

New Mills School Business & Enterprise College

Church Lane, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4NR

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2015

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Inadequate | 4 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Sixth form provision | | Requires improvement | 3 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- In 2014, students did not make good progress in several subjects. Current data show that, while rates of progress have improved, students are not making enough progress in science.
- The most-able students do not consistently achieve highly and the least-able students are underachieving in mathematics.
- Not enough sixth form students are successful in their GCSE re-takes, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always appropriately challenge students in order to support their progress.
- Students do not always respond to teachers' written feedback when they are asked to do so.
- Some students lack the confidence and resilience to work well on their own when required.
- The proportion of students who are persistently absent has increased this year, and too many disadvantaged students do not attend well.
- The school is not doing enough to develop students' numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics.
- The sixth form requires improvement because the leader is not given enough time to oversee provision and ensure teachers follow a consistent approach in dealing with attendance and guidance for students.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, who was appointed at the beginning of this academic year, has led staff to quickly improve many areas of the school, so that it is no longer inadequate.
- Students are making better progress across most subjects and the quality of teaching has improved.
- Governance is good. Members of the governing body hold senior leaders, including the headteacher, to account for their work and they are well informed about the school's areas for development, including teaching and achievement.
- The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and their peers has narrowed significantly since 2013.
- Achievement, teaching and behaviour are good in A- and AS-level courses in the sixth form.
- Students are very polite, friendly, and treat their equipment and their school with respect.
- The school's work to promote knowledge and understanding of safety is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students learning in 21 lessons taught by 21 different teachers. Of these lessons, 11 were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed an assembly and a tutor period.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with students in meetings as well as informally in lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, data on students' attainment and progress, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding procedures, evaluations on the quality of teaching and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Although there were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to produce any information, inspectors took into account the 120 responses to the school's own parental survey, which asked the same questions as Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian McNeilly, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Lomas

Additional Inspector

Elaine Hamilton

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- New Mills Business & Enterprise College is smaller than the average-sized secondary school for students aged 11-18.
- The proportion of students who are White British is well above average.
- The proportion of students eligible for pupil premium funding is slightly lower than the national average. This additional government funding is for children looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is average.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision at Woodside Garage in Salem Mill.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Despite the name of the school, the teaching of business and enterprise is no longer officially classed as a specialist subject area.
- A new headteacher took up post in September 2014.
- Support to the school has been provided by Cheadle Hume High School and its headteacher, who is a National Leader of Education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and therefore achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers match work more effectively to students' different abilities, particularly the most-able, the least-able in mathematics, all students in science and those students in the sixth form re-taking GCSE courses
 - ensuring that students respond to the written feedback they are given, when they are asked to do so
 - developing students' confidence and resilience so that they are able to work more effectively on their own.
- Improve attendance by:
 - doing more to promote the attendance of disadvantaged students
 - following up unexplained absences with more rigour
 - ensuring that teachers are consistent in the way they record and deal with attendance in the sixth form.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - developing a whole-school approach to promoting numeracy across the different subjects of the curriculum
 - ensuring that the leadership of the sixth form has the capacity to oversee and ensure consistency of provision.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has had a hugely positive effect on the school since she began her role at the start of this academic year. Due to the changes she has made, and the positive actions she has encouraged members of staff to take, the school is improving quickly and is no longer inadequate.
- A culture of high expectations, while not yet consistent across all members of staff and students, is beginning to develop. The headteacher has aspirations for the children in her care and she is successfully encouraging teachers to share these. This is reflected through a new, more robust approach to behaviour which has improved this aspect of the school.
- Teaching is improving as a result of robust performance management by senior and middle leaders. All staff attend weekly teaching and learning briefings where best practice is shared. Teachers benefit from peer coaching. The impact of strategies is evaluated through senior and middle leaders' quality assurance activities. All teachers, even those judged to be outstanding, have an improvement target for teaching which is linked to whole-school priorities.
- Good leadership has ensured that students are making more progress across most subjects; senior, middle leaders and governors are fully aware of the areas which require further improvement.
- The school's self-evaluation processes reflect the headteacher's open, demanding and self-critical approach to improving the school. Middle leaders produce self-evaluation documents about their own areas of responsibility; these have been successful in identifying areas for improvement and supporting the necessary actions.
- School leaders have ensured that the pupil premium funding is being used effectively. The gaps in attainment between disadvantaged students and their peers closely significantly in 2014 and in-school data show that progress is being maintained. The most positive impact of this funding has come through the recruitment of three higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) to work in English, mathematics and science. The successful work with students eligible for pupil premium of the science HLTA was recently recognised through a national award.
- The school's work with parents is much improved. The quality of written information parents receive about their children's progress is much more detailed and helpful. The parental surveys conducted show that the vast majority of parents are satisfied with the school's work.
- Systems for the safeguarding of students are well established in the school and leaders ensure that members of staff are appropriately trained. Governors fulfil their statutory duties in this regard and they ensure that as many governors as possible are adequately trained. School leaders ensure that all governors promptly receive any new safeguarding guidance.
- The development of literacy skills is promoted well across the curriculum. During the inspection, all teachers were promoting a subject-specific 'Word of the Lesson' with the aim of increasing students' vocabulary. The development of numeracy skills is not as well promoted. There are opportunities for students to improve their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics, as seen in a highly engaging Year 8 food lesson where students were calculating the cost of ingredients. However, the whole-school strategy to promote numeracy across the curriculum is not well developed.
- Given the relatively small size of this school, senior leaders' work to maintain choice in the curriculum is good. Students can choose up to four GCSE options in Year 9, although a small percentage have to accept a reserve choice. There are opportunities to take part in a variety of sports. Girls interviewed would appreciate the opportunity to try sports other than those they study in physical education lessons, though the school does promote girls' football.
- The school's work to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, particularly through considering current issues. Students interviewed valued this work, particularly that

done to promote awareness of homophobia and other forms of discrimination. Key Stage 4 students felt that the nature of religious education lessons had changed to consider ethics as well as faiths. British values are considered. Candidates standing for parliament in the recent general election came to the school to answer students' questions. This was effective in improving students' understanding of the democratic process.

- The school is committed to ensuring that all groups of students have an equal opportunity to succeed. Leaders recognise that, in this respect, there is work to do to ensure that the most-able students achieve highly.
- The quality and impact of middle leaders have improved. They are now more involved in whole-school strategies for improvement. The recently appointed head of science, in particular, has had a very positive impact on the department she leads. Senior leaders hold middle leaders to account more robustly and, in turn, these middle leaders hold their members of staff to account for students' achievement. Middle leaders have had professional development training in undertaking accurate self evaluation; quality assurance procedures; and data analysis. This training has helped them become more effective in their roles.
- The school's use of alternative provision is very limited. Where it is used, senior leaders receive reports from the provider on the progress, attendance and behaviour of the students.
- Every Year 11 student receives a personal interview from an independent adviser to discuss future career choices, and this helps them make informed choices. The school's younger students who were interviewed would appreciate more guidance in this area, and firm plans are already in place to address this from September.
- The support provided by the local authority over the last 18 months has helped to improve the school. Local authority advisers have supported several subject leaders in their improvement work particularly through quality assuring teachers' assessments of Year 11 students in English. Effective support was brokered from Cheadle Hume High School (CHHS) who have seconded two very effective teachers to work in the priority subjects of science and mathematics. Members of CHHS's staff have also quality assured teachers' assessments of Year 11 students in mathematics and science, and CHHS's headteacher has given advice and support at leadership level.
- Systems to support necessary leadership actions in the sixth form require improvement. The teacher with responsibility for this key stage has a demanding teaching timetable and does not have the resources to lead the sixth form effectively. As a result, aspects such as attendance and enrichment are not overseen as closely as they should be.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The quality of governance has improved since the school was last inspected and is now good. Governors, due particularly to their personal involvement in half-termly departmental reviews, are well informed about the quality of the teaching and achievement in the school. They are fully aware of senior leaders' actions to address underperformance. They have all received training to make them better understand data on student's achievement.
 - Three governors, including one with professional expertise in human resources, are responsible for the headteacher's performance management. This group meets termly to discuss the progress being made against the headteacher's targets. A governor uses the *Teachers' Standards* to inform reviews of applications made by teachers to progress to a higher pay grade. The process is robust and, as a result, not every application is successful.
 - Governors are beginning to move from being reactive to proactive. An example of this was seen through their research on teachers' approaches to those students who are classed as disadvantaged, disabled or who have special educational needs. The findings are helping governors in their monitoring work.

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

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Attendance has declined this academic year. The proportion of students who are persistently absent has risen and too many disadvantaged students do not have high levels of attendance.
- The number of students temporarily excluded from school has risen and is too high. This is mainly a result of necessary action taken by senior leaders to improve standards of behaviour, and students interviewed appreciated this. Regardless, senior leaders acknowledge that the current number is more than they would usually accept.
- Students' attitudes to learning are generally positive, although some students lack the confidence and resilience to work effectively on their own.
- Low-level disruption is uncommon and students usually respond promptly to requests from members of staff. Students, members of staff and parents all believe that behaviour is improving as a result of the higher expectations, both of leaders and teaching staff.
- Students behave well at break times and when moving around the school site between lessons, although a minority, including students in the sixth form, are not always punctual.
- Students take pride in their work and in their school. Exercise books are usually well presented and there is very little litter or graffiti. Most students take pride in their uniform; those who do not are strongly encouraged to do so.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. Where they occur, members of staff take appropriate action and the school's record keeping in this regard is improved. If parental concerns remain, governors are prepared to become involved.
- No concerns have been raised about the behaviour of students in alternative provision.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Practices and documentation around safeguarding are robust, including the training of staff. The vast majority of parents who responded to the school survey agree that their children feel safe.
- There are clear procedures in place to ensure visitors to the school are suitable, checked and monitored.
- Students interviewed speak highly of the school's work to keep them safe and to make them aware of potential dangers. Outside agencies have been used effectively to increase students' knowledge and understanding of alcohol and drug use; drama was used as a medium to explore the dangers of child sexual exploitation.
- E-safety has been taught through assemblies but also through lessons in information and communication technology.
- Students have a very good awareness and understanding of bullying and the various forms it can take. Those students interviewed felt that bullying was uncommon in school and all knew what to do if any incidents should occur. Students have been taught that discriminatory and derogatory language is unacceptable.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching, though improving, is not consistently good across all subjects. As a result, not all groups of

pupils make good progress. In particular, teaching requires improvement in science and mathematics. The mathematics department has been affected by staff absence, resulting in some teaching by non-specialists.

- Teachers do not always plan to most effectively cater for the different abilities of their students. Too much teaching is aimed at students of average ability, meaning that students of less ability do not always make good progress, though it is the most-able students who are most affected by this. Most-able students who spoke to inspectors confirmed that they found some work too easy.
- The quality of written feedback students receive has improved greatly since the previous inspection. The school's approach to marking involves teachers occasionally providing extra challenges or clarifications which students are then expected to respond to. Many students do but some do not, and teachers do not always ensure this happens.
- There is some excellent practice in the school, even in some subjects which do not perform very well on a whole-department basis. Teaching is consistently good in drama, media, art and music.
- The teaching of English is improving and the approaches taken to teaching literacy across subjects is effective, with clear strategies for sharing key words and improving spelling. Displays are also clear and reinforce subject-specific vocabulary. Reading is taught well and the extended reading programme for Year 7 is well supported by the resources manager and the well-resourced library.
- The quality of teachers' assessments, particularly at Key Stage 4, is improving and teachers are beginning to use students' responses to inform their future teaching.
- Teaching assistants have a positive impact on the progress students make; those seen during the inspection had good knowledge, both of the topics being taught and of the students they were supporting.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- In 2014, although general improvements were made from the previous year, when achievement was inadequate, Year 11 students still did not achieve well across all subjects.
- In-school data show that rates of progress have improved considerably across most subjects. The Year 11 elements of these data have been externally verified. Achievement in science has improved but it is still too low in some courses. The least-able students are not taught well in mathematics and they underachieve as a result.
- Students in Year 9 have been badly affected by staffing issues in mathematics and have not made good progress this year, particularly the least-able students. The school has taken action to ensure that they are well catered for from September.
- The most-able students underachieved generally in 2014, though a good proportion of them made expected progress in mathematics. The proportion of most-able students making expected progress in all subjects is predicted to improve, but not enough of them are exceeding expected progress, especially in science subjects, geography and history.
- Of the disadvantaged students, 41% achieved five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics in 2014, which is higher than the national average for this group but lower than the standards achieved by other students nationally.
- In 2014, disadvantaged students were one GCSE grade behind their classmates in both English and mathematics. They were one grade behind other students nationally in English and one and a half grades behind in mathematics. This was a considerable improvement from 2013 and in-school data show that disadvantaged students are making better progress this year, although a larger than acceptable gap is evident in English in Year 10.

- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is generally good because of the effective support these students are given.
- Early entry has previously been used for mathematics, core science and English literature. It has not contributed to good outcomes for students in any of these subjects. The headteacher has ended this policy for mathematics and English literature, though it is set to continue for core science due to the way the course is structured.
- Year 7 'catch-up' funding is used effectively, particularly through a reading programme which is helping students to improve their progress in this area.
- The small number of students in alternative provision make the progress expected of them, taking into account the type of activities they pursue in this setting.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- Some aspects of leadership of the sixth form provision require improvement. The leader responsible for the sixth form has not been given enough time or support to carry out the role effectively. The headteacher has addressed this from September with the appointment of two new members of staff.
- The system to monitor students' attendance is not effective. It does not promote good attendance or punctuality, nor does it produce wholly accurate data. Individual teachers are responsible for dealing with these matters in their own way, which means that there is not a consistent approach across the sixth form.
- Students have opportunities to pursue enrichment activities, work experience and to develop their understanding of social issues, but not enough students take advantage of these, partly because there is no effective strategy in place to encourage them to do so. Therefore, the impact of these opportunities is limited.
- Although students receive advice and support on their future options, including university applications, the school does not assure itself that this is of a consistently high standard.
- Achievement and teaching in the sixth form is good in both A and AS level courses. In 2014, students achieved particularly well in drama and media. They achieved well in fine art at A level, and in music at AS level. Current data show that the small number of disadvantaged students in the sixth form are making more progress than their classmates.
- Students performed badly in their GCSE English re-takes and did even worse in mathematics. Not enough curriculum time is given over to this; an issue which is being addressed for September 2015.
- Sixth form students behave well both in and out of lessons. There is a positive atmosphere in their social areas.

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 | 112936 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 464981 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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|---|--------------------------------|
| 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 | 537 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 88 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Maggie Cole |
| Headteacher | Debra McGloin |
| Date of previous school inspection | 21 January 2014 |
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