

Heritage High School: A Mathematics and Computing Specialist College

Boughton Lane, Clowne, Chesterfield, S43 4QG

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that students make good or better progress across different subjects.
- In 2014 the proportion of students gaining five good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, was below the national average.
- Students' progress is improving this year, but still not as good in mathematics as it is in English.
- Teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment information to plan work that fully stretches or challenges students of different abilities.
- Teachers do not always make full use of the expertise of teaching assistants to support and extend students' learning.
- Some subject leaders are not holding teachers to account for the quality of teaching or the progress made by students in their areas of responsibility.
- Staff are not consistently applying the school's new policies for improving marking and literacy.

The school has the following strengths

- Extensive training and more rigorous systems to check the work of the school mean that governors are now better informed and increasingly challenge leaders to do better.
- The executive headteacher and associate headteacher are clear about what needs to be done to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Their actions are already having an impact.
- Staff use effective systems to keep students safe.
- Achievement in English is improving because of better teaching and more effective use of assessment information to plan more challenging work for all abilities of students.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are polite and respectful towards adults and each other.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a variety of activities in lessons and the many after-school clubs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 30 lessons to observe the progress and engagement of students. Six of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- A number of other lessons were visited briefly to review the quality of the work in students' books to judge the effectiveness of marking, the progress of students over time, and the accuracy of the school's assessment data.
- Other aspects of the school day were observed, including assembly, tutor time, students' behaviour at break, lunchtime and between lessons, and students' arrival and departure from the school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior staff and subject leaders. A meeting took place with seven governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a discussion was held with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with students formally in meetings and informally in lessons and at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors took account of the views of the 49 parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire and the school's own parental survey. They also considered the 50 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents including: the school's data on students' progress and its self-evaluation and improvement plans; training arrangements for teachers and other staff; checks on the quality of teaching; attendance records and behaviour logs; minutes of governing body meetings; documents relating to students' safety; and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.

Inspection team

Ann Behan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Edwards	Additional Inspector
Roger Whittall	Additional Inspector
Elaine Hamilton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional government funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Currently, 23 students attend part-time work-related courses away from the school site. The providers are: Landmarks College, Chesterfield; Chesterfield College, Chesterfield; Groundworks, Bolsover; Age UK, Chesterfield; and Jig-Saw, Chesterfield.
- Since January 2015 the school has been led jointly by a temporary executive headteacher and a temporary associate headteacher. A permanent headteacher will take up post in April 2015.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers plan work that is at the right level of difficulty to challenge all groups of students
 - teachers apply the school's marking and literacy policies consistently well
 - the expertise of all teaching assistants is used effectively to support students' learning in lessons.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders at all levels check that all policies and systems for improving teaching are consistently applied by all staff
 - subject leaders take full responsibility for the quality of teaching and students' achievement in their departments.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school's senior leaders and governors have not done enough to ensure that teaching and the progress of different groups of students are consistently and routinely good.
- The acting executive headteacher and the acting associate headteacher are providing strong leadership. Since their appointment in January 2015 they have had a positive impact on improving teaching and students' progress. However, the changes they have made have not yet had sufficient impact on students' attainment, which remains below average.
- The leadership and management of teaching are improving. Senior leaders have correctly identified what needs to be done to improve standards and raise achievement, and their new strategies and policies have already secured improvements in teaching and learning. However, they have not ensured that policies to improve marking and promote literacy are consistently applied by all staff.
- Not all subject leaders are providing good leadership. Some have lacked rigour in monitoring the work in their areas. They have not been quick enough to challenge underperformance of staff or held them to account to make sure they consistently apply policies for improvement. Recently, senior leaders have clarified the roles of subject and pastoral leaders, and have provided them with training so that they are better skilled to lead and manage their areas of responsibility more effectively.
- The school's evaluation of its performance has become more focused and accurate over the last few months. This is because of the introduction of better systems for monitoring teaching and tracking students' progress.
- The system for managing staff performance has recently been revised and is now more closely linked to the checks on the quality of teaching and the tracking of students' progress. Teaching staff and non-teaching staff are set more exacting targets which must be met in order to be rewarded financially. The support systems for staff who need help have been revised and extended. Recent evidence shows that these have had a positive effect on improving teaching.
- The courses students study generally match their abilities and interests well. Students said they value the independent advice that they receive to help them make informed choices for future education and careers. Almost all students successfully progress to education, training, apprenticeships or work at the end of Year 11.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through assemblies and many after-school clubs and educational visits. Students are encouraged to take on responsibilities through the student council, acting as prefects and librarians, and through various charity fundraising events. The school's recent strong focus on understanding and promoting British values such as democracy is making sure that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Funding for disadvantaged students is increasingly being used effectively to provide additional teaching and support in English and mathematics, to promote small-group and individual work, to help improve attendance, and to make sure students have opportunities to take part in after-school clubs and educational trips and visits.
- All students have the same opportunities to take part in all aspects of school life. There is no evidence of discrimination.
- Recently the school has received excellent support from the local authority. It has provided a significant amount of training and advice for the governing body and has arranged other support for mathematics through the local teacher training school, an external consultant, and the temporary appointment of the executive headteacher. The local authority has worked alongside leaders in checking the accuracy of their

judgements on teaching and learning and improving their use of assessment data to track students' progress. It has also provided training for the subject and pastoral leaders.

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements. They include effective child protection procedures and checks on any adults appointed to work in the school.
- The school works closely with providers of off-site courses to check the attendance, behaviour, safety and progress of the students.
- The school canvasses the views of parents through questionnaires and feedback from parents' evenings. The results show that most parents are pleased with the education the school provides for students. The majority of the small proportion of parents who responded to Parent View say they would recommend the school to others.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- In the last 12 months governors have benefited from a large amount of training from a variety of sources, including the local authority and other governing bodies. They have a good knowledge of the school and are increasingly effective in challenging leaders to improve all aspects of its work. They bring a range of skills and experiences from industry, commerce, education and finance to their role. When there are vacancies on the governing body an audit of skills is taken so that any new governors bring additional expertise to the group.
- Governors are able to use information on students' progress to compare the performance of the school with others nationally. They regularly check the quality of teaching through visits, speaking to senior leaders, staff and students, and looking at students' work.
- Governors have worked with the executive headteacher and the associate headteacher to improve the systems for managing the performance of staff. They have linked targets closely to the quality of teaching and students' achievement and make sure that salary progression only occurs if staff meet exacting targets. Increasingly they are dealing with underperformance swiftly and effectively.
- Governors check the school's finances closely, including how effectively additional funding for disadvantaged students and Year 7 'catch-up' are being used to improve these students' progress.
- Governors oversee all statutory child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures. They make sure that the school effectively promotes the British values of respect and tolerance, and that students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. There is a friendly and calm atmosphere around the school. Students are courteous and polite to adults and each other. They say they enjoy coming to school and take pride in wearing their uniform. They appreciate the modern buildings and facilities and there is little evidence of litter or graffiti around the site.
- Students are positive about the relationships that they have with staff and with one another. One student said, 'We all get on well together, we are one big happy family.'
- In lessons where work is challenging and engaging, students are eager to take part, respond well to teachers and are enthusiastic about their learning. Even when work is less challenging, and students are not always focused fully on their work and sometimes lose concentration, learning is rarely disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. This view is supported by students, who told inspectors that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and that lessons generally run smoothly. They said that on the few occasions when students misbehave, staff deal with them effectively and fairly.
- School data show that incidents of unacceptable behaviour are reducing. The number of fixed-term exclusions is low and there have been no permanent exclusions this academic year.

- Staff check closely the behaviour and attendance of students following part-time courses on other sites, and they are typically good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Systems for health and safety and child protection are thorough. The governors and senior leaders closely monitor procedures and make sure they are consistently applied by all staff.
- Students value the information about safety that they receive in assemblies, tutor periods and the programme of personal, social and health education. They are very positive about the help they receive in understanding how to use the internet and social media safely.
- Students say that bullying is uncommon, incidents of racist and homophobic behaviour are rare, and on the few occasions that they occur staff deal with them promptly and effectively. They are very positive about the role of the 'guidance managers', who they say are always there to support them if they are upset or need help.
- The school has worked hard to raise parents' and students' awareness of the importance of good attendance and has used additional funding to provide support for families of students who are regularly absent. As a result, attendance is improving and current information shows that it is now in line with the national average. The number of students with recurring absences is reducing.
- The school checks closely the safety of the students who attend off-site courses.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although improving, teaching is not yet consistently good enough to support good achievement. Teachers apply policies for marking and literacy inconsistently in different subjects. They do not always set work at the right level for all groups of students, with the consequence that the work is too easy for some students and too difficult for others.
- The quality of teaching varies across subjects. Although there have been improvements recently, teachers do not always use up-to-date assessment information to plan activities that are at the right level of challenge for different ability groups.
- Marking was an issue at the previous inspection. A new marking policy has been introduced and is having a positive impact on feedback to students. However, staff are not applying this policy consistently across all subjects.
- The school has also introduced a new literacy policy. Many teachers now give students opportunities to write extensively, in history for example, and practise technical terminology in some lessons, particularly in mathematics and science. However, this policy is not consistently applied across the school.
- In most lessons teaching assistants contribute well to students' progress. They work alongside the teachers to provide extra support for disadvantaged students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs. They provide a balance between support and challenge, so that these students progress at least as well as other students. However, in a few lessons teachers do not plan the work of teaching assistants well enough and their skills are not used to the best advantage.
- Students are encouraged to read widely at home and in lessons, and have access to a very popular, well-resourced library. This is contributing to the faster progress students are now making in English.
- Most teachers set appropriate homework to support and extend students' knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching is improving, particularly in English, and more recently in mathematics. In some lessons teachers

provide demanding and interesting work, which builds on students' previous learning and fully engages their interest. In a Year 8 English lesson, where students were using different words to create tension, the teacher used questions skilfully to gauge students' understanding and to extend their vocabulary and learning. Activities were well planned for students of different abilities, and the teacher expertly guided students to express and discuss their ideas with others in the class. The students responded well to the teacher's high expectations and probing questions and made excellent progress.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2014, the proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics was below the national average. Given their average starting points, this shows that too many students did not make the progress they should have made. Despite improvements this year, students' attainment is not yet high enough.
- The proportion of students who made nationally expected progress in 2014, using best results from retake examinations, was average in English and below average in mathematics. The proportion exceeding expected progress was below average in English and well below in mathematics. However, recent improvements in teaching, more effective use of tracking information to identify students who need extra help and better feedback to students on how to improve their work have brought about increasingly rapid progress, particularly in English. Progress is also improving in mathematics, and current assessment information and work seen in books show that mathematics is beginning to catch up to English.
- The attainment of disadvantaged students is below that of others in the school and nationally, and their achievement requires improvement. In 2014, those in Year 11 were around a GCSE grade behind their classmates in English and mathematics. In English they were close to a grade and a quarter behind students nationally, and in mathematics they were a grade and a third behind. School assessments and work seen in books show that the attainment gaps in both subjects in the current Year 11 are narrowing. The attainment and progress of disadvantaged students are improving across all year groups because recently these students are receiving more intensive, well-targeted support.
- The most able students do not always achieve their full potential because in some lessons they are not given work that stretches them. Not enough reach the higher grades in GCSE examinations. Current information shows that as teaching is getting better, their progress is improving and more of these students in Year 11 are working at the higher grades.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement in line with that of their classmates. The additional individual support they receive is helping them to make better progress this year.
- Students supported by the Year 7 'catch-up' funding make better progress than their classmates in literacy and numeracy because of one-to-one teaching and additional support in class.
- The small number of students who attend part-time work-related courses at other sites progress at least as well as other students. This is because they are able to choose courses that match their abilities and interests particularly well.
- Last year a very small number of students were entered early for GCSE English examinations and reached the highest grades of A and A* before going on to study more advanced courses in English in Year 11. The school no longer intends to enter students early for GCSE.

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	112964
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	453707

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	773
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dawn Green
Headteacher	Eddie Wilkes (executive head), Susan Dench (associate head)
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2013
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