

Windsor High School and Sixth Form

Richmond Street, Halesowen, B63 4BB

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve well across a wide range of subjects. They make exceptional progress in English, where standards are well above average.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities in lessons that ensure students enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Students behave well. They take part enthusiastically in lessons, and act maturely and responsibly around the school.
- Marking and assessment are outstanding. Students value and act upon the excellent guidance on how to improve.
- The sixth form is good. It is in its third year of operation. Students are making good progress as a result of engaging teaching with a strong focus on the development of independent learning skills.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are committed to providing the highest quality of education for all their students. They are uncompromising in their commitment to 'Excellence For All' and this vision is shared by staff and students, who say they are proud to belong to the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small number of lessons, particularly in mathematics, teachers do not match work closely enough to the different ability levels of all students, or give them enough opportunities to practise and develop new skills.
- Students who are supported by additional funding do not reach such high standards as other groups. Senior leaders are well aware of this, but the actions they have taken to improve these students' attainment have not yet had the desired impact.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 53 lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and groups of students. Inspectors also spoke with many students informally, in lessons and around the school.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including information on students' progress over time, school improvement plans, monitoring documentation and records related to behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 34 responses from the Parent View website, and the questionnaires completed for the inspection by 101 staff. They also considered the results of student, parent and staff surveys carried out by the school.

Inspection team

Deborah James, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Alicia Welsh-Kuligowicz	Additional Inspector
Janet Bird	Additional Inspector
Harkireet Sohel	Additional Inspector
Jerry Seymour	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Windsor High School and Sixth Form became an academy in April 2011. When the predecessor school, Windsor High School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is much larger than the average secondary school with a sixth form.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from service families, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average, but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- The school does not use any off-site provision for students.
- The school became part of the Windsor Academy Trust in September 2012, along with Goldsmith Primary Academy in Walsall. Windsor is also supporting Halesbury Special School and provides mathematics, science, languages and gifted and talented programmes to a number of local primary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase students' progress, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring all teaching is at least good and much is outstanding through:
 - planning work that is always closely matched to different ability levels of all students in the class
 - giving students plenty of opportunities to practise and extend new skills.
- Seek better ways to use pupil premium funding to close the gap in attainment between students eligible for the pupil premium and others in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs and those students eligible for the pupil premium make good progress in a broad range of subjects. Students from all starting points make outstanding progress in English as a result of consistently demanding teaching and extensive opportunities for reading.
- The percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is consistently above national averages.
- For the last three years all students have gained five or more passes at GCSE as a result of good teaching and a range of courses that appeals to students as well as closely meeting their needs. However there is a large gap between the grades of students eligible for the pupil premium and other students in both English and mathematics. As a result of intensive support, this gap narrowed between 2011 and 2012. However, senior leaders recognise that it is still too large.
- The school has carefully considered how it puts students forward early for GCSE mathematics and English. In mathematics, early entry has proved a successful option for more-able students, allowing them to make an early start on A-level courses. Early entry for English GCSE has been used to support middle-ability students. Students who take the examinations early but do not attain their challenging target grades continue to study and sit the examination again at a later date.
- The first group of A-level students received their grades in 2012. There is some variation between subjects but current assessments and students' work show that the gaps are closing. The achievement of students in the sixth form is good.

The quality of teaching is good

- The great majority of teaching seen during the inspection was good or outstanding. This closely matched the school's own view of teaching. As a result, students in all year groups, including the sixth form, are making good progress.
- Teachers display a strong enthusiasm for their subjects, and carefully design lessons with a wide range of activities that engage students and keep the pace of learning high. They use questioning well to probe students for more detailed answers and to check their understanding. Relationships between teachers and students are very good, and this gives students confidence to answer questions in class.
- In the very best lessons:
 - learning objectives showed increasing levels of challenge
 - teachers used a number of different ways to check that students understood their work
 - students were given opportunities to take the lead in organising their learning.
- For example, in a Year 11 mathematics lesson students undertook a motivating sequence of mini-challenges that required them to organise themselves in a team, make good use of their own resources from previous lessons and assess their own learning.
- Teachers' marking is consistently strong across all subjects. It gives students detailed feedback

on how well they are doing, and what they need to do next to improve their work. In many subjects, this detailed marking is followed by a short task that allows students to show the teacher that they understand the comments.

- Teaching assistants are used to good effect in many lessons to support the progress made by disabled students and those who have special educational needs. However, at times they do too much for individual students rather than giving them the chance to learn how to work by themselves.
- In a few lessons seen, teaching required improvement. This is sometimes because the work was not sufficiently matched to the different ability levels of all students in the class. In these lessons, students continued with their work but did not make as much progress as they might because their tasks were either too difficult or too easy. Teachers sometimes spent too long talking and did not give students enough time to learn and practise new skills.
- The teaching observed in the sixth form during the inspection was never less than good, and often outstanding. Teachers convey high expectations and expertly use questioning to deepen students' understanding and consolidate their learning. Frequent opportunities to work on their own encourage students to show confidence and resilience in their approach to their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students have very positive attitudes to their learning. They participate enthusiastically in activities in lessons, are keen to do well and enjoy working collaboratively. They are friendly, polite and were keen to engage the inspection team in conversation.
- Around the school, students behave in a supportive, mature and responsible manner so that breaks and lunchtimes are calm and orderly. A good, consistently applied system of rewards and sanctions gives students a clear understanding of how they are expected to behave at all times.
- Students say they feel safe in school and enjoy their lessons. Parent and student surveys, along with school behaviour records, confirm that behaviour is typically good.
- Attendance is above average and the level of persistent absence is low. The school carefully monitors attendance and the current gap in attendance between students eligible for the pupil premium and others is closing as a result of well-considered help and guidance from the attendance support team. In such ways, the school tackles barriers to learning and helps make sure that all students have an equal chance to succeed.
- A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying, and the inspectors looked into this carefully. They found that the school deals thoroughly with any allegations of bullying, and the students were keen to say that bullying was rare, and when it did occur it was dealt with promptly and effectively by the staff. An assembly during the inspection made students think hard about how bullying on the internet affected people.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leaders have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is based on thorough and regular checking of students' academic and personal progress, faculty reviews, and frequent monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Areas for further

development are clearly identified in school and faculty improvement plans. These plans include challenging targets and realistic timescales for action.

- Senior leaders are relentless in their drive to improve teaching and learning. Appraisal systems are well managed, targets are demanding and their impact is carefully monitored. A wide range of training and coaching has been highly effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff spoke highly of the individual support they have received to improve their skills.
 - The range of taught courses meets students' needs and aspirations well. In Key Stage 3 an increasing focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills includes the use of numeracy activities in tutor time and encouraging reading for pleasure. In Key Stage 4 students are helped to make choices towards different pathways depending on their interests and ability levels. The Windsor Business Centre lets students learn in realistic work-like surroundings.
 - Students are able to participate in an extensive range of lunchtime and after-school activities. These activities give students memorable experiences and include extensive opportunities to develop leadership skills.
 - Senior leaders carefully analyse the impact of funding for students supported by the pupil premium. Last year it provided one-to-one tuition in mathematics, an additional attendance officer, external counselling, computer support materials for revision and homework, teaching assistants to work with students in Key Stage 3, and team-building and exam revision activities.
 - All of this has helped to improve progress and attendance for eligible students, but their attainment is still not rising rapidly enough. Senior leaders are continuing to seek and review models of good practice used in other schools.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors bring a wide range of personal skills and professional expertise to the school. They share the headteacher's vision of excellence for all and can give many examples of how they challenge leaders to ensure that decisions are always made in the best interest of Windsor students. They have a clear understanding of how well pupils are performing compared to similar schools nationally, and the quality of teaching. They have a good grasp of how the school budget is spent and understand, for example, the current achievement gap for students eligible for the pupil premium. They are working closely with senior leaders to help these students to find greater success. They ensure that the arrangements for checking and improving teaching are thorough, and that teachers' pay rises are linked closely to students' achievement. They are committed to rewarding excellent performance. They ensure that statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding students, are met.
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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	136618
Local authority	N/a
Inspection number	395703

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
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	1668
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin White
Headteacher	Keith Sorrell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0121 550 1452
Fax number	0121 585 0610
Email address	info@windsor.dudley.sch.uk

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