities to provide a rich variety of interesting opportunities for students to learn about future careers.
- All aspects of arrangements for safeguarding of students meet statutory requirements. These are monitored rigorously by senior staff. Absence is rapidly followed up. Support for vulnerable learners and work with other agencies, such as social care, help students to be safe and successful. Checks on the attendance and progress of those educated off site are thorough. Students behave well and make good progress in these settings.
- The range of strategies in place for improving the performance of disadvantaged children, through pupil premium funding, has been consistently successful in English. Improvements in mathematics for this group have been uneven.
- Parents are kept well informed. They believe that their children are happy and safe in school, well behaved and well taught. However, despite steps taken by the school to involve parents, a significant minority do not attend parents' evenings.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, know the strengths and weaknesses of the school in detail. They have a more detailed knowledge of the school than at the time of the previous inspection. They have benefited from more training and a review of governance and are ambitious for the success of the school.
 - Governors hold the headteacher and her leadership team to account. They know how the school performs in comparison with other schools, that improvement has not been rapid enough and in which areas. They support the headteacher in tackling weaknesses in teaching and achievement, ensuring that good teaching is rewarded.

- Governors understand the school's policies on safeguarding and receive regular reports.
- Governors monitored rigorously the historical budget deficit, which the local authority has now removed. They know how the pupil premium is spent and are aware of the need to accelerate improvement for disadvantaged students in mathematics.
- Governors are aware that the involvement of parents in all aspects of college life is a priority for the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Parents confirm this. They appreciate the improved design of the building and treat it with respect. Student conduct around school is calm and ordered. Exclusion has reduced consistently because of the good range of strategies in place for helping students behave in the best way they can.
- Students educated temporarily in Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision improve their behaviour.
- Students greatly appreciate their school and talk about how it has improved. They are proud of this.
- Students' attitudes to other members of the school community are a strength. Staff set a good example of respectful attitudes. Younger students talked often of the way the school is a kind place.
- The vast majority behave well in lessons and have good attitudes. They say they enjoy learning.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students, including checks on the recruitment of staff, are exceptionally rigorous and monitored closely by senior staff.
- Attendance is above average, and improving, as a result of highly effective systems of following up absence and the fact that students want to be in school. Students arrive promptly at lessons. The attendance of disabled students, those with special educational needs and disadvantaged students has improved and is above average.
- Incidents of bullying of all types are rare. Students and parents say that where bullying occurs it is dealt with effectively and immediately. There are high levels of trust that the school will keep students safe.
- Students are highly informed about how to keep themselves safe from, for example, online bullying. They look forward to lessons in the Learning for Life curriculum, and were greatly impressed by the play about child sexual exploitation, 'Chelsea's Choice'. Students were very articulate about the way in which young people can avoid being victims of any kind of exploitative behaviour by having confidence in themselves.
- Care for vulnerable students is highly individualised and sensitive. Work with other agencies, such as social care, is very strong, with the school initiating contact, monitoring risk and making sure that such children always have someone to confide in.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching is not yet good and improvements since the previous inspection have not been rapid enough.
- There have been clear improvements to the quality of teaching in English and this is leading to better achievement. However, the proportions of students making and exceeding expected progress are not yet above national figures.
- As a result of improvements in the teaching of history, religious education and catering, achievement is beginning to improve. Some teaching of physical education, resistant materials, chemistry and biology is not yet good enough to ensure that students achieve well.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics have been slowed by changes in staffing. New leadership of mathematics is now helping to secure better teaching and students' achievement in mathematics is beginning to improve.
- Where teaching is most successful, questioning is precisely matched to the needs of learners, they are highly engaged and hungry for more. One student told inspectors that her humanities teacher, 'Makes you want to find out more after lessons and is always there if you have questions.' The school has introduced a consistent approach to marking and students frequently write answers to teacher comments, practise spellings or rewrite sentences. They say this helps their learning.
- Where teaching is less effective, there is not enough challenge in the work set and students, especially the

most able, often find tasks too easy and are not motivated to make rapid progress.

- Sometimes questioning is not used well to extend learning and check students' understanding. As a result, progress slows.
- The teaching of literacy is a growing strength. Younger students have recently improved their reading scores as a result of the good teaching they have received. Students are enthusiastic about the new library and some read widely. Strategies for improving spelling, punctuation and grammar are consistently used and result in better writing.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school with attainment which is broadly average. The progress they make from their starting points is not yet good, but has improved recently. Outcomes for some students are negatively affected by changes of school. In 2014, the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, was below average. However, attainment and progress of the current Year 11 are significantly better than that of the previous year, despite lower attainment on entry to the school.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is now improving. In the case of English, improvement has been consistent and sustained. Improvements in achievement have been seen in history and catering, with above average attainment and good progress. Attainment in chemistry, biology, physical education and resistant materials is well below average.
- Some of the most able students do not achieve as well as they should. This is because they are not always given work that is challenging enough for them.
- Those educated in alternative provision make good progress.
- The attainment and progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs have been below expectations overall, and some have not achieved as well as they are able. However, this is improving as a result of careful, personalised help and these students are now beginning to make more rapid progress.
- Differences in attainment at the end of Year 11 in English, for disadvantaged students and others in the school and nationally, have reduced significantly to one third of a GCSE grade. Similarly, in mathematics, the gap has narrowed compared with others nationally who are not disadvantaged. However, when the mathematics results of the disadvantaged students are compared to their peers in the school, the gap has widened to one and two thirds of a GCSE grade.
- The school previously entered a very small number of students for early examinations. This did not improve progress and the school is no longer using this approach.

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	115775
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	449005

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	499
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eric Dawson
Headteacher	Mrs Pam Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 December 2012
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