

# Sandon Business and Enterprise College

Sandon Road, Meir, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire, ST3 7DF

## Inspection dates

14–15 January 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement is inadequate and has declined since the last inspection. A culture of low expectations has become acceptable across the school.
- Too few students make the progress they are expected to make by the end of Key Stage 4, in particular disadvantaged students and those who are more-able.
- Students' attendance is well below the national average. Systems to improve the attendance of students are not effective.
- Students do not make enough progress because teaching over time is inadequate. Teachers do not use information about what students can and cannot do in different subjects in their planning and teaching. As a result, students are not challenged in lessons and quickly become bored and distracted. Teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are too low.
- The quality of marking of students' work is inconsistent. It does not help students to improve their work.
- Leaders, including governors, have failed to stop the decline in students' achievement and attendance.
- Systems for safeguarding students do not meet statutory requirements. The checks on adults working in the school are not robust.
- The extra funding given to schools to support disadvantaged students has not been used well enough to halt the decline in these students' achievement and attendance. The gaps between disadvantaged students, their classmates and other students nationally, continue to widen.
- Leaders and governors have not tackled significant weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics and science since the last inspection.
- Senior and middle leaders do not use information about achievement, attendance, behaviour and teaching to identify where things are going wrong and act quickly to bring about improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- A well-structured reading programme is beginning to improve students' reading skills.
- Students told inspectors that students from different backgrounds get on well together.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 57 lessons, including short visits to lessons; some observations were with senior leaders. Inspectors visited form time, and observed students during breaks, lunchtimes, and around school at the start and the end of the day. One inspector visited an assembly.
- Inspectors met formally with three groups of students, and also spoke to students in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the interim headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors and two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspection team considered the views of 13 parents who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire. The views of 40 staff that completed Ofsted's staff questionnaire were also analysed.
- A variety of information was analysed about examination results, students' attendance, behaviour and current progress information. The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation which included school development plans, a self-evaluation report, external reviews, and records related to keeping students safe.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

## Inspection team

Helen Reeves, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Stephen Wall

Additional Inspector

Catherine Davies

Additional Inspector

Marcia Harding

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- Sandon Business and Enterprise College is smaller than the average-sized secondary school with 787 students on roll.
- The majority of students attending the school are White British, with a much lower than average proportion of students attending from minority ethnic groups.
- An above average proportion of students are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after).
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below the national average.
- A small number of students attend courses away from school at Phoenix, Round1 Academy, Kinetic Academy, MERIT and Stoke on Trent College.
- An interim headteacher has been in post since October 2014.
- Based on their unvalidated 2014 results, the school does not meet the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum standards expected for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve systems for safeguarding students so that statutory requirements are met by ensuring that all necessary checks are carried out and documented when recruiting staff.
- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that students' achievement accelerates, particularly in mathematics and science, by ensuring that teachers:
  - use the information about what students can do to plan lessons that meet their abilities, in particular the most able
  - insist on higher expectations of what students can learn in lessons and over time
  - ask questions in lessons that encourage students to think more deeply about and reflect on their learning
  - mark students' work regularly, providing helpful comments on how to improve
  - consistently and effectively challenge low-level disruption so that the focus is on learning in all lessons.
- Close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and other students nationally by:
  - analysing achievement information across subjects in all years to provide well-planned support where it is needed
  - making sure that the pupil premium funding is effectively allocated and monitored to raise students' achievement.
- Improve the attendance of all groups of students to at least the national average by:
  - developing systems to identify and tackle regular absence
  - monitoring trends of absenteeism
  - evaluating the success of actions taken.
- Improve leadership at all levels, including governance, so that leadership has a greater impact on students' achievement by:
  - evaluating rigorously the quality of teaching throughout the school, using information about students' progress as well as observations and scrutinies of students' work

- improving teaching where it is needed
- addressing the key areas for improvement in mathematics and science, which include measurable criteria by which success can be judged
- analysing more thoroughly other information gathered in the school, such as students' attendance, punctuality, exclusions and behaviour and using this information to target actions in a more focused way that lead to improvement
- ensuring that students are taught by teachers who have a strong subject knowledge in mathematics
- ensuring that governors receive clear, analytical reports on students' progress and behaviour and the quality of teaching so they can be more effective in challenging and supporting the school.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### are inadequate

- Safeguarding arrangements do not meet statutory requirements. The school has not been supported or guided well by the local authority in meeting its safeguarding duties. For example, no one at the school had received or sought out training on the accurate completion of the single central register. This is a record of all the important safeguarding checks that have been made by the school.
- Leaders have failed to halt the decline in students' achievement since the last inspection and, as a result, the underperformance of all groups of students has continued. A culture of low expectations has become acceptable across the school.
- Leaders and governors have not made sure that students' underachievement and well below average attendance are addressed. They do not sufficiently analyse the information about the achievement and attendance of different groups of students to plan and implement actions for improvement.
- The school's system for monitoring the quality of teaching is not effective in driving improvement. Too much emphasis has been placed on the observation of the teaching without detailed scrutiny of the work in students' books and consideration of the achievement of groups of students. Consequently, leaders do not have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching. In addition, the individual training needs of different teachers are not met.
- The quality of the work of subject leaders is variable across the school, as shown in the achievement of students. While some have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of their subject area and effective plans to drive improvement, others do not.
- Leadership in mathematics and science is inadequate. The decline in students' achievement has not been tackled effectively since the last inspection.
- Additional government funding to support the most disadvantaged students is not spent effectively to improve the achievement of these students.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and has been reviewed recently to ensure that it provides equal opportunities for all groups of students. The introduction of personal, social, cultural and health education days each term provides good opportunities to explore a range of different issues. The teaching of British values of tolerance and respect is well planned into assemblies each term, and tutor time has become a valuable opportunity to discuss the news and topics relevant to young adults in today's society. Students responded exceptionally well to a very moving and motivational assembly delivered by the interim headteacher during the inspection.
- Students in Year 8 receive detailed advice and guidance to help them make their subject choices for GCSEs, which start in Year 9. Students undertake work experience and Year 11 students are provided with guidance about colleges and apprenticeships. Information provided by the school suggests that the majority of students go on to further study or training after leaving school.
- In mathematics, just under half of the teachers are not subject specialists. Lack of subject knowledge has resulted in mathematics classes being moved around different teachers for different topics. As a result, students' progress has not been tracked carefully and teachers have not been effective in addressing the needs of the individuals in the different groups. These weaknesses have contributed to the poor performance of students in mathematics.
- The interim headteacher has an accurate picture of the considerable weaknesses and relative strengths of the school and has begun to address the most urgent areas for improvement. These include: reducing disruption in lessons; providing guidance to teachers to help plan lessons; making changes to the curriculum; and providing support for teachers by working with other local schools. He has also implemented rigorous performance management processes, which previously were not sufficiently robust. These actions are fully acknowledged and welcomed by the staff. However, this work has just begun and it is too early to measure its impact.
- The school has supported the development of good relationships between different groups of students in the school by promoting equality of opportunity. Students told inspectors that classmates from different backgrounds get on well together; any racist behaviour is not tolerated.
- The school regularly checks on the attendance, achievement and behaviour of students who attend courses away from school.
- The local authority has an accurate picture of the significant weaknesses in the school. They have offered the school support since the last inspection. However, local authority officers report that this support was not taken up by the school, and in addition, despite the decline in students' achievement, the local authority did not act quickly enough to tackle these weaknesses. The interim headteacher evaluates the support and challenge of the local authority as effective, because they now regularly check on the

achievement of all students.

- The school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have not been effective in challenging school leaders. They do not have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and have not been actively involved in deciding whether teachers should or should not receive pay rises. Governors have not held senior leaders to account for the continuing decline in students' achievement, and the widening gaps in the performance of disadvantaged students and other students nationally since the last inspection. Governors do not understand the information about achievement of students well enough to ask the right questions. Governors have little understanding of financial planning, the new special educational needs and disability code of practice.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

are inadequate

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is inadequate.
- Students who spoke to inspectors expressed concern at the number of lessons each week that are disrupted by poor behaviour. When the teaching is well planned and challenging, students respond well in lessons. Students reported that average and lower ability groups were more likely to cause disruption to lessons. Inspectors' observations in lessons confirmed this to be the case on some occasions.
- Students do not move quickly to lessons. Between lessons, students collect books from their lockers or fill up water bottles. These delays result in sluggish starts to lessons and valuable learning time is lost.
- Too many students arrive late to school. The sanctions applied for lateness have not had an impact on the number of students who are repeatedly late to school.
- Levels of exclusions from school are high. Disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs are excluded from school more frequently than others. The school does not systematically record sufficient information about incidents of exclusion. Consequently, leaders are unable to identify patterns in exclusion and act quickly to limit the amount of school days lost through exclusion.
- The behaviour of students attending courses away from school is checked thoroughly. The different providers regularly update the school on students' behaviour and achievement. Some of these students who did not behave well in school have settled into their placements and over time become more motivated, with an improved attitude towards their chosen courses.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate.
- Systems to recruit staff and documented information about the adults working in school are not robust. Some staff have not received the appropriate training.
- Attendance is well below the national average. Leaders have not acted quickly enough to reduce the large numbers of students who regularly take time off school. Leaders do not sufficiently check on attendance information to speedily investigate students' or groups of students' absence. This limits the support that can be given to families to improve attendance and prevent some students missing so much learning time.
- Students told inspectors that they generally feel safe in school, with the exception of lunchtime. The dining hall is crowded and students can wait a long time to collect their lunch. Movement at lunchtime in both the building and outside in the playground is boisterous.
- Students have a good awareness of different types of bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying. Students are very clear that any incidents of this nature are well dealt with by teachers, and the appropriate action is taken.
- The attendance of students attending courses away from school is closely checked on and the appropriate safety checks have been carried out.

### The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate. Due to weak teaching over time, most students fail to make the progress they should. There is not enough teaching that is good, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Teachers do not use the information about what students can and cannot do in order to plan activities that are at the right level of difficulty for them. In lessons, learning is slow, tasks are not challenging, and students lose interest quickly. Teachers do not take enough account of what students should be learning.

- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what students can achieve. Where learning is more effective, teachers demand hard work and good behaviour. As a result, students are energised by their learning and make better progress.
- Students' confidence and skills with number and mathematical problems are not strong. This is having a negative impact on their achievement in other subjects. For example, in science, students were unable to calculate the results of an experiment accurately because of mistakes in simple addition and subtraction. Teachers' planning in lessons other than mathematics to develop confidence with numbers, is not well established.
- Marking of students' work and the quality of feedback to students is inconsistent across different subjects. The introduction of a common marking policy is not used by all staff. Some students' books have very few teacher comments to help students improve. Marking of spelling and grammar is inconsistent. Inspectors observed effective examples of marking in history, art, and English, where comments from the teacher clearly help students improve their work.
- Presentation in students' books is variable. Diagrams can be inaccurate, and some handwriting very untidy. Some students arrive to lessons without the correct equipment. Untidy work in Key Stage 4 books is likely to hamper students' ability to revise for exams.
- Teachers do not use a range of questioning in lessons to explore what students understand about their work. Questions often only require single word answers and do not encourage a much greater depth of thinking from the students. When teachers' questioning is well-planned and challenging, for example, in English and religious education, students are encouraged to think deeply about possible answers.
- Teachers do not encourage students to think for themselves or provide them with ways to find out the answers to questions. As a consequence, students are over-reliant on teachers and quickly give up when they are stuck with their work.
- Teachers are not clear enough about what they want students to learn when planning lessons. Teachers do not check on how well students are learning during lessons. As a result, they fail to amend their lessons to secure students' ongoing understanding.
- In lessons, inspectors observed some teaching assistants working well under the direction of the teacher, and supporting students in different ways in order to further the development of their knowledge, skills and understanding. In these lessons the teachers and teaching assistants planned together to ensure that the needs of students were met. However, where teachers' expectations were not high enough, students underachieved.
- A well-structured programme to improve reading skills is in place in Years 7, 8 and 9. This programme is successfully developing the reading skills of students and encouraging students to read more at home. However, teachers' planning for reading and literacy across all subjects, is not well established.
- Registration time is used well to explore relevant issues from local and international news and also to build confidence with words, grammar and spelling. Students attend assemblies each week which also encourage students to think hard about the world in which they live, and how they make a positive contribution to British society. These opportunities promote tolerance and respect for diversity through a carefully considered programme of themes across the school.
- The interim headteacher has very recently introduced booklets for teachers that provide simple yet very useful information to help them plan for the range of students' needs they teach. Teachers have also had training on how to plan what students are expected to learn by the end of each lesson. Teachers have welcomed these initiatives, but it is too early to measure the impact of this work.

## The achievement of pupils

## is inadequate

- Since the last inspection achievement has declined. Not enough students make the progress expected of them.
- The proportions of students gaining five GCSE A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, in 2014 was much lower than the national average. These results were much worse than the school's predictions.
- Students start at the school with broadly average ability in English and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 4, they do not make enough progress and fewer students than seen nationally make expected progress in English, mathematics and science.

Only 17% of disadvantaged students achieved five GCSE A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics. The achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their classmates in both English and mathematics has widened since the last inspection, to just under a grade in English and just over a grade in mathematics. The gap has also widened when compared to other students nationally: disadvantaged students achieve just under a grade lower in English and almost two grades lower in

mathematics.

- In 2014, the number of students making expected progress in English was just below the national average. The number of students in English making more than expected progress has increased since results in 2013, but remains below the national average.
- In mathematics, the number of students making expected progress and more than expected progress has declined since the last inspection. Only just over a third of students made the progress they should.
- Few of the most able students across the school make the progress they should. In mathematics, two thirds of the most able students failed to make the progress expected of them. In 2014, not all of the most able students attained five A\* to C grades at GCSE.
- Attainment in English, English literature and religious studies in 2014 was above the national average.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs also make inadequate progress. Leaders do not keep a close enough eye on how well these students are doing. Leaders were unable to provide detailed information about the achievement of these students.
- Assessment information for the current Year 11 in school would suggest that a large number of students will not make the progress expected of them. These predictions remain below the national average for both English and mathematics.
- The school no longer enters students early for GCSE mathematics. In the past this strategy prevented too many of the most able students from achieving the highest grades.
- The school does not evaluate the impact of the Year 7 catch-up funding (additional funding provided by the government to support Year 7 students who join the school with below average skills) rigorously, to know if it has had an impact on students' achievement.
- The achievement of the small number of students who study courses away from school is broadly average.



## 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>	124389
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-On-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	452838

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	787
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Albert Griffin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Castrey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2013
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<b>Email address</b>	info@sandonmail.com

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