

Shenley Brook End School

Walbank Grove, Shenley Brook End, Milton Keynes, MK5 7ZT

Inspection dates

21–22 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders at all levels have high expectations for students and staff. They have worked effectively to establish a culture of learning and a sense of belonging for students and staff alike.
- Leaders have acted effectively to reverse a previous decline in students' achievement in English and mathematics and close gaps in achievement between disadvantaged and other students.
- Teachers receive a wide range of effective training and support which contributes well to developing and maintaining good quality teaching.
- The school provides well for students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. The school prepares students well for life in modern Britain.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They keep a close eye on the school's performance and hold leaders to account well.
- Students achieve well in most subjects. The gap in achievement between disadvantaged students and others is typically small. In some subjects and years groups, there is no gap.
- Almost all teachers have high expectations of students. They teach lessons that engage students' interest and provide suitable challenge for those of varying abilities.
- Teachers' skilful use of questions helps students deepen their learning.
- Students' behaviour around the site and in a notable number of lessons is exemplary. Low-level disruption is very rare in most lessons. The school's work to keep students safe is robust. Students feel safe from bullying.
- Students make good progress in most subjects in the sixth form. Teaching is effective and a range of opportunities in and outside of lessons help sixth-formers develop the skills and understanding needed for life beyond school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teachers of science and humanities do not always teach lessons that help and challenge students to learn well. In these lessons, some students drift off task and cause low-level disruption.
- A few teachers do not mark students' work well enough. In such cases, students do not receive useful timely feedback to help them improve and take full responsibility for their learning.
- The proportion of sixth form students gaining a Grade C or above when retaking GCSE mathematics is improving but is still not high enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 45 lessons, 27 jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors undertook a number of shorter visits to lessons to look at students' behaviour and teaching in humanities and science.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, teachers, support staff and groups of students. The lead inspector observed the headteacher speak about the school to a group of 40 aspiring headteachers who were attending a course at the school's Leadership and Training Centre.
- Inspectors reviewed a number of documents, including safety procedures, behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation and planning documents and the academy's records on performance management and teaching and learning.
- Inspectors took into account 76 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) survey and 75 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Diana Choulerton, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional Inspector
Steven Edwards	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hazlewood	Additional Inspector
Colin Lower	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Shenley Brook End School converted to become an academy school on 1 May 2011. When its predecessor school, also called Shenley Brook End School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school. It has a large sixth form.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is average, as is the proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest proportions being of Black African and Indian ethnicity.
- The proportion of students eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for children who are looked after by the local authority and students known to be eligible for free school meals) is lower than that found nationally.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- A very small number of students attend full-time alternative education through the Stevenson Trust.
- The school meets the current government floors standard, which sets the minimum expectations for student's attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a national leader of education (NLE).
- The school is a Teaching School within the Denbigh Teaching School Alliance and has a Leadership and Training Centre based at the school. In this role the school provide a range of support to other schools in and beyond the local area.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all teachers of science and humanities teach lessons that engage students' interest and provide suitable levels of challenge for students of varying abilities, so they learn and behave consistently well.
- Ensure teachers' marking and feedback are always of a consistently high standard, so students can take full responsibility for developing and improving their work in all the subjects that they study.
- Significantly increase the proportion of sixth form students that gain at least a grade C when they retake mathematics GCSE.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is committed to a school community that learns together and prepares students for all aspects of life beyond school. Leaders at all levels share this commitment. They have high expectations and have worked effectively to establish a culture of learning and a sense of belonging for students and staff alike. The headteacher's open and approachable manner has been key to achieving this.
- Leaders have a well-developed understanding of the quality of teaching and areas for development. Subject leaders regularly look at students' work, visit lessons and review achievement data. Senior leaders, including the headteacher, pay frequent short visits to lessons and alert team leaders to any issues or concerns. Teachers who need it are provided with coaching support to help them improve.
- All teachers engage in a wide range of training and support, including research, coaching and peer reviews, so they can continually improve their practice. The high level of skill which many teachers displayed during the inspection is testament to the effectiveness of this.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding and Year 7 catch-up funding. A range of support, including individual and small group session in English, mathematics and science, helps disadvantaged students make good progress and catch up with their peers.
- The school has a clear commitment to promoting equality and tackling discrimination. Work on racism is strong. Work to raise awareness of homophobia is not as well developed. However, assemblies cover the issue and leaders are producing guidance for staff on tackling it.
- House leaders carefully track students' achievement and make sure they have support to catch up when needed. Student support services are on hand for students who need help with pastoral matters. All students have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers all the national curriculum subjects. At Key Stage 4, students have a suitable range of academic and practical subject options to select from. The curriculum effectively promotes students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Students in all year groups study a life skills course, which covers topics including keeping safe, self-development, health education, and discrimination. Older students take a qualification in religious education. Teachers promote spiritual, social, moral and cultural development well in lessons. Examples seen on inspection included drama students discussing body image, art students considering their dreams for the future and students in a science lesson considering what a world without animal testing might be like. Tutor time, assemblies, after-school clubs, student council elections and regular trips, including to the theatre, concerts and art galleries, also make a strong contribution. The school prepares students well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have made sure that arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Staff receive suitable safeguarding training. Risk assessments and recruitment processes are sound.
- Leaders receive regular information on the progress, attendance and behaviour of the small number of students who attend full-time alternative provision. The school is increasing the frequency with which they receive this information, so they can respond more quickly if the provision is not meeting a student's needs.
- Students have varying views on the helpfulness of careers advice and guidance. Some students expressed reservations and a few felt pressured to join the school's sixth form, whereas vulnerable learners and sixth formers spoke positively about their experience. Sixth-formers described how they had explored alternatives to the school sixth form when they were in Year 11. Leaders have rightly identified careers provision as an area for further development and are undertaking a review of its effectiveness.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have successfully challenged leaders to reverse declining performance and continue to hold leaders to account for further improvements. Directors of learning report termly to governors on performance in their areas of responsibility and governors check that leaders have suitable targets for bringing about improvements in teaching and achievement. Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance.
 - Governors check regularly on the progress of disadvantaged students to make sure that pupil premium funding is spent effectively.
 - Governors fulfil their statutory duties for safeguarding.
 - Governors keep a close eye on the school's finances. They know how teachers' pay relates to performance and they are planning ahead to avoid any future financial shortfalls.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Students typically behave themselves well in lessons. They show enthusiasm for their learning and engage well in the tasks at hand. Punctuality to lessons is good and students come well equipped and keen to learn. Where teaching is strongest, behaviour is outstanding. Inspectors witnessed outstanding behaviour in about a third of the lessons they visited during the inspection.
- In a few lessons, behaviour is not as impressive. In these lessons, not all students receive the challenge they need to keep their interested and engage fully in their work. Students drift off task or chat about unrelated matters.
- The atmosphere in this large school is happy, business like and purposeful. Students conduct themselves in an exemplary manner around the school site. Their behaviour towards each other and to staff is respectful and polite. Students take pride in their school and their appearance. Uniform rules are adhered to and litter is rare. Students spoke positively about the school and their experience of it.
- The school monitors the behaviour of students attending alternative curriculum provision. Students usually behave well and work with concentration.
- Exclusions have fallen over the last two years. There were no permanent exclusions last year and the proportion of students excluded for a fixed term was in line with that seen nationally.
- Attendance is in line with that seen nationally.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it does occur. Students say that they feel safe at school, and parents agree.
- Students typically have a well-developed understanding of issues related to discrimination and bullying based on prejudice. They are tolerant and understanding of difference.
- Life skills lessons help students understand how to take calculated risks and keep themselves safe when using social media and out in the real world.
- Suitable arrangements are in place to make sure that students who attend full-time alternative provision are safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers typically have high expectations of students. In most subjects, students tackle interesting and engaging tasks suited to their varying abilities. Teachers have good subject knowledge and well-developed strategies for helping students learn effectively. They regularly ask questions to check students' understanding and help them think more deeply about their learning. Students receive helpful feedback in most lessons and engage in useful self-assessment which enables them to improve their work. As a result, students learn well during lessons and over time.
- Teaching of science and humanities is not consistently effective. Some teachers of these subjects set students work that is not challenging enough. Not all teachers' marking is giving students the information they need to improve their work and learn well.
- Students typically have well-developed literacy and communications skills. Inspectors witnessed students reading confidently and writing well in a wide range of subjects across the school. The school assessment process encourages students to reflect on their development of these skills and identify areas for improvement. Reading is promoted through weekly quiet reading sessions and the school's busy library runs books weeks and hosts visits from authors.
- Teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 3 and 4 is effective and students develop good numeracy skills. Other subjects contribute to this development. Examples of this include students plotting graphs in science and measuring, weighing and marking-out in design and technology.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students achieve very well across the school in a wide range of subjects. Variations in progress between different groups of students are increasingly small. Inspectors saw evidence of students making strong progress in many lessons visited during the inspection.
- Historically, students typically reached well above national standards and made strong progress across

most of their subjects. However, students' achievement in mathematics and English has declined over the last three years. In 2014, the proportions of students making expected progress was just in line with that seen nationally. Instability in staffing and several changes of leadership in English have contributed to this decline. Leaders' effective actions have arrested this decline and students' achievement in English and mathematics is now better. However, the proportions of students in Years 10 and 11 on track to exceed expected progress in English by the end of Key Stage 4 are lower than those seen nationally. This is because of students' previous slower progress in the subject. There is a better picture lower down school.

- Students' achievement in science GCSE has improved over the last three years. However, it is not consistently strong, particularly in the single science subjects. Leaders are continuing to take action to address this, but have been hampered by difficulties in recruiting science teachers and the resulting need to use temporary staff.
- Disadvantaged students are increasingly achieving well. In 2014, by the end of Key Stage 4, these students were on average less than a third of a grade behind other students in the school and nationally, in both English and mathematics. In the previous year, disadvantaged students completed Key Stage 4 a grade behind in English and over a grade behind in mathematics. The proportion of disadvantaged students making expected progress in mathematics from their different starting points was close to that of other students in the school and much closer to other students nationally than in 2013. In English, the gap closed more modestly. Disadvantaged students in the school are broadly on track to do as well as their peers. A gap remains in English in Year 10 but it is much smaller than that seen in 2014.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make broadly the same progress as other students. Progress in English is strong. Teachers and support staff make sure these students have helpful targets for improvement and receive support when they need it, so they can learn well.
- Students who speak English as an additional language and those from Black African and Indian ethnic backgrounds make noticeably better progress than their peers. They do at least as well as, and often better than, similar groups nationally
- The most able students are making good progress and are on course to do well. A leader takes responsibility for tracking the progress of these students. She makes sure support is provided if they are underachieving.
- Students who attend alternative provision receive the support they need to stay in education and make positive progress in their learning.
- Leaders entered all students for mathematics GCSE early in the last academic year. The most able students did not do as well as similar students nationally. Early entry appears to have limited their opportunities to achieve the highest grades.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Sixth formers typically achieve well and are effectively prepared for life beyond school.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. It has the same strengths as teaching in the rest of the school.
- Students' achievement across academic subjects is in line with that seen nationally, and in vocational subjects it is slightly above the national averages. Most students who retook English GCSE in 2014 successfully gained grade C. This was a notable improvement on the previous year. Students retaking mathematics GCSE have not been so successful. Only two of the nine students who retook the subject reached a C grade. However, this is an improvement from 2013, when no student gained a grade C or above.
- Tutor time helps students reflect on social and moral issues and prepare for adult life. An inspector witnessed students engaging in mature and considered debate about the nature of racism in one tutor group. In another, students had been looking at issues around homelessness and mental health issues and were moving on to look at managing their own finances. Students regularly work in small groups with their tutor to review their progress.
- Students get involved in the wider school community through a range of activities, including supporting lessons in other year groups. This contributes well to their development as responsible citizens.
- Students are mature, well behaved, tolerant and respectful of difference. They understand how to look after themselves and keep safe.
- The relatively new head of sixth form is taking action to improve weaker aspects of the provision. She is working with the director for work-related learning to improve opportunities for work experience and she has sharpened the system which staff use to refer students for support.

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	136730
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	449421

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1521
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	354
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Malpass
Headteacher	Glen Martin
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01908520264
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