

Chaucer School

Wordsworth Avenue, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 8NH

Inspection dates

12–13 April 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have an overoptimistic view of how well they and the school are doing. As a result, senior leaders have not made rapid enough progress in tackling the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection.
- Subject leaders do not have an accurate view of how well pupils are doing in their subject area.
- Planning for school improvement is not sharp enough and is not used to hold leaders to account for securing the improvements that have been prioritised.
- Not enough pupils are making the progress expected of them across a wide range of subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching is too inconsistent across the school and also within subject departments. Teachers do not take account of assessment information to help them set work at the right level for pupils. As such, pupils find the work is either too easy or too hard and they do not make the progress they should.
- The school's marking policy is not being followed and this prevents pupils from improving their work.
- Teachers often accept work that is incomplete or of a poor quality. Many pupils do not take care with their work or show pride in what they do.
- In lessons too many pupils lack enthusiasm and look to disrupt the learning of other pupils who are keen to learn.
- Attendance is well below the national average and has been for a long time. This is having a harmful effect on pupils' progress.
- Pupil exclusions are high and show little sign of improving.
- The school has not made effective use of additional government funding to improve the attendance and progress of disadvantaged pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are supported well by teachers who provide good support, care and guidance.
- Pupils at the school feel safe and trust the teachers and adults who support them.
- Within the school there are teachers who have high expectations and who enable pupils to engage in interesting and exciting lessons.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - leaders develop an accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school
 - improvement plans include sharp and precise outcomes throughout the year so that progress can be measured and leaders at all levels are held accountable for bringing about change
 - leaders at all levels are able to accurately evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through linking it closely with the impact it has on pupils' outcomes
 - subject leaders are accurate in judging how well pupils are achieving
 - all teachers follow the school marking and assessment policy so that all pupils are clear about what they need to do next and can act on teacher comments and advice
 - additional funding, including pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding, is used effectively to reduce the gaps in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils needing to catch up.

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - leaders establish where the best teaching is taking place and share this across the school
 - accurate assessment information is used across all year groups to enable teachers to plan work that fully meets the learning needs of different groups of pupils so that outcomes improve
 - teachers check carefully on the progress pupils are making so that they are clear about any pupils' misconceptions and misunderstandings
 - leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are closely linked to detailed review of the progress that pupils are making in all subjects
 - all teachers have high expectations for all pupils and only accept work that is presented to a high standard and completed.

- Improve behaviour and safety substantially by:
 - quickly tackling poor behaviour in lessons so that all pupils are able to work without interruption and are supported by teachers who consistently follow the school's behaviour and discipline system
 - further improving attendance and reducing the numbers of pupils excluded from the school so that they are at least in line with national averages.

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

It is recommended that newly qualified teachers are not appointed to the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have made slow progress and many of the weaknesses identified at that time still remain.
- Senior leaders have an overoptimistic and inaccurate view of how well the school is doing. They are clearly ambitious but this has not translated into significant improvements for either pupils' outcomes or attendance levels.
- The leadership of teaching is inadequate. Leaders have had insufficient impact in making sure that teaching helps pupils make more rapid progress. For example, not all staff follow the school's marking policy and this means that pupils do not fully understand how they are performing and what they need to do to improve and make their work better.
- Middle leaders are not clear enough about what they need to do within their subject areas to bring about key changes that help to raise pupils' achievement successfully. Improvement plans at both whole-school and departmental level do not provide clear direction, or make explicit expectations regarding the impact of leaders' work.
- The school's performance management systems are not linked closely enough to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Performance management is not rigorous and requires increased focus to ensure that pupils make rapid progress.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Leaders do not do enough to challenge the most-able pupils to make faster progress. Leaders have not done enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress expected of them across a range of subjects, including in English, mathematics and science.
- Leaders and managers were disappointed and surprised by Year 11 outcomes in 2015 across a wide range of subjects. Despite leaders predicting significant improvement for 2016, inspection evidence from observations of teaching and looking at pupils' work do not support leaders' views.
- The school has worked hard to resolve staffing and recruitment issues. Difficulties in recruiting staff, especially to middle leadership, have resulted in the use of temporary and long-term supply teachers being employed by the school. The change of teachers has had a negative impact on some pupils' attitudes to learning and their engagement in lessons.
- Since the time of the last inspection the curriculum has not been effective in ensuring that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their learning journey. Recent changes to the curriculum have ensured that pupils receive more teaching in English and mathematics. The impact of these changes is not yet evident.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of extra-curricular activities alongside a rich and varied spiritual, moral, social and cultural development programme that prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Key stage 4 pupils are very positive about the work done to support them with their examination preparation.
- Leaders have not ensured that additional funding is making enough of an impact on helping disadvantaged pupils catch up with their peers. As a result of these weaknesses, disadvantaged pupils are not making the progress that they should be.
- The school has seen a significant decline in pupil outcomes since 2014. External consultants and staff from the school sponsor have been used to support and develop leaders and teachers. These approaches have not yet had a positive impact on the quality of provision or outcomes.
- The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are safe. Pupils have absolute trust in their teachers and adults in the school. They report that they feel safe in school. Safeguarding policies and systems are effective and these are regularly reviewed. All staff receive training. Referrals of children to the local authority and other agencies are carefully monitored and actions followed through.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors at the school are knowledgeable and experienced but over recent years have been unsuccessful in effectively challenging leaders to improve the school's overall effectiveness.
 - Governors have started to challenge the school over the disappointing 2015 results and are raising the level of accountability expected of senior leaders.
 - Governors are now asking school leaders to explain and demonstrate what is being done to eradicate underperformance and provide more detail on how pupils and groups of pupils are performing.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils make inadequate progress.
- Teacher expectations are still too variable and much still depends on which teacher pupils are placed with in determining how well they achieve.
- Teachers do not always fully take account, when planning lessons, of what pupils already know and what they are able to do. Consequently pupils are often not clear about what they need to do next in order to further develop their learning and understanding.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to demonstrate and tackle extended writing work and to work on improving their literacy skills. There is an inconsistent whole-school approach to improving spelling and developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. These weaknesses were identified at the previous inspection.
- The quality of marking and feedback that pupils receive remains extremely variable. Some teachers follow the marking policy well. However, there are too many times when the marking policy is not followed and this hampers pupils' progress because pupils are unclear of what they need to do to improve their work and their responses are not checked by their teachers.
- Teachers do not always check carefully on the progress pupils are making. Questioning is not used well enough to highlight pupils' misconceptions and misunderstandings.
- In many lessons low-level disruption hinders learning and slows progress. Some pupils clearly do not engage productively with their learning and look to distract others who are on task and working. Teachers then waste valuable teaching time getting pupils to listen and concentrate.
- Many pupils take little care in their work. Presentation is poor in many books. A lot of work is untidy, rushed and done in books that contain graffiti. Not all teachers are quick to tackle this issue and low expectations therefore remain commonplace.
- A new whole-school approach to teaching and learning has been introduced this academic year and has been supported with staff training. However, new approaches are not well embedded and have made little impact on the progress of current pupils.
- Learning activities do not always meet the needs of the most able and as a result they are not sufficiently challenged to achieve well, particularly in mathematics.
- Some teachers are successful in supporting high expectations and enabling pupils to engage in interesting and exciting lessons. This circumstance, however, is the exception not the rule. The school has not done enough to share and promote effective practice since the last inspection.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- A significant minority of pupils show a lack of respect for each other or staff. They do not follow polite teacher requests or instructions and this prevents other pupils from engaging in their lessons.
- Pupils comment that their lessons and learning in class is disrupted by other pupils who choose not to moderate their conduct and who regularly behave inappropriately.
- The school keeps effective records of bullying incidents and makes positive use of restorative meetings between pupils. These are effectively logged and reviewed by the school. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue and that when it happens the school deals with it well. They are aware of the different types of bullying and have been given information on cyber bullying and keeping safe.
- Pupils say that they are safe and well looked after. They are confident about approaching adults if they have any concerns and know that matters will be dealt with promptly and effectively. They trust their teachers.
- Independent careers advice and guidance is well delivered and allows pupils to access a range of 16 to 19 study programmes, training and employment routes. Pupils are confident about moving on and are able to talk about what they want to do and why.
- There is a planned and delivered programme of activities to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school. Pupils engage with this. They welcome the opportunities it gives them to think about their role in society. They were able to give examples of how they have been involved in fund-raising to support charities and activities to enable them to experience other cultures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Often, in lessons, pupils fail to respond to teacher instruction and this has an adverse impact on the pace of learning for others. The school's behaviour policy is not applied consistently by teachers and this means that some pupils get away with disrupting the learning of others. Lack of positive engagement from a small minority of pupils has led to increased exclusion rates from school, including a high number of permanent exclusions over three years.
- Low-level disruption in lessons is preventing some pupils from making faster progress. Pupils confirmed that this was often the case. Poor behaviour occurs more in lessons than around the school campus. When moving about the school, pupils behave better and show more consideration towards each other and adults.
- Despite some slight improvements, attendance remains consistently low for all groups of pupils. It is not increasing quickly enough to bring the school in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is well above the national average and has been for some years. Current school data suggests little chance of persistent absence significantly improving.
- Leaders and managers have been ineffective in tackling poor behaviour over time. As a result, the levels of fixed-term exclusions remain stubbornly high. Permanent exclusions are considerably above the national average and have been for some years and show little if any signs of improving.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Outcomes have not improved since the last inspection. Pupils fail to make strong or rapid enough progress due to inadequate teaching over time. The number of Year 11 pupils obtaining five A* to C grades at GCSE has declined over the last two years. In 2015, only 26% of pupils obtained five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics. This is well below the national average.
- Pupils enter the school with attainment that is significantly below average. Pupils do not make the progress expected of them whilst at this school. There is a significant difference between what school leaders believe pupils will achieve and actual outcomes. Assessment information over time shows that pupils do not make the progress that they should, including disadvantaged pupils.
- The school's own information about the progress and attainment of pupils currently in the school is unreliable and not fully up to date. Progress seen in pupils' workbooks and lessons during the inspection does not support the view that outcomes are improving fast enough at either key stage 3 or key stage 4.
- Inspection evidence, including in-school assessment information, joint observations of teaching and work scrutiny with senior leaders, shows that the rates of progress between and within subjects vary too widely. Progress is particularly weak in mathematics. Year 7 catch-up funding is having mixed success. This funding is being more effective in English than it is in mathematics.
- The impact of pupil premium funding in helping particular groups of pupils make fast progress is weak over time. For example, over the last three years, disadvantaged pupils' achievement in English and particularly mathematics has been considerably below that of other pupils, with little sign of sustainable improvement.
- Too few of the most-able pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Not enough pupils are obtaining A* or A grades at GCSE across a wide range of subjects. Teacher expectations are not high enough and their planning does not support the most-able pupils in making the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Despite this overall poor performance some curriculum areas are improving, for example attainment at key stage 4 in business studies, health and social care, the performing arts and English improved in 2015.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make expected progress from their starting points as a result of the extra support they receive, which is effective and targeted to their learning needs.
- Pupils in key stage 3 are beginning to make better progress in art, modern foreign languages, humanities and physical education than they do elsewhere. This is as a result of stronger teaching, learning and assessment in these subjects and the subject leaders in these subjects having high expectations of their teachers and pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	138414
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10012075

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	School sponsor led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	795
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Matthews
Headteacher	Scott Burnside
Telephone number	0114 232 2338
Website	www.chaucer.sheffield.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@chaucer.sheffield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in September 2012 and is part of the Tipton School Academy Trust, which consists of three secondary and three primary academies.
- The school is smaller than average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is twice the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school uses onsite alternative provision.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well above the national average.
- In 2015 the school met the government's floor standard for the Progress 8 measure.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in lessons across a range of subjects and undertook joint lesson observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and over time.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work in workbooks and folders was undertaken alongside senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and the school trust's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including information on pupils' outcomes, the school's self-evaluation, monitoring records, improvement planning, minutes of meetings, behaviour and attendance records and records relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- Inspectors took note of recent external reviews of the school's performance.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils about the quality of their educational experience and the standard of behaviour in lessons and around the school. Inspectors also spoke to pupils in their lessons and around the school over both days of the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 53 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and the 36 staff and 34 pupils' online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Tudor Griffiths, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Phil Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Pridding	Ofsted Inspector
Melanie Williams	Ofsted Inspector

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