

# Tewkesbury School

Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury, GL20 8DF

**Inspection dates** 26–27 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.

- The quality of teaching is not yet good. The good practice present in the school is not shared well enough.
- Some teachers do not use the information they have to make sure that the work given to students is at the right level of difficulty. Sometimes the work provided is not hard enough.
- The quality of marking varies. Students do not always receive the necessary advice on how to improve their work.
- Some students do not make the progress that they are capable of by the end of Year 11, particularly in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged students are not closing the gaps with others in the school quickly enough.
- The most able students do not always reach the highest possible standards.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Some sixth form students do not make enough progress.
- Leaders, managers and governors have not yet ensured that teaching and achievement have improved enough to be good. Strategies that have been introduced have not yet led to sustained improvement.
- Some teachers with subject responsibilities do not check effectively that school policies to improve teaching and achievement are being followed.

### The school has the following strengths

- Achievement is improving. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is increasing.
- Standards in English have improved. By the end of Year 11, many students make good progress in English.
- Provision in the sixth form is improving. The school makes sure that students follow only appropriate courses and this is beginning to raise achievement.
- The headteacher, supported by other senior leaders and governors, has introduced initiatives that are leading to better teaching.
- Students' behaviour is good and they feel safe in the school. Arrangements to keep them safe are robust. In almost all lessons, they show a genuine desire to learn.
- Governors are developing a detailed understanding of the school and are playing an active part in its improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 44 lessons, seven of which were observed jointly with members of the school’s leadership team. They also visited an assembly and several tutor groups.
- Inspectors looked at students’ work in lessons and carried out two detailed scrutinies of their written work in several subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with three groups of students to hear their views on learning and behaviour in the school. They also spoke informally with students during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities and four members of the governing body. An inspector held a telephone conversation with the school’s improvement consultant to gather further evidence about the school.
- Inspectors examined a variety of school documents. These included records of current students’ progress, unpublished examination results for 2014, self-evaluation and improvement plans, and behaviour and attendance logs. Inspectors also examined minutes of meetings of the governing body and records relating to safeguarding and the management of staff performance.
- Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 26 members of staff and 112 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.

## Inspection team

Sean Thornton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Bowles	Additional Inspector
Steven Colledge	Additional Inspector
Peter Rodin	Additional Inspector
Julie Summerfield	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Tewkesbury School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, about one in five, is below average. These students are supported by the pupil premium which is additional funding provided for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is about one in ten. This is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding, one in eight, is below average. The funding is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- About one fifth of the students in Year 10 and Year 11 spend part of their time studying work-related courses at the Tewkesbury campus of Gloucestershire College, called the 'Launchpad'.
- The school became an academy in January 2012.
- The school's 'Tewkesbury Learning Centre' provides emotional support for students when needed.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- Several new appointments have been made to the leadership team.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better throughout the school by ensuring that:
  - all teachers use information about students' progress to challenge them with work at the right level of difficulty.
  - the good practice in the school is shared effectively so that all staff use questioning that deepens students' understanding and make sure that students progress well throughout their lessons
  - all teachers follow the school's policy on marking and feedback so that all students receive clear advice on how well they are doing and how to improve their work.
- Raise achievement by ensuring that:
  - the most able students reach the highest possible levels of attainment in all their subjects
  - disadvantaged students close the gaps with others
  - students make rapid and consistent progress throughout the sixth form
  - students make faster progress in mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that all teachers with leadership responsibilities make sure that agreed school policies are implemented consistently by:
  - carefully checking the quality of teaching and students' progress
  - ensuring that the results of these checks are used promptly to plan improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching is not yet good and, consequently, students are not making enough progress.
- As a result of new appointments, the headteacher is now well supported by senior leaders and staff with subject responsibilities. Together they are making significant improvements in the overall leadership and management of the school. They have begun to improve the quality of teaching and raise students' achievement, showing the capacity to improve the school further.
- Senior leaders have systems in place to check teaching and achievement. However, the way in which information from these checks is used by some subject leaders is not always effective. This means that students are not always challenged to make the best possible progress. The school is working to improve the consistency of the work of subject leaders, and senior leaders are leading these improvements.
- Training takes place regularly for teaching staff. However, the impact of this on students' learning is not checked rigorously and, as a result, teaching remains too variable.
- School self-evaluation is thorough and broadly accurate. School improvement plans are detailed and show clear priorities for further improvements in teaching and achievement. Some of these plans, however, do not contain enough detail on how these improvements are checked over time.
- School leaders ensure that the school's systems for managing behaviour are followed consistently so that students' behaviour is good and supports their learning.
- The school checks carefully that all students attending off-site provision attend regularly, that they make progress in their learning and that there are no concerns about their welfare or behaviour.
- The school's system for setting targets for teachers is well organised, rigorous and related fully to teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. Evidence shows that salary progression occurs only when merited by sustained good performance.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The range of subjects and courses is well managed and meets the needs of the school's students. More difficult courses have been introduced for the most able students to raise their achievement. Provision for younger students is varied according to their abilities, and in Key Stage 4 there is a good balance between GCSE courses and high quality work-related qualifications. Partnerships with other schools and Gloucestershire College increase the range of opportunities offered to students. The school is reviewing both its curriculum and assessment arrangements in the light of recent changes to the National Curriculum.
- Students in all key stages benefit from a good programme of advice and careers guidance. This ensures that they make well-informed choices about their futures.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, both through the curriculum and the general life of the school. There are many opportunities for reflection and for celebrating achievements, together with effective assemblies which deal with sensitive issues. The school provides many enrichment activities in music, drama and a wide range of sports. Students from all backgrounds work well together in the school.
- The school has not been able to rapidly reduce the achievement gap for disadvantaged students in recent years. However, the school has commissioned an external review of its pupil premium programme and leaders are now making better use of the additional funding to support disadvantaged students. These students benefit from extra small-group teaching in English and mathematics, one-to-one tuition, and emotional support when this is needed. A summer school is organised to aid the transition from primary school for many vulnerable students and their families. The impact of this work is not yet fully established.
- All requirements for safeguarding are fully met.
- The governors and headteacher ensure that the school rejects all forms of discrimination, fosters good relationships and promotes equality of opportunity. The emphasis on mutual respect and tolerance, supported by a good programme of careers advice, prepares students for life in modern Britain.
- **The governance of the school:**  
Governors have carried out an audit of their skills and reviewed their responsibilities in order to improve their effectiveness. They feel well informed about all aspects of the school's work. Governors have a good understanding of how well the various groups of students are progressing and of most of the published performance information on the school. They challenge the headteacher and other school leaders when this is necessary to improve the school further. For example, governors have enquired why the school's own views of students' progress are sometimes over-generous. Governors are involved in checking the quality of teaching by visiting the school frequently and holding discussions with subject leaders. They understand the importance of improving teachers' performance and have been involved in tackling areas

of underperformance. Governors work with the headteacher to ensure that teachers' pay increases are linked to their performance in raising achievement. They manage finances well and understand how the additional funding is spent and how it is now helping to improve the achievement of current eligible students. Governors ensure that their statutory responsibilities are fulfilled and that safeguarding requirements are fully met.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students in lessons and around the school is good.
- In almost all lessons, students concentrate well, showing positive attitudes and a desire to learn. Most students persevere with their work even when finding it difficult and contribute well to class discussions. Occasionally, when teaching does not interest them sufficiently, they participate less well.
- Students show pride in their school and wear their uniforms smartly. There is very little litter and no signs of graffiti. Students are well prepared for their lessons and settle quickly to their work, so that very little learning time is lost.
- Students move calmly around this large school site. Behaviour around the school at break times and change of lessons is orderly and good natured. Students show courtesy to each other and to adults.
- The rate of fixed term exclusions is below average. This is because the school employs a range of sanctions and rewards, and works closely with parents to improve students' behaviour. Staff in the 'Tewkesbury Learning Centre' provide support for any student who is having emotional problems.
- Students' strong social and moral development enables them to respect each other and understand the consequences of their actions. This contributes to their good behaviour.
- Attendance is at least average in all year groups. It is increasing as a result of close monitoring, the use of rewards and prompt actions when students are absent.
- In their responses to the Parent View questionnaire, a small number of parents did not agree that behaviour was good or was well managed in school. However, no evidence to support this was found during the inspection.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Governors are currently deciding on how to further improve the physical security of the school site.
- The identities of all visitors to the school are checked carefully to ensure that their visits are appropriate.
- Almost all students feel safe in all parts of the school.
- The curriculum supports students in learning how to stay safe. They have a good understanding of e-safety, including how to avoid unsafe websites.
- Most students reported that incidents of bullying, including racial or other forms of prejudice-based bullying, are rare and are dealt with swiftly by the school's staff. The school stresses the importance of reporting any incidents of bullying so that they can be dealt with promptly.

## **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement. It is not consistently good enough across the school to ensure that students make the best possible progress from their starting points.
- Some teachers do not use information about students' progress to plan activities at the right level of difficulty for their students. As a result, the most able students are sometimes not challenged to make their best possible progress.
- Teaching is having an increasing impact on raising students' achievement. In particular, teaching is leading to rising standards in English and mathematics.
- Where learning is more effective, teachers provide a variety of engaging activities for their students and ensure that no time is wasted. They check students' understanding frequently and use questioning skilfully to make sure that students are making good progress. This good practice is not yet shared enough across the school.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly. However, marking does not always provide sufficient guidance on how well students are doing and how to improve their work. Some teachers do not check to see if students have acted on the advice given. This limits students' progress.
- The school has introduced a scheme to improve younger students' reading and this is leading to rising

levels of literacy.

- Relationships between teachers and their students are good so students confidently ask for advice when they are unsure about what they are doing. Teachers manage students' behaviour well so that little time is wasted in their lessons.
- The school checks the quality of teaching provided for students who spend part of their time off site at the 'Launchpad'. These students benefit from effective teaching in their work-related courses.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students' achievement requires improvement because there are variations between subjects, within subjects and between groups of students.
- Students who completed their courses in 2013 joined the school with above average levels of attainment. The standards they reached at the end of Year 11 were broadly average, showing that they did not make the progress expected, given their starting points. Unpublished results for 2014 show that attainment has improved and that students are making better progress.
- Examination results and the school's own information show that in the past, students have not made enough progress in mathematics. However, a new subject leader for mathematics and several new teachers have been appointed and students currently on roll are now making much better progress.
- The progress that the most able students make is too variable because work is not always challenging enough. In some subjects, the proportion of students gaining the highest grades is not as high as it could be.
- Disadvantaged students do not all make good progress. In 2013, the attainment of disadvantaged Year 11 students in English was one grade below that of their peers and that of other students nationally. In mathematics, these attainment gaps were both one and a half grades. Unpublished results for 2014 show that these gaps in attainment are now reducing. Initiatives introduced with younger students are proving effective in raising the achievement of disadvantaged students in Key Stage 3.
- The school's system of checking students' progress has been improved. However, some assessments are not reliable because they are over-generous. The school is working to improve this.
- Achievement is improving, particularly in English, where many students reach above average standards by the end of Year 11. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics is increasing.
- School leaders have taken strong actions to raise standards and these are showing increasing effect with younger students. These actions, however, have not yet had time to show sustained impact in some subjects by the end of Year 11.
- Additional funding for those students in Year 7 who need help to catch up with their peers in English and mathematics provides additional small teaching groups. Almost all these students make good progress.
- The progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs is similar to that of other students and currently requires improvement.
- Students who attend off-site provision gain valuable work-related qualifications and their progress overall is good.
- The school is continuing to enter students early for their GCSE examinations in English because staff consider this to be in the students' best interests. Governors support this policy because it raises the final achievement of all groups of students. There is no evidence that it limits the potential of the most able students.

### The sixth form provision

### requires improvement

- The sixth form requires improvement because some sixth form students do not make rapid enough progress to fulfil their potential.
- A new leadership team has been established in the sixth form and new systems have been introduced to raise achievement. These systems, however, are in their early stages and have not yet had time to demonstrate sustained improvements.
- Checking students' progress by subject areas is not always reliable so that sometimes leaders do not have an accurate picture of the sixth form's strengths and weaknesses. New systems, however, are leading to more accurate assessment.
- Historically, some students followed courses that were not appropriate to their needs and abilities. The

sixth form curriculum has now been modified into two pathways and entry requirements have been raised to address these weaknesses. This improved provision is enabling current sixth form students to make better progress.

- The behaviour of sixth form students is good. They provide good role models for younger students. The school ensures that sixth form students are safe and secure at all times.
- Achievement varies between subjects. For example, the small number of students who follow work-related courses make slower progress than other students. Progress also varies between the stages of the sixth form; students in Year 12 make slower progress than those in Year 13. Sixth form leaders are aware of this and are taking strong actions to remedy it.
- Students report that they benefit from teaching that makes them think and work hard. Observations during the inspection confirmed this view and many examples of good teaching were seen in sixth form lessons.
- Sixth form students feel that they are part of a coherent community. The 'Futures' programme prepares them well for their adult life, careers and higher education. Community service is a compulsory part of sixth form life and Year 13 students take their roles as senior prefects very seriously, providing good role models for the rest of the school.

## 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>	137752
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	451246

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>	Academy converter
<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>	1420
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Howard Davis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 July 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01684 292152
<b>Fax number</b>	01684 850742
<b>Email address</b>	office@tewkesburyschool.org

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

