

Stockland Green School

Slade Road, Erdington, Birmingham, B23 7JH

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching requires improvement because a minority of teachers are not consistently using information about students' prior attainment to set learning activities that challenge and motivate every student.
- Not all teachers, including in mathematics, consistently adapt their teaching to take account of students' learning in the lesson.
- The achievement of students in some subjects, particularly mathematics, requires improvement. This is because the legacy of previously poor teaching in Key Stage 3 has not yet been fully eliminated.
- Some older students do not fully understand the mathematical ideas that underpin calculations, and therefore are not able to apply these ideas in solving multi-step problems.
- Some written feedback to students is too vague. Even where feedback is sharp, the action taken by students varies, and depends on how well teachers direct and guide students' responses.

The school has the following strengths

- Determined good leadership by the headteachers, supported by skilled direction from the Chief Executive of the Trust, is bringing about rapid school improvement in teaching and achievement.
- Previously inadequate teaching has been eliminated, so that almost every student is now making at least expected progress across all subjects.
- Senior leaders monitor students' progress effectively and intervene quickly should any student underperform.
- In English, students achieve exceptionally well because this subject is taught consistently well.
- The Arthur Terry Multi Academy trust has delivered effective teachers' professional development, and this underpins the improvements in teaching quality.
- The school is vigilant in ensuring students are safe. It takes great care to protect students from radicalisation or sexual exploitation.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well.
- The resources available to support disadvantaged students (the Pupil Premium) are being used effectively to raise their achievement.
- Students behave well, and help to make day-to-day life at school a pleasant experience for all. Attendance is above national averages and is improving.
- Recent governor training has provided governors with the skills they need to provide strategic direction for the school, and governors use these skills effectively to hold leaders to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons taught by 20 different teachers, in eight of these cases conducting joint observations with the school’s senior leaders. In lessons, inspectors looked at students’ work, heard some students read, took account of available lesson planning notes, and talked to some students about their learning.
- Inspectors met with the Chief Executive of the Academy Trust, the school’s headteachers, senior and middle leaders and managers, teachers, governors, the independent school improvement partner, the National Leader in Education supporting the school, and groups of students from different years. Inspectors scrutinised governing body minutes, monitoring reports of previous Ofsted visits and those of the Academy Trust, and the school’s self-evaluation and development planning documents.
- Inspectors analysed data on students’ recent attainment and progress, behaviour and attendance logs.
- Inspectors took note of 60 responses to ‘Parent View’.

Inspection team

Brian Cartwright, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Anne White

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

- The Academy appointed the two headteachers just before the previous inspection in December 2013. That inspection was the first since the school converted to Academy status. It is part of the Arthur Terry Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school is smaller than most comprehensive schools.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is one in three, is double the national average.
- The proportion of the students who receive support from the pupil premium (students for whom the school receives additional funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is higher than the national average.
- Over half of the students are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. One in five students speaks English as an additional language.
- The school has used a Birmingham local authority special school for a short (3-week) alternative provision placement.
- The school receives support from a national leader in education (NLE), a head of an outstanding school, and the Chief Executive of the Arthur Terry Academy Trust. The parent academy (Arthur Terry Academy) also provides weekly consultant support for middle leaders of English and mathematics.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Establish consistently good teaching in all subjects and classes by ensuring all teachers:
 - use the information they have on students' prior learning to plan activities that challenge students with work that engages and motivates them according to their ability
 - observe and question students effectively in order to adapt and reshape tasks their teaching according to how well students are learning and understanding the lesson content.
- Ensure mathematics lessons, especially in Key Stage 3, develop and deepen students' understanding of mathematical operations.
- Make sure students always respond to consistently clear developmental feedback.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School senior leaders have successfully reversed the previous decline in students' standards of attainment and behaviour. By insisting on high quality teaching, and providing good training to bring that about, they have eliminated inadequate teaching. They have clearly demonstrated a strong capacity for improvement by leading the school out of special measures, and by putting in place measures that are enabling it to pursue further rapid improvement.
- The drive to improve student achievement is personified by the Chief Executive of the Academy Trust. His enthusiasm is infectious, allowing teachers and their leaders to attempt very challenging targets on behalf of their students. This leads to high expectations of what students can achieve are high throughout the school. Leaders' good-humoured support for staff and students alike is generating a very positive ethos where all staff and students are committed to improvement and confident of their ability to achieve it.
- Teaching and support staff have ambitious professional targets that link directly to student performance. There is strong culture of continuous improvement, with expert feedback by managers that help teachers to improve their practice. As a result, teachers are self-reflective and ambitious for their students.
- The school matches pupil premium funding exceptionally well to each entitled student. Each student has a budget that shows what the school has spent to support their particular need. This includes providing an audio headphone guide during a museum visit in individual cases, subsidising instrumental music lessons, and the provision of additional one-to-one careers guidance consultations.
- The school works closely with its diverse local community and stresses the importance of cooperation and cohesion between students from different background. Students are systematically taught about different faiths, cultures, how democracy works and why the rule of law provides both rights and responsibilities to British citizens. The school provides strong support for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its well-organised personal, social and health education curriculum called SPHERE. This programme is led by a specialist team of teachers and external experts and provides excellent support for individual students, as well as good careers advice, health education and guidance on e-safety.
- The school has reduced the range of subjects taught since the previous inspection, in order to concentrate on higher grades in fewer subjects. The curriculum remains broad enough to ensure students are well-equipped to choose from all possible career pathways in their future. Consequently, the number of former Year 11 students who are not in education, employment or training is lower than the national average.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders varies but is good overall. External support remains necessary in mathematics. Some middle leaders are new to the role, and are benefitting from the support of experienced colleagues from the Academy trust.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. There are several examples of effective intervention to protect students. Staff implement school policies consistently and, when necessary, liaise with the local authority's Prevent team and local children's social services.
- Almost every parent who completed 'Parent View' was positive about the work of the school, and would recommend the school to prospective parents and carers.
- The sponsoring Academy Trust is very effective in providing external consultants to support the school and most of the professional development training. The parent academy is a teaching school, and this resource has been used by Stockland Green to successfully recruit new teachers of science and mathematics from autumn 2015. The school has been very imaginative in the way it has set about attracting high-calibre new entrants to the profession, for example by arranging masters level qualifications for teachers keen to develop their careers, and providing early access to leadership training route.
- When students attend alternative provision their attendance is checked daily.

- A small number of students occasionally attend a Birmingham local authority school that offers specialist alternative provision. Students' attendance is checked daily by Stockland Green staff.

■ The governance of the school:

- A governors' skills audit has helped to direct the recruitment of new governors. Governor training, and the opportunity to shadow other governors across the Academy Trust, have equipped the governing body with the necessary skills to hold school leaders to account, and to understand school performance data for themselves.
- Governors learn about the quality of teaching from reports and face-to-face briefings from middle and senior managers, and their own focussed school visits. Each governor is linked to a group of subjects, and aspect of the schools' pastoral care system.
- Data on the school's performance is gathered from the frequent formal 'assessment weeks' that report on student attainment and progress, including that of groups. Governors contribute to decisions on the actions to take as a result of this data.
- Governors scrutinise the performance related pay information to ensure only those staff who have met the targets are rewarded.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is calm and good-natured, exemplified by the well-mannered way students enjoy lunch in the large internal atrium. Despite the narrow stairs, students are patient as they wait their turn to change floors. Duty staff are vigilant to help students who find such crowds daunting.
- Consistent work by all staff to apply the schools' behaviour and rewards policy has ensured student behaviour has rapidly improved from inadequate to good. Students agree that the school is a comfortable place to learn, with good relationships between all groups of students and their teachers. Low-level disruption is rare, because almost every student wants to learn. They take personal responsibility for behaving well even if the work they are asked to do is not challenging or motivating them.
- Students value the quality of advice they receive on how to stay safe, including on-line safety advice. They do report incidents of cyber-bullying, which are dealt with effectively. Students are also aware of other forms of bullying, including racist and homophobic abuse. They are confident that these rare events are dealt with well. As a result, they feel safe in school.
- Students understand and appreciate the effectiveness of schools' behaviour and rewards policies. Students participate in democratic elections to choose their representatives for the house system and for school ambassadors.
- Fixed-term exclusions have rapidly declined; they have halved since last year. Rates are now below average overall, for both disadvantaged and other students. The school carefully records incidents of bullying and racist insults; these logs show such events have halved in the past year. Students say these incidents are rare.
- Overall attendance is improving and is now above the national average. Persistent absence is declining.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The school's thorough checks on staff and volunteers who work in the school, or who visit it from other employers, ensure it complies fully with legislation. The school exceeds the minimum requirements for staff training in child protection, with all senior leaders in receipt of local authority 'designated person' training.
- Senior safeguarding staff are in continuous contact with other agencies, particularly the local Prevent team, and children's social services. This allows for a quick and well-informed response to signs of

concern. Staff are well-versed in their duty to notify the relevant lead child-protection leader and respond quickly to any alerts.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement. Not all teachers use prior attainment information to provide different students with tasks that match their capability. A minority of teachers do not sufficiently adjust their teaching to take full account of the responses of their students. This leaves some students with unfinished work, or others having to wait before moving on.
- Mathematics teaching has been weak over time. There have been considerable changes in staffing to improve teaching but further improvement is needed before it is consistently good. To this end, school leaders have appointed an assistant headteacher with a successful track record in another school with sole responsibility for improving mathematics. It is planning to appoint a full complement of permanent specialist mathematics teachers for September 2015; many of these will start induction training in July.
- Although some marking is effective, teachers' feedback is often too vague to show students what is needed for them to improve. Even where feedback is clear, not every teacher insists students act on the advice they are given.
- In the majority of examples seen by inspectors, teachers are regularly marking students' work. At appropriate moments, teachers provide formal written feedback. This feedback is usually sharp enough to steer students onto actions that will deepen learning.
- As the school continues to improve, so does teaching quality, which is now securely better than a year ago. In the high performing subjects such as English and Art, teaching is consistently good or better. In these lessons, teachers use the good information they have on students' prior attainment to plan and deliver activities that capture students' interest well.
- A key feature of the best teaching is the way teachers use their subject expertise to model high standards. Students say this makes lessons interesting, and inspires them to try and reach that standard. It also encourages students to think for themselves, leading to creative responses in their writing and expressive arts. For example, Year 10 watched as the teacher demonstrated her expertise in stage makeup by making a 'wound'; the gruesome result triggered considerable discussion amongst students, and motivated them to have a go for themselves.
- Good work to improve literacy skills begins in Year 7. A specific course for some Year 7 students called the 'Creative Curriculum' is proving effective in helping them catch up with literacy skills. Across the school there is a focus on improving students' speaking skills through encouraging them to speak at length when giving answers. There are systematic checks on students reading skills across the school, leading to effective specialist support for those needing a boost to help them reach age-related reading standards.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The attainment of students when they join the school in Year 7 is significantly below average.
- The GCSE results in 2014 were mixed, with overall standards below average. Results in English performance were very strong, particularly so for girls, and progress overall, for all groups of learners, was at least average. However, in some subjects and particularly in mathematics but also in modern languages, achievement was weak. The cause of that has been identified, via consultant expertise of a GCSE principal mathematics examiner. Action has been taken to prevent a recurrence.
- School data for the current Year 11 shows progress in English continues to be strong, given the low starting points for all groups. In mathematics, the most-able students are achieving well, but there are a small number of middle ability students who might not all make expected progress. Intensive personalised support is in place of these students. The problem relates to previous weaknesses in mathematics

teaching in Key Stage 3. These students have not understood some basic concepts and find it difficult to solve complex problems in new situations. There are still several students at risk of gaining a 'C' grade in only one of English or mathematics. Overall, the current Year 11 are working at broadly average standards, which represents good progress from their low starting points.

- The gap in attainment between disadvantaged and other pupils nationally, and with their peers in school in English, was less than one third of a grade in 2014, and should be similar this year; this is better than in most schools. For mathematics in 2014, that gap was a grade compared to the national average, but half a grade in school (because some non-pupil premium students made below expected progress). This year, the in-school gap is projected to be half a grade. In other year groups, gaps between disadvantaged and other pupils are lower than in previous years and are narrowing quickly over time.
- In 2014, the most-able students achieved well overall, because of their very high achievement in English. In mathematics, they achieved in line with national averages for this group. This year, these students in English remain on track to make good progress, as do the most-able students in mathematics. The school runs an after-school session aimed at the most able (called 'The Brilliant Club!'). This specifically looks to inform students of the opportunities they might aspire to at university, as well as providing stimulating activities that extend and stretch their thinking.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well, because the education provided by the school meets their needs effectively. For some of these students the school operates 'The Grove', a suite of rooms where students receive specialist teaching to meet their moderate learning difficulties or needs related to their autistic spectrum disorder. This is one part of the effective provision for these pupils.
- Achievement for disabled students and those who have special educational needs in English is very good, and this high quality English provision again brings up the overall achievement for these students to above average. These students also achieve well in mathematics, in contrast to students without special educational needs.
- Students for whom English is an additional language also achieve well, and better than other students. Most of these students are fluent in English, although their progress is carefully monitored, which leads to adjustments in these students' curriculum, or specific personalised intervention.
- The school no longer offers early entry for GCSE examinations.

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	138137
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	454146

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.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	741
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Dawson
Headteachers	Marie George and Tracey Peters
Date of previous school inspection	04 December 2013
Telephone number	0121 5664300
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