

Ellis Guilford School and Sports College

Bar Lane, Basford, Nottingham, NG6 0HT

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders are tackling the legacy of previous underachievement and improvement has been rapid. Consequently, students are making good progress in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Leaders work closely and effectively with the local authority and the Quadrant C Leading Edge Partnership to improve the quality of teaching.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons with clear focuses that engage students.
- Teachers assess students' progress regularly and accurately. They use a range of approaches to identify gaps in students' knowledge and understanding.
- Students identified as falling behind are helped to catch up through well-planned support sessions.
- Disadvantaged students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive timely and effective support so that they make good progress, closing gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Behaviour is good and students feel safe. The vast majority of students are courteous and polite. They express consideration and friendliness.
- Governors, staff, parents and students report significant improvement in students' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Notably, there has been a rapid decline in exclusions and absence.
- The headteacher provides clear leadership. Senior leaders, governors, staff, parents and students support her well.
- Leaders rigorously check the quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, and students' progress. Effective actions have improved the quality of teaching, behaviour and progress.
- The curriculum includes academic and work-related courses that appeal to students' aptitudes and interest. Students benefit from good careers guidance and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The inclusion faculty helps students overcome effectively a range of challenges to their learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in science does not always stretch and challenge students sufficiently to ensure that all groups make good progress.
- Teachers do not always check that students respond to the advice they give, and complete the assigned 'gap tasks'.
- The most-able students are not consistently stretched or challenged enough so they can achieve the highest grades.
- The behaviour of a small minority of students is not always consistently good and their attitudes to learning are not always positive.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 44 lessons. Eight of these observations were completed jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed students at breaks and lunchtimes and attended tutorial periods.
- Discussions were held with students, staff, governors, the headteacher and a representative from the local authority.
- Insufficient responses from parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, meant that inspectors could not use them. Inspectors took account, however, of the 454 responses to the schools' own questionnaire, based on Parent View, and correspondence from parents. They also took account of 132 responses to the school's own staff questionnaire.
- A wide range of documents was examined including samples of students' work, information about students' progress, the school's development plan and self-evaluation, records of any poor behaviour, records of governors' meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to students read, and observed support lessons in reading and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Emma Brown	Additional Inspector
Joseph Skivington	Additional Inspector
Paul Watson	Additional Inspector
Adrian Reed	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students from a minority ethnic background is above average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported through the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- 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.
- Fifteen students currently attend off-site work-related courses at Premier Training, Zone, Nisai, Fuel, Buxton Training, Cast, SEND, Equip and TLG.
- The school works in partnership with the Quadrant C Leading Edge Partnership and LEAD Teaching Alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that achievement is higher by:
 - ensuring science teaching consistently stretches and challenges students in their learning in order to secure good progress for all groups of students
 - checking that students respond consistently well to the advice that teachers provide, and complete the 'gap tasks' they are set
 - providing the most-able students with an appropriate level of stretch and challenge to help them reach the highest grades.
- Support more effectively the small minority of students who need to improve their behaviour so that they develop more positive attitudes to learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school well. She receives good support from senior leaders, governors and staff, who all contribute to creating a culture of learning and higher expectation in the school. Effective behaviour management has led to a sharp decline in exclusions. Students' attitudes to learning are improving.
- Leaders are improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement through close partnership with the Quadrant C Teaching School Alliance and the local authority. Teachers engage in exchange visits to observe outstanding teaching. Lead teachers and lead learners provide support for colleagues through a successful coaching programme, and lead whole-school training.
- Subject leaders check the quality of teaching in accordance with the school's quality assurance calendar, which is set each term. They regularly observe teaching, conduct learning walks and undertake checks of students' books to ensure students stay on track to make the progress they need to achieve their challenging targets.
- The pupil premium is used to good effect. It provides disadvantaged students with additional support through one-to-one tuition, small-group sessions, after-school revision, booster classes, as well as access to after-school clubs including arts and sport. Consequently, standards are rising for disadvantaged students. The attendance, behaviour and achievement of disadvantaged students show good improvement.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used to target students who arrive at the school with low results in English and mathematics assessments in Key Stage 2. The 'learn-to-learn' programme, nurture groups, online literacy and numeracy software, small group work and one-to-one tuition help these students to make up lost ground quickly.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. It welcomes students from a range of backgrounds. Many students join the school mid-year and speak English as an additional language. Skilled teaching and well-thought-through approaches to transition and integration help students settle quickly. All staff effectively tackle inappropriate behaviour and have reduced the level of harassment, discrimination and bullying experienced by some students in the past. The school's calm environment for learning now supports students in making good progress.
- Students from all backgrounds get on well together, and an increasing proportion, including disadvantaged students and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. However, the most-able students are not stretched and challenged sufficiently to achieve the highest grades.
- A wide range of academic and work-related subjects is available to students through several curriculum pathways. Students benefit from opportunities to study in a variety of settings including in school and offsite. The subjects available appeal to students' abilities and interests, and help to generate good engagement and attendance. Students benefit from clear impartial careers guidance to plan their career pathways. Very few students do not remain in education, training or employment at the end of Year 11, reflecting their recently raised aspirations.
- Leaders, including governors and those responsible for subjects and students' pastoral care, monitor students' progress towards their targets each half term. Students who are not on track to achieve their potential receive additional support to close the emerging gaps in learning and restore their confidence.
- There are rigorous systems for managing students' progress, behaviour and attendance, including students educated off site. Staff check and follow up students' absence from school and offsite provision on the first day. Improved communication with families supports improvements in behaviour and attendance.

- Leaders ensure that the school's arrangements to ensure students are safe, including those attending off-site courses, meet statutory requirements. Staff are trained well in safeguarding matters and child protection. The school follows recommended guidelines for recruiting staff. Records of incidents and concerns are clear. Reporting procedures, including safeguarding referrals to the local authority, are secure.
- The curriculum promotes British values well. The vast majority of students behave respectfully and demonstrate tolerance. Exposure to the diversity of religions, cultures and non-religious systems in modern Britain is helping students to understand and value difference. The 'learner goals' of the school reflect the school's expectations for each student: that they should become responsible, engaged, ambitious, confident and helpful. As a result, students understand right from wrong, and develop good spiritual, moral, social and cultural character. Students understand the value of democracy. They participate in democratic structures and simulate national elections. Students enthusiastically elect their own student leaders and members of the school council.
- The work of the local authority to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of leadership and management is effective and leads to higher achievement for students.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective. Governors bring a range of knowledge, skills and experience to the role. They are trained in safeguarding and the interpretation of students' performance data. They monitor students' behaviour, safety, attendance and academic progress with rigour. As a result, behaviour and attendance has improved and challenging targets are set for students. Governors provide senior leaders with an appropriate level of challenge and support to improve the school.
 - Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development. They regularly monitor progress in implementing the initiatives in the school development plan, including teaching and learning. Regular reports from the headteacher and visits to the school help to keep them well informed.
 - Governors understand the value of good teaching in securing high standards for students. The governing body manages the headteacher's performance closely and uses staff appraisal to drive school improvement. Governors ensure that school leaders monitor and challenge staff underperformance effectively. Pay rises are linked appropriately to students' good progress and good teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The vast majority of students behave in a mature, polite and friendly manner. Many show consideration through their words and deeds, for instance by holding doors open for others. Students' attitudes to school and learning are increasingly positive.
- Students appreciate the rewards system and this motivates them to work hard and do well. Teachers use praise well to reward students' engagement, effort, achievement, behaviour and uniform. Students in Year 11 told inspectors how they valued the monetary vouchers issued as rewards.
- The vast majority of students cooperate with their teachers to ensure that the school is calm and purposeful. They respond to teachers' instructions quickly and sensibly. The vast majority of students also listen politely to adults and to one another, and take turns to contribute to discussions. Students understand the consequences that follow inappropriate behaviour and spoke proudly of significant improvements to the quality of behaviour more recently. There has been a sharp reduction in fixed-term exclusions. Evidence shows that staff record and report unacceptable behaviour systematically.
- Students enjoy school and attendance is improving rapidly. Punctuality to school continues to improve and students move between classes quickly. The pupil premium promotes good improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged students.
- Close checking of the behaviour and attendance of students attending off-site provision ensures they are

safe and supports good attendance, behaviour and progress.

- The school's inclusion faculty is effective in its work with students who have special educational needs or face other barriers to learning such as challenging behaviour. Skilled staff work well with students, parents and external agencies to develop students' support plans. They involve students in discussions to set targets for their personal and academic improvement. This means that students are better motivated to achieve their targets. Staff understand students' needs and help them develop good techniques to self-manage their behaviour.
- Students, particularly those in Key Stage 3, are proud to belong to the school. They take their roles as head boy, head girl, student leaders on the school council and house leaders seriously. Success in democratically held elections, interviews and a formal presentation are prerequisites for these roles. Experiences like these help students develop leadership skills. Students wear their uniform with pride.
- Students benefit from opportunities to participate in charitable work, volunteering, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, a residential ski trip, after-school clubs including arts and sport, and the mediatory approach used by the school to resolve conflict. All of these contribute positively to students' personal and social development and wellbeing.
- The behaviour and attitudes to learning of a small minority of students limits their progress. They require support to develop consistently good behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school trains students to evaluate risk in the local community. Students understand how to spot potential dangers online. They know how to use the internet safely and use privacy settings when on social networking sites. Students told inspectors that they know what to do in cases of cyber-bullying and they are confident that the school deals firmly with this issue when it arises. Few incidents of cyber-bullying are recorded.
- Students feel safe in the school. They say that there is some name-calling and some parents expressed some concern about bullying in response to the school's own questionnaire. Inspectors investigated this during the inspection and found that instances of bullying and name-calling were significantly lower than in the past. School records show that instances of bullying and name-calling are declining rapidly and are now few in number.
- The school deals firmly with incidents of a racist, sexist or homophobic nature and records show that these incidents are recorded and reported, and that there are few of them.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons with a clear focus. Teachers use regular and consistently well-checked assessments of students' skills and abilities in each subject to identify students not making at least expected progress. Teachers use this accurate assessment information to guide their planning. However, the learning activities they plan do not always stretch and challenge the most-able students to achieve the highest grades.
- In the inclusion faculty, skilled teaching and learning activities match the abilities of disabled students and those who have special educational needs and are highly effective. Good collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants leads to well-planned sessions and helps students gain age-appropriate skills, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The large majority of teachers ensure good cooperation from students because of skilled classroom management and positive relationships with students. These teachers create a positive climate in the classroom, where students feel safe to contribute to class discussion. During the inspection, in some English lessons in Year 9 and Year 10, weaker readers read aloud in a safe, secure environment and gained greater confidence as a result.

- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is improving. Additional support provided through online numeracy and literacy programmes, as well as through the 'learn-to-learn' curriculum, strengthens students' basic skills, and closes gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers mark students' classwork and homework regularly and accurately. They provide constructive comments that build students' confidence. Marking is of high quality and includes good advice to students about how they can improve their work. However, some teachers do not check that students respond to the advice they provide. This means that some students do not complete the 'gap' tasks they are set, which are intended to correct misconceptions and improve the quality of their work.
- Although, the quality of teaching in science has improved it is not yet consistently good. Some teachers do not provide enough stretch and challenge to ensure that students of all abilities make good progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards are improving rapidly, particularly in English and mathematics. From below-average starting points, students in Year 11 are on track to achieve results in 2015 that are broadly in line with last year's national average. This represents a considerable improvement on the school's results in 2014.
- In 2014, the proportion of students achieving five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics was below the national average. Attainment was also below the national average in English and mathematics. Improvements in teaching, particularly in mathematics, are resulting in students making better progress. In science lessons, however, some teachers do not stretch and challenge all groups of students to achieve their best.
- In 2014, students did not make good progress in English or mathematics. Close partnership working with the local authority and the teaching school alliance has improved the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, where it was weaker. School information, supported by students' books, shows that the proportion of students who are now on track to make expected progress, and the proportion of students on track to make better than expected progress in English and mathematics in 2015, show considerable improvement on 2014 outcomes.
- Disadvantaged students did not achieve as well as their classmates in 2014. Their progress in English and mathematics was behind that of others in the school. These results were, however, an improvement on previous years and helped to close the gap between them and their peers. On average, disadvantaged students were approximately half of a GCSE grade behind classmates in English and a grade behind in mathematics. When compared to all students nationally, they were approximately a GCSE grade behind in English and almost two GCSE grades behind in mathematics. Rigorous checks on students' progress and timely support are helping to close gaps so that higher outcomes are predicted in 2015.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs did not make good progress in 2014. Effective one-to-one tuition and small-group support is now helping students to achieve standards that are more appropriate to their age and ability. School information shows that disabled students and those who have special educational needs are on track to make better progress in 2015.
- Some of the most-able students did not make good progress in 2014 and did not achieve results in line with their ability. Some teachers do not stretch and challenge the most-able students to achieve the highest grades. School information shows that the most-able students are, nevertheless, on track to achieve higher standards in 2015.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make at least as good progress as their classmates because of the effective integration and support provided to boost their reading, writing and communication skills. These students are on track to make better progress in 2015.
- Some students from minority ethnic groups made poor progress in 2014. Purposeful teaching and targeted support have accelerated progress for these groups of students, so that higher results are expected in 2015.

- Students attending courses off site make good progress. They develop work-related skills and become more secure in their grasp of English and mathematics. These students are also on track to make good progress in 2015.

- In 2013, students entered early for GCSE mathematics so they could retake the subject and improve their grades. This strategy did not prove as successful as hoped. Students did not achieve as well as they might have done if entry was delayed until Year 11. This practice has been discontinued.

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	122828
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	462606

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	1320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Gadzik
Headteacher	Sally Coulton
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2013
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