

Turton School

Bromley Cross Road, Bromley Cross, Bolton, Lancashire, BL7 9LT

Inspection dates 12–13 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a rapidly improving school. Senior leaders and governors have addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection with rigour and intelligence. Consequently, teaching and achievement have improved and are good.
- The headteacher has been instrumental in driving this rapid improvement. Ably supported by her senior leadership team, she has ensured that everyone understands the ethos and purpose that underpin the school's aims.
- Staff recently appointed to key leadership positions throughout the school have been very effective in a short period of time.
- Students' progress in English is now very strong. Teaching in mathematics is also improving and current students are progressing well. There are improvements across all year groups and in almost all subjects.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and show respect for others.
- The attention given to students' personal development is a considerable strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to their good achievement and behaviour.
- Permanent exclusion is not used for students who have difficulties managing aspects of their behaviour because they are supported expertly by capable school staff.
- The governing body has improved its effectiveness and influence on school improvement by seeking advice and recruiting new governors who have skills that help the school to move forward.
- The sixth form is good and improving due to strong leadership.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In mathematics, students are currently achieving well but have not done so over a sustained period of time. Over time, standards in mathematics are not as high as those seen in English.
- Students' progress in French has not improved at the same rate seen in many other subjects.
- A small proportion of teachers do not give sufficient advice to students about how to improve their work. Some teachers do not ensure students present their work carefully enough or make the most of the advice that they do receive.
- In a few cases, teachers do not ensure students have a secure understanding of earlier learning before moving on to higher level work.
- Some students who did not achieve a good GCSE pass in mathematics are slow to achieve this in the sixth form.
- A few students start at the sixth form with gaps in their subject knowledge so their progress is not as fast as many of their peers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents including: the school's own data on current students' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; documents pertaining to safeguarding; and external reports on the school's performance and overall effectiveness.
- Students' current and earlier work was evaluated. Together with the school's senior and middle leaders, the inspectors undertook joint lesson observations and reviewed students' work.
- Inspectors spoke with a wide range of students. They also spoke to a representative from the local authority, school staff, governors, those with management responsibilities, and teachers new to teaching.
- The views of the 86 members of staff who completed an inspection questionnaire were taken into account.
- There were 204 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). These were taken into account. The inspection team also considered the school's own consultations with parents and students.

Inspection team

Neil MacKenzie, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marcia Harding	Additional Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Kelly	Additional Inspector
Tony Clifford	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized secondary school, where a greater proportion of girls attend than seen nationally. Applications for places at both the main school and the sixth form are consistently oversubscribed.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, and therefore eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of students whose heritage is White British is above average.
- The proportion of students whose heritage is Indian is larger in the sixth form than the main school.
- In 2014, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- In 2014, students were entered early for GCSE examinations in mathematics.
- Currently, 22 students from Years 10 and 11 attend, part-time, one of three alternative providers of education. These are Bolton College, Bolton Wanderers FC and Myerscough College. While there, students study vocational courses including hair and beauty, construction, motor vehicle maintenance and land-based studies.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a significant number of staff changes including a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and two other senior leaders. Staff responsible for the leadership and management of the sixth form have also been appointed within the last two years. A new leader of mathematics and three other staff appointments with leadership and management responsibilities for mathematics started in September 2014. A new special educational needs co-ordinator also started work at the school in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve teaching and achievement across the whole school, so that the standards seen in English are matched in other subjects, including French, by ensuring teachers:
 - plan lessons which help students develop secure basic skills and knowledge so that they are more confident and capable when moving on to more difficult topics
 - give high quality advice to students on how to improve their work, matching the best guidance seen in the school, and give students opportunities to act upon such advice
 - consistently apply the school's marking policy
 - have high expectations of their students' presentation of work and ensure that their students do too.
- Help students who join the sixth form to cope equally well with the demands of the higher-level learning required for A-level studies by:
 - identifying more quickly any weaknesses in their subject skills, knowledge, literacy and speaking skills, particularly for those students who join the sixth form from schools other than Turton School
 - providing early support to those students who need it, so they are able to make faster progress.
- Ensure a greater proportion of students who join the sixth form without a good GCSE in mathematics attain this before they leave school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported by the governing body, has quickly created a desire and belief across the school that everyone can improve the quality of their work. Through clarity of purpose, excellent relationships and mutual respect, staff and students have brought about school improvement.
- The leadership and management of teaching and learning have improved significantly. Leaders skilfully support teachers to improve their work and to raise standards for students. For example, leaders require teachers to evaluate in depth how well they are performing. Teachers and leaders regularly discuss potential barriers to students making progress and how to make improvements.
- School leaders provide a well-judged balance between rigorous accountability and professional support in order to get the best from staff. Across the school, teachers can describe examples of professional development that have made a significant difference to their teaching.
- The headteacher and governors take decisive action when individual teachers do not meet Turton School's high standards. They also reward appropriately, through the pay structure, teachers who perform well.
- Students are progressing more rapidly because there are much better systems to monitor their progress. These checks on progress are frequent and accurate. This enables teachers and subject leaders to quickly identify students at risk of underachieving. The school is then able to intervene early, so these students are kept on track. Senior leaders and pastoral leaders also use these improved systems to monitor progress and to spot any patterns in different subjects or student groups. This has helped to tackle previous weaknesses quickly, and to raise the achievement of different groups of students and that of individual students who may have previously gone unnoticed.
- Additional funds to support disadvantaged students and those who need to catch up in Year 7 are used effectively. The school spends this money in a variety of ways, including funding residential visits, and ensuring students are well nourished when at school. Those students who join the school with low reading ages improve quickly due to carefully targeted support.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has invited external evaluations from a wide range of education professionals. The school has responded very well to the advice it has received. Support from the local authority has been good. In particular, it is helping to improve the quality of leadership and teaching in mathematics.
- The leadership of the English department has improved, raising expectations of what students can achieve. English teachers, supported by senior leaders in the school, seek inspirational cultural events for students to attend and motivational visitors to the school.
- The new leadership team in mathematics is beginning to make improvements, but has had less time than their colleagues in the English department to rapidly improve student achievement. Consequently, improvements in mathematics are not as well ahead as those seen in English.
- The middle tier of leadership within the school, including subject leaders, is now much stronger. These middle leaders take responsibility for the achievement and personal development of their students and hold other staff to account for the quality of their work.
- Turton School has excellent systems to consult with parents and students. There are many examples where the school has responded positively to suggestions. These included a request from students to improve careers guidance. This has happened and students are now provided with high quality advice, information and guidance at each key transition point in their education.
- The school has excellent communications systems with all of its alternative providers. Any absence is reported promptly, enabling the school to quickly check with parents. The progress, attendance and behaviour of the students attending alternative provision are evaluated frequently and accurately.
- The curriculum is varied and fully meets the needs of all its students. Students develop very useful skills and understanding that help them adapt to their changing world through a programme called Open Minds. Topics are as diverse, ranging from financial awareness to sexual health.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a considerable strength of the school. The school's ethos and an excellent range of activities that enrich learning support this. Through faith and ethics courses, students explore their own values, cultural assumptions and those of others. They display a clear understanding of right and wrong and the need for law and order. They are very well prepared to play a responsible part in society.
- There are many opportunities to take part in sporting, artistic and cultural activities. These include very successful charity work including raising money for Bolton Dementia Support, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, first-aid qualifications, foreign educational visits and environmental work in the community.
- This is a harmonious school where all flourish. Relationships are excellent and students are happy and

enjoy coming to school. All groups of students currently achieve well, none experience any form of discrimination and there is equality of opportunity for all. Students are exceptionally well prepared to make highly positive contributions to their communities, and this is reflected in practice.

- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and are effective. Staff and students understand the routines and procedures that keep them safe at school. The high reputation Turton School has had over many years for providing excellent care and ensuring their students are safe is fully justified.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have very good capacity to continue the school's improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The effectiveness of the governing body is good and it is continuing to improve. It has been strengthened significantly by the recruitment of governors with particular expertise in finance, legal matters and education management.
 - Governors have taken steps to improve their understanding of the school's performance data and this is helping them set higher expectations for school leaders, staff and students. The governing body has always supported the school very well and it is now increasing the rigour with which it holds the headteacher and other staff to account. Governors use their good knowledge of the quality of teaching and of students' achievement to authorise appropriate pay progression and tackle underperformance.
 - Governors have a good understanding of how all funding is spent, including additional funding for disadvantaged students and for those who need to catch up in Year 7. They are improving their evaluation of the impact of this spending on current students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good
- Students say there is very little low-level disruption of learning and school records confirm this to be the case. Almost all students engage very well with their learning. In corridors, students are calm and polite. Lessons are not disturbed, even during the split lunch time arrangement in this large school.
- Students show respect for one another and for adults. Students are happy in this school. Their good behaviour and keen attitudes make a major contribution to the positive learning culture of the school.
- Systems to help those students who find it difficult to behave are very effective. On the few occasions when students are withdrawn from lessons, they are well supported and quickly return to their usual classes.
- Students are keen to take part in the wide range of activities available to them. For example, the school offers the chance to study and gain a qualification in astronomy.
- Students attend lessons promptly and are well prepared to learn. Attendance has been broadly average, with some groups not attending as well as others. However, this year, attendance has improved and is now above average, including for disadvantaged students.
- The majority of students take considerable pride in their work and, for many, their work is exemplary. However, for a small group of students, mainly boys, work can be scruffy, untidy and inaccurate. This does not happen in all subjects. Where this does occur, teachers do not always set high enough standards to ensure that students give of their best.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- The school has a highly professional approach to keeping students safe, secure and healthy. All staff are very well trained and seek to ensure students are kept safe and feel secure. In addition, some staff have backgrounds in mental health and social work.
- This considerable staff expertise means that students' needs are identified early and picked up quickly. Students who need extra help get swift, high quality support, which usually works well. The school has established excellent relationships with the parents of such students.
- Students are taught how to keep themselves safe and how to deal with potential dangers they may experience out of school. This includes e-safety and substance misuse.
- Students say there is almost no bullying. The very few students who have experienced bullying in the past say that, when they spoke to an adult about it, the problem was dealt with very promptly and effectively. All forms of prejudice-based bullying are addressed through raising awareness and understanding. Prior to the International Day Against Homophobia, Year 9 students attended an excellent assembly on homophobia and the damaging effects of it on people.

- Systems to ensure students are safe and secure are robust. The school regularly practises its well understood evacuation and emergency procedures.
- Students, parents and staff all say they feel students are safe in school and have confidence in the school's routines.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is improving rapidly because teachers are keen to improve and they are provided with very good support to do so. The assessment of students' work is now more accurate, which enables teachers to plan well-informed lessons based on what students need to do to increase their knowledge, understanding and skills further.
- Teachers are given good guidance on how to develop students' numeracy and reasoning skills. This includes standardised methods for calculations. This consistency is helping students to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- In recent times, there has been a greater focus on making sure all teachers help students to improve their reading and literacy skills. This is meeting with success and this is helping all students, and particularly lower ability students, improve their work in English and other subjects.
- For many teachers, the rigorous leadership of teaching is changing what they teach and how they teach it. There is an understanding that students who have a very secure grasp of the basics of their subject are better placed to build further on their learning and deepen their understanding. Therefore, in mathematics, for example, teachers ensure students can better explain why they would adopt particular techniques or strategies to solve problems, relying less on rules and easy repetitive exercises. Their understanding is now reinforced much more strongly by applying their learning to practical, real-life problems.
- There is a clear marking policy in the school and, when this is followed, it supports students' learning and progress very well. In line with this policy, most teachers provide very precise and valuable guidance for their students on how to improve, but not all do. In addition, even when high quality guidance is given by teachers, some staff do not ensure students act upon such advice.
- There is a very positive culture for learning and students readily support one another. Where teaching is at its most effective, teachers combine excellent subject knowledge with a very secure understanding of how their students learn. These teachers are confident, adaptable and have high expectations of what their students can achieve.
- Not all teachers know well enough what their students understand and can do. In a few cases, some students are moved on to new learning before earlier learning is secure. This leads to gaps in their understanding.
- Homework is set regularly. It is usually of good quality and assists students' learning and progress.
- Students and parents say that the quality of teaching is good. Inspection evidence confirms that this is the case.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement has improved since the last inspection and is currently rising rapidly in all year groups. Previously, progress of different groups of students was variable. Now, however, all students make better progress than they used to and there is much less variation in the rates of progress made by different groups of students.
- Achievement of students in English is currently very strong. In this subject, boys' progress in particular has improved since the school appointed two highly effective English teachers who are excellent role models. In addition, the school uses cultural visits and visitors who work with students in the school to raise the achievement of all, but with a particular focus on boys.
- Achievement in mathematics is improving and current students make good progress. Teachers have worked hard since the previous inspection to raise attainment but the results of Year 11 students last year were not as high as the standard seen in English. This was mainly due to these Year 11 students benefiting from only one year of stronger teaching following earlier weaker teaching across their Years 7 to 10. Currently, much better teaching in mathematics is raising achievement across all year groups.
- Very strong teaching ensures students make rapid progress in history, English, drama, art and graphics. Progress in French, however, is not as strong.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs now make good progress, which is

similar to other students in the school. This is largely due to clear-sighted leadership that has ensured that teachers now receive good support and advice about how to adapt their teaching to support these students' learning needs.

- The most-able students are doing well. These students continue to make strong progress because there is a good curriculum and programme of enrichment activities to support and challenge them in their learning.
- Due to closer and more effective checks on their progress, better teaching and well-informed support, lower ability students are making faster progress than in the past.
- In recent years, including 2014, disadvantaged students attained approximately one GCSE grade lower in English and mathematics in comparison to their classmates and all students nationally. Current school data shows that the attainment of disadvantaged students currently at the school is now better and is judged to be closer to that of their peers at about one half of a grade behind. The progress that disadvantaged students make compared to other students in the school and compared to all students nationally has been closing over time and continues to do so.
- The achievement of those students who attend off-site provision is good. Their progress is monitored closely and timely support ensures those who struggle with aspects of their learning make the progress of which they are capable.
- The school no longer enters students early for GCSE examinations.
- Overall, students attain very well in this school; they get good GCSE results. Students are articulate and have good literacy, numeracy and information technology skills. They are very personable and work well with one another. Students at Turton School are very well prepared for the next stage in their education, their training or for employment.
- In their responses to Parent View, most parents agreed that their children make good progress at this school. Inspection evidence supports this view.

The sixth form provision

is good

- This is a good and improving sixth form where achievement is good. This is because good leadership and management have improved the quality of teaching, support and guidance provided for students. The sixth form is very popular and approximately 40% of its students join from other schools.
- The same improved rigour in monitoring students' achievement and attendance that is seen in the main school has also been developed in the sixth form, with the same benefits. Teachers are now much better informed about what students know and understand and, consequently, are able to target their teaching effectively.
- Nevertheless, some students, a number of whom join this sixth form from other schools, have gaps in their subject knowledge. This slows the pace of their new learning as teaching has to first address these gaps before moving on to new ground.
- Students who have Indian heritage achieve very well.
- Leaders and managers understand clearly that teachers of A-level subjects need to have high expectations of sixth form students and for their own teaching. Consequently, some recent training for teachers in the sixth form has focused on making sure teaching lifts aspirations and promotes high standards for all. The good teaching now provided in the sixth form has raised, and is continuing to raise, standards.
- The attitudes and behaviour of sixth form students are excellent and they are outstanding role models for younger students. Sixth form students take an active part in school life. Their leadership skills are well developed and most take advantage of the wide range of additional opportunities available to them through the school. Students attend well and attendance is improving.
- The sixth form provides excellent care and support for students and students feel safe.
- There is no difference between the performance of disadvantaged students and others. Students from this sixth form, including those classed as disadvantaged, have been successful in gaining places in some of the country's most prestigious universities. Students are very well supported to achieve their potential, whatever their capabilities or ambitions.
- Students who join the sixth form without a good GCSE in English gain this qualification quickly. However, too few students joining the sixth form without a good mathematics GCSE attain one over the course of their studies.

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	105253
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	432345

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,643
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	400
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Owen Hughes
Headteacher	Sam Gorse
Date of previous school inspection	10 April 2013
Telephone number	01204 333233
Fax number	01204 333240
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