

Windsor Park CofE (C) Middle School

Springfield Road, Uttoxeter, ST14 7JX

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All groups of students achieve well. Standards have risen and rates of progress increased rapidly across the school since the previous inspection.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. They are very keen to learn and are excited by their lessons and the extra activities provided for them. They are polite and thoughtful and are very proud of their school. They are extremely safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving strongly, as a result of leaders' high expectations and rigorous monitoring. Teachers set tasks that are fun and interesting and relationships are warm and supportive.
- The quality of marking of students' work is a strength of the school. Students respond to the advice they are given on how to improve, by undertaking a new challenge to show they understand. This leads to rapid progress.
- The headteacher, very well supported by senior leaders and by the governing body, has ensured that all areas of the school's work have shown rapid improvement since his appointment. Staff morale is high and all are keen to do even better.
- The progress of every student is closely tracked and teachers are held to account for any that fall behind. They respond effectively with extra help so that students catch up quickly.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding as a result of the curriculum that they follow and the caring atmosphere that the school provides. It promotes respect, tolerance and British values very well.
- The school's procedures to accelerate progress in reading are outstanding. Mixed-age reading sessions enable older students to support younger ones and make reading fun.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A minority of teachers do not set tasks that fully stretch their students to ensure that they all make the maximum progress.
- Although they catch up in Key Stage 3, pupils are not making such good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 as they do in reading and writing. The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and others in the school is wider in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students’ learning in lessons across all year groups in a variety of subjects.
- Meetings were held with students, members of the governing body, staff, a representative of the local authority, and a Local Leader of Education (LLE) who has provided recent support for the school.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at policies, the school’s own assessment of its strengths and weaknesses, and its plans for development. Inspectors examined records of lesson observations, information about students’ progress, safeguarding documents and samples of students’ work.
- The views of the 55 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. Inspectors also took individual communications from parents into account as well as the 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mary Davis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Laurence Reilly

Additional Inspector

Dorothy Martin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The large majority of students are from White British backgrounds. Very few students speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- Four students attend part-time off-site alternative provision at ARC which is a Pupil Referral Unit. (PRU)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The head teacher took up his post in January 2014.
- Following the previous inspection, the local authority commissioned the support of a Local Leader of Education, (LLE) from Cheadle Primary School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate remaining weaknesses in teaching so that it is outstanding by:
 - making sure that teachers have the highest expectations of what students are able to achieve, so that all groups are consistently challenged and make rapid progress.
- Raise achievement in mathematics in Key Stage 2 to equal that in reading and writing, and further close the achievement gap in mathematics between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has secured rapid improvements in all aspects of the school's work following his appointment. He has been closely supported by his senior team and by the governing body, in his drive to ensure that all issues raised by the previous inspection have been addressed robustly. Improvements continue to be made quickly.
- The school is a close and caring community where all students are known and supported as individuals. Adults lead by example and work as a close team, sharing leaders' vision of continually improving students' achievement and wellbeing.
- Procedures for checking on the quality of teaching are very robust. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported and provided with good opportunities to observe outstanding practitioners. Any teacher experiencing difficulty is quickly identified through checking students' books and teachers' marking, or from lesson observations. These teachers are quickly placed on an intensive programme of support. Teachers across the school share good practice, observing and supporting each other effectively. Training is closely matched to teachers' individual needs as well as school priorities.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a high degree of consistent practice across the school, particularly in establishing their expectations for high quality marking and the management of behaviour using positive rewards.
- The tracking of students' progress across the school is exemplary, ensuring that all groups achieve well and that there is no discrimination. Charts for each year group are shared with all staff and leaders, showing photographs of all students which are moved across the chart as they progress. This enables each individual's progress to be clearly identified and quick support provided for any who are falling behind. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in the rates of progress that students have made since the previous inspection so that, in reading and writing in Key Stage 2, pupils are now making outstanding progress.
- Additional funding is well used. Year 7 catch-up funding ensures continued support for those with low basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The additional primary sports funding is also very effectively leading to increased opportunities for all students to be involved in a wide variety of sporting activity and competition and to experience professional coaching. This is greatly appreciated by students and has increased participation rates.
- Additional funding provided through the pupil premium is also used effectively and the gap between this group and others in the school is closing rapidly across the school. However the gap in progress rates in mathematics is currently wider than in reading and writing. Leaders have recognised this and are working robustly to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged students in this subject. The additional funding also ensures that disadvantaged students are included in, for example, school trips or instrumental lessons.
- The curriculum that students follow provides exciting and memorable experiences, including through a wide range of enrichment activities and clubs. Students told inspectors how much they were enjoying rehearsing for the house music competition. Facilities in information technology enable students to learn advanced skills and a 'state of the art' kitchen inspires students' enthusiasm for cooking.
- The leaders' drive to promote reading has resulted in students showing a great love of books and an enthusiasm for reading. During the inspection, students and staff dressed up as characters from a book to celebrate 'World Book Day' which generated much excitement. An author of children's literature also worked with students, including an on-going project to support some Year 6 students to write a novel.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school has a constant focus on creating a climate where students are kind and considerate. This stems from the promotion of the key values required for 'Learning for Life', including 'endeavour, teamwork, friendship and laughter.' This philosophy is reinforced through personal, health and social education lessons, (PSHE)

and includes a focus on democracy and rights and responsibilities. This prepares them very well for life in modern Britain. The family atmosphere of the school is reinforced by the 'vertical tutoring' system, where students from all years are grouped together so that all ages know each other and get on well together.

- Subject leaders, particularly in English and mathematics, successfully promote improvement and are fully involved in monitoring teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. They hold teachers to account and provide good support for teachers who are new to the profession.
- The school takes great care of its students. Short-term off-site alternative provision is currently being provided for a small group of students who attend for one session per week, to raise self-esteem. Their progress and well-being is carefully checked by leaders. Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. Students facing challenging circumstances are very well cared for and leaders ensure that students know how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they should encounter a dangerous situation.
- The school has established a strong partnership with parents. Information is provided through the website and regular reports on progress. A parents' forum has been established which is enabling parents to express their views and to share in the school's drive for further improvement.
- The local authority has provided good support since the previous inspection. This has included commissioning regular external support and training, including for the governing body. The local authority is now only providing light-touch support as a result of the improved leadership and rising achievement.
- The school is working to strengthen links with the first schools and with the high school in order to provide a seamless education. This has included establishing a common assessment policy across these schools and other local middle schools. Transition between each key stage is well supported and links with the high school are enabling high quality careers guidance to be provided in Key Stage 3.

The governance of the school:

- Governors have a clear vision for the school, using their range of expertise and experience and now give a strong lead to its direction. They have been rigorous in their procedures to appoint a new headteacher and secure a strong leadership group.
- Governors are well informed about data relating to the school's performance and how it compares to schools nationally. They value the training they have received which has enabled them to have a far better understanding than they did at the previous inspection. They also value the clear information that is provided by the senior leadership team about all aspects of the school's work. This enables them to provide a balance of challenge and support for senior leaders.
- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They make regular visits and know about the quality of teaching and the progress that students are making. They ensure that performance management procedures are effective and that teachers' salary progression is linked to the achievement of students. They ensure good teaching is rewarded, and tackle underperformance effectively. They carefully monitor the impact of additional funding on the progress and well being of disadvantaged students.
- Governors ensure that they access training and are constantly seeking to improve their practice. They focus strongly on ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed. They work effectively as a group to ensure that the school continues to promote the core values that have been so well established.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They are enthusiastic learners and are keen to do well. They show great excitement when undertaking active tasks but are quick to respond to teachers' instructions and to listen attentively. They were observed during the inspection, often engrossed in the tasks that they were undertaking and working as a strong, collaborative team when they are required to work together in groups. The school monitors students' attitudes to learning in every lesson and this information shows that, for the vast majority of students across the school, attitudes are outstanding.

- Around the school behaviour is calm and sensible. Warm relationships are evident between students and adults. There is no graffiti or litter and students present themselves very well.
- Students enjoy opportunities to take responsible roles. Members of the student leadership group and the school council expressed pride in their achievements in representing their peers and in taking a leading role. For example, they have identified that the girls' toilets require refurbishment. They have been fully involved in raising funds for this project, which have been doubled by the parents' association, and in approving designs. Students are also involved in expressing their views about the quality of teaching they receive and say that adults listen to them and respond to what they say. They show maturity and thoughtfulness when expressing their opinions.
- Exclusion rates have fallen since the previous inspection. The 'Students Success Centre' is used very effectively to provide support for those experiencing behavioural difficulties, to resolve friendship problems or provide opportunities for restorative justice where there has been an issue that needs resolving.
- Students attend regularly and are punctual to school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students have a very secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They say the school gives them 'loads' of information about e-safety and say that they have had drama presentations that have effectively pointed out the dangers of using social media at their age.
- The school site is safe and secure. When a student reported a hole in the perimeter fence during the inspection, it was immediately mended. This attention to detail typifies of the way that the school ensures student safety.
- PSHE lessons enable students to discuss issues which face them as they are growing up. Mixed-age tutor groups also provide the opportunity for discussion and for older students to support younger ones and act as good role models.
- Students say that bullying is rare and that they actively combat any incidents. They expressed great indignation when asked by an inspector about any racist or homophobic language, saying that this would never occur and if it did swift action would be taken.
- The school's leaders provide outstanding care for families facing challenging circumstances and ensure that those students on alternative provision are safe and that they behave well. The attendance of these students at alternative provision is 100%.
- Nearly all students and parents and staff agree that students behave very well, are happy and safe.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Leaders' rigorous monitoring of all aspects of teaching throughout the year, and of the progress that students make, shows that most teaching has strongly improved. It is now good with some aspects that are outstanding.
- Students enjoy their learning because teachers often set tasks that are fun and exciting so that they engage students' interest. There is often, therefore, a buzz of excitement in lessons as students discuss their learning.
- The quality of feedback through marking is a strength. Teachers provide 'red pen' advice, with many reminding students of the level they are currently working at and spurring them on to achieve their targets. Students then respond to this advice using 'green pen', often by repeating a section of work to show they understand how to improve the quality of what they have done as the result of the advice given. This accelerates their progress.

- Where students make the fastest progress, teachers have high expectations, enable students to build on their previous learning and set tasks that are well matched to the different abilities within the class. Teachers are well organised, for example when they give clear success criteria that enable students to confidently check for themselves on how well they are doing. This improves learning. For example, in one lesson observed, students used their planning from a previous lesson to write a diary entry as a character from the book they were studying. They closely followed the success criteria they had discussed to check that they were including everything needed, to achieve the highest level.
- Literacy and numeracy are promoted well across different subjects, with most teachers focusing closely on the technical language for each subject and using graphs where appropriate, for example, to present data. They place a strong emphasis on promoting reading skills and challenge students to use adventurous vocabulary when writing.
- Teachers know their students well and will often challenge the most able students with an extension task. A small minority of teachers, however, do not consistently set tasks or use questioning that fully challenge students or recognise when they are ready to move on to something more challenging. Here, teachers expect students to make progress in line with national expectations rather than striving to exceed these rates.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school in Year 5 having achieved average basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and having made steady progress at the start of Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6 in 2014, results of national tests were above average in all subjects, having risen from the previous year. By the end of Year 8, when students exit the school for high school, standards also rose in 2014 on previous years, with most reaching standards usually expected by the end of Year 9. The schools' rigorous assessment indicates that standards will rise further at both key stages by the end of 2015.
- Progress rates have also accelerated since the previous inspection. In 2014, all students made expected progress from Key Stage 1 in reading and writing, with an above average proportion of students exceeding expected progress rates. Progress in mathematics was equal to national levels. By the end of Year 8, however, students have caught up, making better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing. There is no significant difference in the progress of students from different ethnic backgrounds or between the very few who speak English as an additional language and other students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs also make good progress. These students receive high quality support in lessons from teaching assistants and benefit from being taught in small groups where they are well supported and encouraged. The part-time alternative provision is having a strong impact on boosting students' self-confidence and success across all subjects.
- The most able students benefit from being taught in top sets, where teachers provide appropriate challenge and students support and challenge each other. Although these groups are inclined to be very large, students work well together and enjoy the challenges they are set. Students told inspectors about how they are aiming for the very highest levels in their work. This is particularly evident in mathematics, where an above-average proportion of Key Stage 2 students in 2014 achieved the highest level 6 and, by the end of Year 8, over 40% reached level 7.
- The school has outstanding provision to develop reading skills. Weekly reading sessions in mixed-age tutor groups generate excitement and competition and enable older students to support younger ones. Students of all ages express a love of reading and they are able to read fluently by the time they leave in Year 8.
- The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other students in the school, and the gap with students nationally, are narrowing across the school. In 2014, disadvantaged Year 6 students in mathematics were just over three terms behind their classmates but only one term behind other students nationally. In reading and writing, they were three terms behind their classmates but above those nationally. By the end of Year 8, in 2014, the gap in reading or writing closed on the previous year, while disadvantaged students remained three terms behind their classmates in mathematics. Assessments indicate that the gap is on track to close further in all subjects by the end of the year.

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	124451
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	453502

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Johnstone
Headteacher	Philip Slack
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2013
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