

Wyvern College

Church Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 1RE

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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

- Over the last four years, the results for Year 11 have improved significantly year on year. The school now exceeds current floor standards.
- Strong improvements in standards have been achieved by the vision of the headteacher and the good support from key leaders.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Strengths include teachers' subject knowledge and the variety of activities in lessons.
- Students' progress is checked very regularly. Students who are not making the progress they should get help quickly.
- Students are positive about the high expectations the school has of them. As a result, many now aspire to achieve well both at school and in further education or training.
- Students feel safe in school, are generally respectful of staff and respond well to instructions.
- Governors understand the strengths and weaker areas of the school's work. They challenge and support well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students' targets do not always reflect their ability, especially for the more able. As a consequence, some do not achieve the highest GCSE grades.
- The behaviour of a small minority limits opportunities for learning in a few lessons and, in some lessons, the large number of students limits opportunities for students to talk to and be guided by teachers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, four of which were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed activities taking place in the school’s learning support base. An inspector also heard some students read.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, a member of the diocese, members of the governing body and school staff, including the headteacher, members of the leadership team and middle leaders. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including data on students’ achievement, planning documentation used by leaders to shape the future for the school, monitoring documentation used by leaders to check on how well the school is doing, governors’ minutes, records of behaviour and attendance, documents relating to safeguarding and marking in students’ books.
- Inspectors took account of 26 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school’s own survey of parents and carers. Seventeen questionnaire responses from staff were considered.

Inspection team

Caroline Dearden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ann Cox

Additional Inspector

Rob Isaac

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wyvern College is a smaller than average boys' secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported at school action is below that found nationally. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- A few students attend alternative provision for part of their education at Avon Valley College.
- The school's GCSE results meet the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress.
- The school shares its site with two other secondary schools; St Edmund's and St Joseph's. These schools work together to offer joint provision at Key Stage 4 for the majority of students in Year 11.
- The school has a specialism in technology which includes engineering.
- Funding has been secured for a major rebuild of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further so that more achieve higher GCSE grades by:
 - ensuring that students' targets help them to make good progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4
 - ensuring that students have the opportunity to access individual support and guidance from teachers during the course of lessons
 - ensuring that plans to further enrich the curriculum take account of students' talents and aspirations.
- Improve behaviour further by:
 - applying rigorously the system of sanctions and rewards to ensure that behaviour supports learning in all subjects, particularly for students in Year 10.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students' results at the end of Year 11 have improved steadily over the last four years. Last year, they were the highest they have ever been and were significantly above the government floor standards with 58% achieving five or more A* to C grades, including English and mathematics.
- Progress in English and mathematics is good. In 2012, the proportion of students achieving GCSE grade C or above in English was 78%, with 80% making at least three levels progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. In mathematics, 68% achieved GCSE grade C or above and 76% made at least three levels progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4.
- Students' attainment on entry to the school is similar to the national picture, with the exception of the current Year 10 where it was significantly below the national average.
- The additional funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used well to provide extra support and challenge for appropriate students so that the gap in their achievement against all students nationally is closing rapidly. There is very little difference in progress for this group of students when compared with others in the school (66% make at least three levels progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 in English and mathematics).
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs progress as well as others. All teachers have regularly updated information about the needs of students in their classes. Students also benefit from small-group teaching and in-class support from specialist teaching assistants.
- Students who attend part-time, off-site courses achieve as well as others.
- The school operates an early examination entry scheme for English which benefits students. Results for this subject are significantly above the national average.
- Students generally know their targets for the subjects they take. The school's systems for tracking progress have recently been refined so that data underpin all aspects of teaching and learning and is the reason why improvements in progress have been made. However, some students, particularly the most able, should make even greater progress.
- A focus on reading has started to improve students' willingness and desire to read more widely. Students with reading levels below that expected for their age are given extra intensive support. This includes being supported by older students who act as reading mentors. Opportunities to promote reading during the school day are limited due to restricted access to the school library and the recently purchased commercial scheme has yet to be fully embedded.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The teaching in most lessons is at least good. Teachers' relationships with students are generally very good and students find teachers supportive, approachable and helpful. For example, Year 11 students have noticed improvements in the quality and purpose of teacher questioning which they now feel helps them to understand how to improve their work.
- Good systems to assess students' work have been developed recently and this helps teachers to plan a variety of activities. This has been noticed by the students. For example, one student commented that: 'We do everything in moderation, never any one activity for too long.'
- Students describe their lessons as 'kinaesthetic', demonstrating that teachers take time to structure lessons to the learning needs of boys.
- Teachers have high expectations for students' achievement. As a result most students engage with learning and get on well with their work. For example, in a Year 8 science lesson the pace of the lesson supported very good progress; students were enthusiastic about the subject and very keen to learn.
- Most teachers regularly check that students learn at a good pace. However, in the small number of lessons where teaching requires improvement, there are fewer tasks closely matched to students' needs, particularly in large mixed-ability classes or lower sets.

- A very small minority of teaching requires improvement. In these lessons, poor student behaviour can limit the learning and progress of the majority.
- Marking and feedback are usually helpful in telling students how to improve and make progress. Good formative verbal feedback is a consistent feature of the vast majority of lessons. However, although regularly done, some teachers do not use marking consistently to set targets for improvement or to address misconceptions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Students' behaviour and attendance are improving. Fixed-term exclusions have fallen markedly from 46% in 2010 to 12.9% in 2012.
- Attendance was below average at the time of the last inspection report but is broadly average this term. Persistent absence remains relatively high but is reducing as a consequence of effective work with particular families and students.
- Students behave well around the school site. They are respectful of adults and respond appropriately to instructions. The headteacher and staff walk around the site regularly and know the students very well.
- Students were keen to share their views with inspectors. They consider behaviour in the majority of lessons to be good. However, they are critical of the conduct of a small number of students around the site and in some mixed-ability classes or lower sets.
- Students are very aware of the different forms of bullying, especially those more often associated with an all boys' school. They are confident that bullying and other forms of inappropriate behaviour have declined over the last two years and most notably since the start of this academic year.
- Senior and other key staff are said to be effective in resolving issues between boys and there is a high level of parental involvement in seeking resolution. Students say that they feel well supported. One student commented about the headteacher, 'He is the man who has turned the school around.' This view was endorsed by other students in the group.
- A small minority of students do not give lessons their full attention and do not behave in a way that supports learning. Inspectors found that inappropriate behaviour did not happen often and was often linked to weaker teaching. Most teachers demonstrate that they have effective ways of dealing with poor behaviour.
- Students say that they feel safe and secure in school and parents and carers responding to the on-line questionnaire agree.

The leadership and management is good

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has driven improvement by his determination to create a school which is well respected by the community and of which staff and students are proud to be members. As a result, students' aspirations have risen and there are very low numbers not in education, employment or training on leaving the school. This is typified by one student's comment, 'When I joined the school I wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. Now I want to go on to do my A levels and go on to university.'
- Senior leaders have a secure understanding of where improvement is required and action planning is targeted at where changes are most needed. The results can be seen in improvements in achievement and teaching. Students describe the changes and explain how they are improving their learning and progress. Parents' and carers' views are positive about the school.
- Senior leaders have improved the system to monitor the progress of students. This now allows rapid identification of those who are not progressing as well as they should. Some subject

leaders, teachers and teaching assistants use similar levels of scrutiny to ensure timely and appropriate intervention. However, not all use this routinely and well. Not all students' targets are set to ensure progress in line with national expectations from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4, particularly for the most able.

- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported by all aspects of the school's work. As a result students respect each other and value their differences. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination of all kinds very effectively.
- Partnerships and work with other schools significantly enhance the curriculum, especially for those following the 'foundation learning pathway' and vocational courses. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to study music at Key Stage 3.
- The school has good arrangements for managing the performance of teachers with very clear expectations for teachers at different levels of experience. In-service training for teachers is clearly matched to the development priorities for the school.
- The local authority and diocese provide good additional support for the school. Clear reports following each visit enable senior staff and governors to review developments and set priorities for improvement. Senior leaders are skilled at evaluating the quality of provision and demonstrate very good capacity to bring about further school improvement.
- Procedures to ensure safety, child protection and safeguarding are robust. Arrangements fully meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Leadership of the governing body is strong and well informed. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have close links with the school; this includes feedback from departmental reviews, which they discuss with middle leaders and members of the senior leadership team. Governors have clear expectations and examine closely whether teaching is improving students' progress. This is supported by their ability to interpret data and ask searching questions about students' progress and achievement. When necessary they ask for more detailed reports. Where there is evidence that aspects of teaching, subject leadership or the performance of particular groups are falling below expectations then governors act quickly. Governors are aware of the allocation of the pupil premium. They require the headteacher to demonstrate that it is having a positive impact. Information about the progress of eligible students and their achievements at GCSE and equivalent indicates that the pupil premium has been effectively used to close the gap between these students and others. Governors challenge decisions made by senior leaders and evaluate the impact of initiatives prior to approval. This ensures that financial, and other resources, are deployed to raise standards of teaching and achievement.

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	134199
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	406559

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	346
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Henry Head and Frances Wain
Headteacher	Chris Tomes
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 January 2011
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