

Stantonbury Campus

Purbeck, Milton Keynes, MK14 6BN

Inspection dates 24–25 February and 23–24 April 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Students do not make enough progress in all subjects. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged students and boys.
- Teaching, although improving, is not good. Teachers do not always check students' learning well enough in lessons. As a result, teachers move on to new learning before students have firmly grasped the basics.
- Leaders have not made enough impact on the quality of teaching. Too little teaching provides for the needs of students of differing abilities and does not offer enough challenge to students.
- Leaders do not always use assessment information about students to identify underperforming subjects and groups, take suitable action for school improvement, and measure the impact.
- Attendance, although improving, is below average. A small number of students are late to lessons, which interrupts learning.
- Students' behaviour and the school's work to keep students safe require improvement. Around the campus, behaviour can sometimes be too boisterous.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of students' behaviour and do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Where teaching is weaker, students lose concentration, their focus moves away from learning and they distract themselves and others.
- Training for staff and the targets set for them are not always linked sharply enough to the improvements needed in students' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Positive relationships exist between staff and students. Students from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds work as a harmonious group.
- Governors offer a good level of challenge and support to the headteacher and his senior staff.
- The curriculum offers students experience of a wide range of subjects that meets their needs well.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress and leadership is effective so that standards have improved over time.
- Strategies to secure improvements are beginning to yield success. Current achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, is improving.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors first visited the school in February 2015. Through no fault of the school, the inspection was considered to be incomplete. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited the school in April 2015 to gather more evidence about the school's overall effectiveness.
- Overall, 57 part lessons were observed, 19 of which were joint observations with senior leaders. Her Majesty's Inspectors also made a series of shorter visits to a number of English and mathematics lessons to look at students' work. Inspectors observed an assembly and sessions intended to help individuals and small groups of students.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, other staff, eight groups of students of all ages, and representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and assessment information about students' progress and the performance of the school. Inspectors scrutinised the school's procedures and records for safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 78 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Questionnaires from 96 members of staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Lisa Moore, Lead inspector (April)	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Long (April)	Her Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Anwar (April)	Her Majesty's Inspector
Glen Goddard, Lead inspector (February)	Additional Inspector
Kevin Morris (February)	Additional Inspector
Paul Elliott (February)	Additional Inspector
Lynn Lowery (February)	Additional Inspector
Nigel Sheppard (February)	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stantonbury Campus is much larger than most secondary schools.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for specific groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority) is above the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and students who speak English as an additional language is also above the national average. The first language of about one in five students is believed not to be English.
- The campus has a specially resourced provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs, currently providing places for 15 students with autistic spectrum disorders and 15 students with speech, language and communication needs.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is broadly average and represents one in five students in the school.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend alternative off-site provision at The Construction and Vocational Education Centre in Tiffeld, Milton Keynes Christian Foundation and SIEVEMK.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school holds the Arts Council Gold Artsmark Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement, in particular that of boys and disadvantaged students, by ensuring all teachers:
 - make effective use of assessment information about students' abilities to plan lessons that match their needs and provide an appropriate level of challenge for all students
 - check students' learning and understanding in lessons effectively before moving on to new work
 - develop excellent skills in teaching key subject ideas so that students have a firm foundation on which to base future learning.
- Improve standards of behaviour and safety by ensuring:
 - high expectations of student behaviour are applied rigorously by all staff in and out of lessons
 - students' attendance and punctuality continue to improve
 - students' attitudes to learning are improved.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by ensuring:
 - information about students' achievement is used effectively to identify and prioritise what needs to be done to improve the school, to guide the action taken and to check the impact
 - there are better links between staff training, improvement targets set for teachers, and the school's priorities for groups of students and subjects that need to do better.

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

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The Principal and senior leaders have steered the school through changes in recent years that have resulted in higher aspirations for students and a significant structural reorganisation to how the school operates. This has meant that while leaders have concentrated on improving the achievement of some groups of students, this work has not had a sharp enough focus.
- Leaders are not always using the analysis of information about students' achievement well enough as a starting point for school improvement planning or to prioritise actions appropriately. Initiatives that are put in place are not always evaluated fully in terms of their impact on students' achievement.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged students to achieve as well as they should is bearing fruit. The school's Progress Centre has given valuable support to students and their families in a variety of ways, for example through one-to-one counselling. This effective work is not always supported well enough through high quality teaching for disadvantaged students in lessons.
- The training and development programme for staff is not always linked sharply enough to issues identified from information about students' progress. For example, boys' achievement is lower than that of girls' and lower than the achievement of boys nationally. There is limited training to secure improvement for this group of students.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. It has breadth and depth and offers a wide range of subjects that is appreciated by students. The school continues to refine its curriculum, informed by its work with local businesses and regular evaluation of students' needs. Under the strong leadership of the Assistant Principal, the school has developed a robust assessment system linked to the new curriculum requirements for September 2015.
- Staff pay increases are linked to sustained improvements in students' learning. Teachers who cannot demonstrate success do not receive pay rises.
- Middle leaders understand their responsibilities and know where improvements in the work of their departments are needed. There are examples of strong subject leadership, for example in English and science. However, some middle leaders are not driving up the quality of teaching and learning rapidly enough in their areas, or being held to account for improving outcomes for underperforming groups.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through a wide range of additional activities and international links that are exploited well within the arts. A number of students spoke confidently about their awareness and involvement in the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award, and the importance of rights and respect in relationships. Students are prepared appropriately for life in modern Britain, for example through the school's involvement in a project based on the multicultural richness of Milton Keynes.
- Equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination of any kind are key principles of the school. Students demonstrate tolerance and respect towards individuals from different ethnic groups, backgrounds and beliefs. However, the school knows academic outcomes are not equally good for all.
- Helpful advice is given to students about their options, career choices and the transition into further education. Year 9 students expressed appreciation for the wide-ranging information they had received in order to make option choices.
- The school has well-established partnerships with a range of alternative providers. The school monitors effectively the progress, attendance and behaviour of those students who attend alternative off-site provision.
- The school benefits from a good relationship with the local authority. Improvement advisers have worked effectively with the English and mathematics departments to bring about recent improvements in these subjects.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a range of professional skills which are helpful to the school, including experience in the business and finance sectors. The governors have a secure understanding of the issues facing the school. Their work alongside senior leaders to investigate key aspects of the school's work has equipped them with information that enables them to challenge and support leaders effectively.
 - Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and how the achievement of students at the school relates to the national picture. They ensure that performance management of staff, including that of the headteacher, is rigorous and relates to the achievement of students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**require improvement****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- Staff do not always have high enough expectations of behaviour, or rigorously apply the school's behaviour policy, to ensure that students' attitudes support their learning effectively.
- Most students want to learn and are keen to do well. Students often behave well in lessons, but when teaching is weaker and they are not appropriately challenged, students, and in particular boys, lose concentration. When this happens learning can be disrupted by students messing around and distracting each other. Students in Key Stage 3 are less well behaved than those in Key Stage 4. Students themselves felt that behaviour by a few students sometimes prevents them from learning well.
- Students are friendly and welcoming. Relationships between staff and students are very positive and students value these. Students from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds interact together well.
- The number of fixed term exclusions, previously high, has declined to a level close to national figures. This is a result of the effective use of a range of strategies provided by the Aspire Centre.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement.
- Too many students are boisterous as they move around the school at breaks and between lessons, and use inappropriate language which is not always tackled by staff. Students say they feel safe in school but there are parts of the school they avoid because of this kind of behaviour.
- Attendance is below average, but is improving. In particular, the attendance of disadvantaged students is better than their classmates, as a result of effective support.
- A minority of students fail to move to lessons promptly. As a result, valuable time is lost and lessons are interrupted by the late arrival of students.
- All appropriate checks are made before the appointment of new staff. Staff undergo regular training so they know what to do if they have concerns about safeguarding issues.
- Vulnerable students are well supported. Staff know students well and intervene if a student needs support. The school's child protection officer works effectively with external agencies to ensure students get the extra help they need.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because, although it is improving, it is not consistently good across all subjects and year groups.
- Teachers' planning of lessons does not always demonstrate high expectations as tasks too often lack challenge. The same work is often set for all students. This means it is not always matched well enough to the abilities of students. As a result, some students find tasks too easy and do not progress as they should.
- In some lessons, teachers do not check students' learning well enough. As a result, students' learning can be superficial because students have not grasped basic ideas before moving on to more difficult work.
- Assessment is improving and staff in many areas provide students with detailed and specific feedback. Students said they valued this guidance about how to improve their work, but it is not consistent in all subjects. Teachers' assessment of students' work is accurate, following a rigorous programme of standardisation and checking within the school and in partnership with external agencies.
- There are limited opportunities for students to discuss their work or ideas in lessons. Consequently, students' speaking and listening skills are not always developed as well as they should be.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they often use well to plan interesting lessons. For example, in a Year 10 drama lesson, students of all abilities were inspired to produce high quality work because the teacher had used her knowledge to develop their skills effectively.
- The catch-up premium is used well to support Year 7 students who arrive with reading or mathematics skills below those expected for their age. For example, a high proportion of students make good progress in reading and mathematics after extra support in small group sessions.
- Strategies to improve students' literacy skills are not having a consistently good impact across the school. Students' errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not being addressed well enough in all subjects.

The achievement of pupils**requires improvement**

- Students' rates of progress vary too much across different subjects and year groups. This is a result of variations in the quality of teaching in different departments in the school.
- Students join the school with attainment that is significantly below the national average. By the end of Year 11, their attainment is below national figures. Current assessment information shows that, following a dip in 2014, standards are rising. Students' attainment and progress are better in English than in mathematics. Girls made significantly better progress than boys by the end of Key Stage 4 in 2014.
- In 2014, students performed well in science and attainment was at or above the national average for C grades, or better in GCSE examinations.
- The school's current analysis shows that, overall, students' progress is improving to be in line with, or above, that of other students nationally. The exceptions to this are disadvantaged students and boys, who achieve less well than their peers and other students nationally.
- In 2014, disadvantaged students' results in GCSE English were half a grade lower than other students in the school and approximately one grade behind other students nationally. In mathematics, the gap between disadvantaged students and other students in the school was over one grade. Compared to other students nationally, this gap was more than one and a half grades lower. Current assessment information shows that these gaps in both subjects are closing.
- Overall, students with disabilities or special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. Sometimes in lessons, teachers do not provide the right kind of materials or challenge to enable students to make the progress they should. Statemented students, including those based in the resourced provision, make good progress as a result of more specific and effective support.
- Current assessment information shows that the most able students are making good progress. This is a result of a recent school-wide initiative and a raised profile for this group of students across the school.
- Students who attend alternative off-site provision make similar progress to their classmates.
- The campus does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Students join the sixth form at starting points below those found nationally. As a result of good teaching, they make good progress and levels of attainment are rising over time. The achievement of girls and boys is broadly the same and boys do better than lower down the school. Disadvantaged students do as well as their peers and gaps are closing between them and other students.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and is more effective than the rest of the school. It is characterised by well-planned lessons based on a secure understanding of students' achievement. The strong subject knowledge of teachers is used effectively to communicate subject-specific ideas.
- The choice of courses offered to students meets their needs well, with a wide range of academic subjects being complemented in the last two years by a growing number of vocational subjects. Students' achievement in vocational subjects is a strength of the sixth form.
- Students receive good quality advice, guidance and support when they join and leave the sixth form from the supportive sixth form leadership team. However, a small number of students take too many courses in Year 12 and are unable to cope, so they drop one. They do well in the remaining subjects but, as a result, some valuable time is wasted. The number of students going on to education, employment or training, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, is above national figures.
- Students behave well, show respect for each other and staff and set a good example to younger students. More could be done to enable them to work with and support younger students, something which they are keen to do.
- Good pastoral care means students know how to stay safe and how to avoid health and well-being risks. Attendance is better than in the main school.
- Leadership of the sixth form is effective, so that standards have risen over a sustained period. Leaders have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. Good use is made of assessment information to identify weaker subject areas and to put effective plans in place to address these.

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	110526
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	453591
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,974
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Denny
Headteacher	Chris Williams
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 March 2013
Telephone number	01908 324400
Fax number	01908 324401
Email address	enquiries@stantonbury.org.uk

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