

The Deanery CofE High School and Sixth Form College

Frog Lane, Wigan, Lancashire WN1 1HQ

Inspection dates

28–29 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The strong leadership of the headteacher and governors has ensured that the school has improved substantially since its last inspection.
- The progress made by the majority of pupils currently in the school is improving strongly and rapidly. Their progress is now good.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and most provide suitable stretch and challenge for pupils.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They take pride in their work and behave well in lessons and during social times.
- Pupils are safe and happy in school. The school's care, guidance and support are strong, enabling most pupils to thrive. Pupils show good respect for one another, for staff and other adults, and for their school environment.
- The sixth form is good. It is strongly led and teaching is good. Students make very good progress in vocational subjects.
- The school offers good teaching and support for those pupils who arrive with limited English. This is helping them to settle quickly into school and to make good progress.
- The school's work on careers education, information, advice and guidance is outstanding.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the school. They are very well informed and hold senior leaders to account firmly and rigorously.
- Some teaching in mathematics is not yet challenging pupils sufficiently, especially the most able.
- The quality of teaching in modern foreign languages is too variable, with the result that pupils are not making consistently good progress.
- The monitoring completed by senior and middle leaders has improved, but this still sometimes lacks necessary rigour.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than that of other pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take further steps to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics and modern foreign languages, so that:
 - more pupils, including the most able pupils, make good progress
 - all teachers engage their pupils with challenging activities matched to the needs and abilities of the learners.
- Take further action to improve attendance, by:
 - ensuring that processes in place to notify parents on the first day of absence are sharpened and rigorously followed
 - ensuring that the persistent absence of pupils in Years 8 and 9 is rigorously addressed and at least matches national averages
 - continuing to identify and tackle any barriers which prevent disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs from attending well.
- Enhance the rigour with which senior and middle leaders monitor the quality of education, by:
 - ensuring that improvements in pupils' achievement are always measured against national benchmarks as well as the school's own previous figures
 - ensuring that key areas for improvement agreed with teachers and leaders are fully and precisely recorded and that leaders subsequently monitor actions robustly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school is currently undergoing significant construction work, as it prepares to move into a new building in 2017. This has necessitated careful management of the school site and many classrooms have needed to be re-sited in temporary buildings. School leaders have ensured that pupils' movement around the works is safe and well marshalled. Despite this huge upheaval, leaders have continued to improve the school and the quality of education it offers.
- The headteacher has 'led from the front' in driving forward improvement. She demonstrates strong and effective leadership. She and her senior colleagues, and the governors, have tackled the areas for improvement in the previous inspection report with determination: leaders have placed significant emphasis on improving provision at key stage 3, for instance. The impact of their work is clear to see in improving standards and improved teaching. The headteacher is successfully developing the capacity of her fellow senior leaders to improve the school further.
- The headteacher has taken firm and decisive action to improve teaching and subject leadership, for example by setting rigorous improvement targets for teachers whose work had not met required standards.
- The management of teachers' performance is robust, and where teachers do not meet the school's expected standards, leaders and governors withhold pay increases.
- Better teaching and improved subject leadership have led to improvements in the progress made by pupils, especially for pupils currently in the school. Determined leadership has led to greater success in improving the performance of disadvantaged pupils in most year groups and subjects, and they work hard to challenge pupils at all levels, including the most able pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and enables these pupils to make effective progress. Support for pupils who arrive with limited English is effective, as it helps them to settle quickly and to make good progress. Students in the sixth form make good progress from their starting points, especially in vocational subjects.
- The school is making more effective use of the pupil premium and funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, the school has appointed 'pupil premium champions' in each year group, who have supported disadvantaged pupils well and enabled them to make better progress. More work needs to be done to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Teachers interviewed by inspectors, and the majority of those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, are enthusiastic about the 'grass roots' approach to professional development fostered by senior leaders, which they feel takes their learning needs into account. Teachers welcome the opportunity to do action research and generally feel well supported. Leaders also link with local schools, for example using subject networks and the expertise of local headteachers, to provide additional support and challenge. For instance, several subjects moderate their assessments with local schools to ensure that they are accurate.

- The school's curriculum is well planned, broad and balanced, and provides a wide range of courses and subjects which meet the needs and aptitudes of pupils. There is a suitable focus on subjects in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), which ensures that good numbers of pupils opt for academic subjects, but there is also a range of vocational options, several of which lead on to sixth form courses. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, such as sports, music and drama clubs and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. These, along with a variety of regular charity and community events, help students to develop their talents and interests and gain a real desire to support others less fortunate than themselves.
- Leaders have successfully maintained and nurtured the school's positive ethos, which enables pupils to thrive in a caring and supportive environment. Pupils told inspectors that they are happy and safe in school, and that the school cares for them well. Pupils behave well, showing respect for one another, for adults, visitors and the environment.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through its strong ethos, its curriculum, assemblies and the use of tutor time. Its Christian values of compassion, trust, respect, peace and forgiveness are woven throughout the school's work, and provide a basis for teaching pupils about British values.
- In recent times, the school has had to employ too many supply teachers, largely as a result of several long-term staff absences. Pupils told inspectors that they had had too many temporary teachers last year in mathematics and that this had limited their progress. Leaders take firm action where temporary teachers' work does not meet expected standards. This year, the situation is much improved; several permanent staff have returned to The Deanery and staffing has stabilised once more.
- Senior leaders monitor and evaluate the work of the school increasingly effectively. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They meet regularly with middle leaders to assess progress and to discuss areas for improvement, but on occasions meetings lack rigour. Some of the records of the meetings lack depth and detail of any follow-up to agreed actions. Leaders also sometimes measure the school's improvement in pupils' achievement only against what the school achieved in previous years and not against national benchmarks.
- The ability of subject leaders and heads of faculty to lead and develop their teams is growing and is resulting in improved outcomes. There have been several relatively recent appointments. Most leaders hold their departments to account effectively, but in a few cases recent improvements are still embedding, and colleagues need further support to ensure continued progress.
- While the large majority of staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were positive about the impact of senior leaders, a small minority expressed negative views about leadership, including how well leaders deal with incidences of poor behaviour and how well senior leaders support staff.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is effective.
- Governors have effective oversight of the school. They are well informed about the school's strengths and its key priorities for improvement. They ask searching questions about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. Consequently, they hold leaders closely to account for the school's performance. Through their work as 'link governors'

to departments, individual governors ask questions of subject leaders and make it clear that the governing body is determined to bring about improvement.

- Governors are aware of the importance of pupil premium funding and of how this money is spent. One governor has effective involvement with the school's pupil premium champions, whose role is to promote and enhance pupil premium pupils' achievement, and she has a good understanding of how well these pupils are performing. This funding is having a positive impact on the improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors support and challenge the school effectively, and are committed to supporting the headteacher's drive for improvement. For example, they ensure that teaching which does not meet required standards is not rewarded by inappropriate pay progression and that weaker teaching is tackled. Governors have sought to secure high-quality appointments to leadership and teaching posts.
- Governors have good knowledge of the school's budget and manage its finances carefully and prudently.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements.
- Staff work proactively to keep pupils safe. Training in child protection is kept up to date for all staff and the school keeps good records of any issues arising. Staff and governors have had recent training on radicalisation and extremism and the government's 'Prevent' duty, which seeks to ensure that young people do not become radicalised. Staff work well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Pupils have been taught and know how to keep themselves safe, for instance when using the internet, and the school has filters in place to prevent inappropriate internet usage. The school makes all parents and carers aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of its Safeguarding and child protection policy, and reference to it in the parents' handbook.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning in most lessons. They arrive willing, ready and equipped to learn. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are strong and support learning effectively.
- The school's own evaluation of teaching is that it is typically good. The improving progress of pupils in all year groups and in most subjects confirms this view. Inspectors also saw evidence of good teaching over time in pupils' books, which are largely well presented and cared for, and which show positive levels of challenging work. Most pupils who spoke to inspectors were pleased with the quality of teaching they receive.
- The most effective teaching in the school is characterised by well-planned activities that make pupils think and capture their interest. In a challenging Year 10 history lesson, for example, the teacher's careful, probing questions encouraged pupils to develop their thinking and to speak authoritatively about Russia's provisional government.
- Most teachers follow the school's assessment policy by offering good guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Where pupils respond to this feedback and take note of the learning points, this enhances their progress.

- Staff who met inspectors, including some who are in their first year of teaching, were appreciative of the professional development opportunities that the school has given them. Staff feel that leaders recognise and nurture talent and good practice.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors noted that work done with pupils in key stage 3 often lacked purpose and failed to prepare pupils adequately for key stage 4 and GCSE. The headteacher has addressed this issue with determination and substantial improvements have been made to teaching in key stage 3. Most teachers now plan much more effectively to meet the needs of the pupils in Years 7 to 9, with the result that most pupils in these year groups now make stronger progress.
- Staff have worked hard in recent times to boost the achievement of the most able pupils. Pupils' books mainly show that they have received good levels of challenge that are being sustained over time. The most able pupils told inspectors that teaching makes strong demands on them across many subjects. The most able pupils observed at work in lessons sustained their concentration well and often produced good-quality, sophisticated writing. For example, in a Year 8 geography lesson where pupils studied the impact of moving a football stadium from its current town-centre location, they were challenged to think through all of the implications of such a move.
- There is still more work to do to meet the needs of the most able pupils consistently well. The level of challenge in mathematics and modern foreign languages is sometimes insufficient for the most able pupils.
- In mathematics, the subject leader is bringing new impetus to the faculty's teaching, for example in the welcome development of mathematical reasoning and problem solving. Some variability remains in the quality of mathematics teaching and this leads to progress not being rapid for some pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils the inspectors met are happy with how well teachers and staff support and care for them. They are confident that if they are worried about anything they can approach members of staff for help.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They told inspectors that bullying is rare and that staff deal with it effectively if it arises. The school has few recorded instances of racist or homophobic bullying. A few parents who responded to online questionnaires commented that bullying is not dealt with effectively, but evidence gathered by inspectors confirmed that the school takes bullying seriously and that it is promptly addressed.
- Staff have sought to help pupils understand British values. Pupils are given the chance to vote in the youth parliament for issues of importance to them. Many pupils do understand British values, but a small number of more vulnerable pupils who spoke to inspectors have not yet acquired this understanding.
- Pupils take pride in their school and their work. They dress smartly in their school uniform, and respect the school's facilities and environment.

- Staff and pupils relate very positively to one another and respect one another's differences. These supportive relationships, and the school's positive approach to equality and diversity, underpin pupils' good attitudes to learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in most lessons. Students who spoke to inspectors confirmed that this is usually the case. Inspectors noted only a few instances in lessons where behaviour was not quite as positive, usually where teaching lacked pace or challenge.
- Pupils' conduct at social times and when moving between lessons is orderly, mature and responsible, despite the many necessary restrictions caused by building work. Pupils respect and rise to the school's expectations of them. They move promptly to lessons without needing to be reminded by staff.
- The rate of exclusion is low. The school has not excluded any pupil permanently since 2012. The number of pupils excluded for short, fixed-term periods has been dropping steadily in recent years and is now low. There are few repeat exclusions. Whenever it can, the school uses its own internal withdrawal room rather than excluding pupils; here, too, the numbers of pupils admitted has dropped sharply year-on-year.
- Attendance was very slightly lower than the national average in 2015/16, which was an improvement on the previous year. Overall attendance is average, but this masks areas where the school still has work to do to improve it. The overall attendance of disadvantaged pupils and of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than for the rest of the school and in comparison with national figures for other pupils. Persistent absence in Years 8 and 9 is higher than overall national figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's assessment information about the cohorts of pupils currently in the school shows significant improvement to date in all year groups. Senior leaders, supported and challenged by governors, have made strenuous efforts to improve achievement at all levels. As a result, current pupils in Years 7 to 11 and in most subjects, including English and mathematics, are making faster progress than in recent years. Attainment is on a rising trend in the great majority of subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's assessment data and checked the rigour with which senior leaders and heads of faculty assess progress. The school's predictions of its performance are increasingly accurate.
- A notable success in 2016 was that the school successfully reduced the difference between the performance of its disadvantaged pupils and the national figure for other pupils. This is a direct result of the significant emphasis that leaders, teachers and governors have placed on this group of pupils, for example through the work of specially appointed pupil premium 'champions'. Figures for current pupils show that the majority of disadvantaged pupils are continuing to make strong progress.
- The school challenges its most able pupils to achieve well in most subjects, including Latin. The majority of most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are now making good progress.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made better progress in English and mathematics in 2016 than has been the case in recent years. They generally make the progress that is expected of them now. The school has used its 'catch-up' funding well to support those pupils who arrive from primary school with low levels of literacy or numeracy. Leaders demonstrated that most pupils who had been targeted for support made positive progress in both their reading and numeracy over the year.
- The school encourages its pupils to read widely. It has a clear strategy for promoting reading and helping pupils to read better. The library is well stocked and attractive. Year 7 pupils of different ability levels read confidently and are interested in books.
- The school's work on careers education, information, advice and guidance is outstanding. There is a calendar of information events, which involves pupils in all key stages, beginning in Year 7. The school offers its pupils high-quality, impartial careers advice, has strong links with local and national businesses and is supported by an enterprise adviser. Support for pupils at transition points, for example between Year 11 and the sixth form, is excellent. In 2016 no pupils were recorded as being out of education, employment or training.
- Pupils' progress from different starting points is not as strong in mathematics and modern foreign languages as in other subjects.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Students in the sixth form make very good progress in vocational subjects from their starting points. The school improved its performance in A-level academic subjects in 2016, including at the highest grades, with the result that progress was almost identical to the national average. This was despite students entering the sixth form with prior attainment grades that were generally lower than national averages. Overall, this represents good progress. The school met the national interim standards for sixth forms.
- Students who resit GCSE English and mathematics make better progress towards improved grades than students nationally.
- Students' individualised study programmes build on their prior attainment and meet all the requirements of sixth form provision. Students benefit from excellent careers advice and guidance, and they say they were given good guidance in Year 11 when it came to choosing their sixth form courses of study. They have good opportunities to develop their personal, social and employability skills, and they enjoy a good enrichment programme, for example discussing British values as part of a politics programme. Retention from Year 12 into Year 13 is good.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Students work hard and apply themselves well. Teachers challenge them with well-planned and demanding work, which is often expressly designed to meet the varying needs and abilities of their groups.
- Students are very well supported. They are overwhelmingly positive about their reasons for choosing to study in the sixth form at The Deanery. Pastoral guidance is strong. Students' attendance and punctuality in the sixth form are good. They behave responsibly and maturely, are safe and feel safe.
- The leadership of the sixth form is strong. Leaders have cultivated an ethos of hard work and high expectations, which students respect and welcome. The sixth form is

inclusive and promotes equality and diversity effectively. There is close monitoring of student progress and students have weekly meetings with their form tutors to assess needs and address any difficulties.

- Development planning is an area of leadership which needs further work. Plans currently lack sharpness and precise success criteria by which improvements can be measured.

School details

Unique reference number	106534
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10019803

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,304
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Speakman
Headteacher	Janice Rowlands
Telephone number	01942 768 801
Website	www.deanery.wigan.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@admin.deanery.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than others of its type.
- In some year groups there are many more girls than boys.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. However, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is increasing. The school has its own unit where these pupils receive specialist tuition to improve their English.

- The proportion of pupils known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part-way through the year is higher than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is currently undergoing a significant building programme which has necessitated the use of a number of temporary classrooms and offices.
- Due to site restrictions, pupils need to be bussed to local sports facilities for their physical education (PE) lessons.
- No pupils are educated off-site in alternative provision.
- The school works in partnership with other local secondary schools as part of the Wigan consortium, in order to mutually support leaders and teachers. It has close links with many local primary schools to prepare pupils for secondary school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of lessons, several of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors visited tutor time and an assembly and observed pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons. They scrutinised some pupils' exercise books across subjects in more depth. They also looked at information on pupils' current progress and attainment.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, subject leaders, class teachers and governors. They held telephone conversations with a local headteacher, who was the leader of one of the Wigan consortia of schools, and with an external consultant employed by the school.
- Inspectors met with five groups of pupils formally and spoke with many more pupils informally. They took account of the single response to the online pupil survey.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of documents. These included: the school's website; development plans and evaluations of the school's progress; external reports; policies; safeguarding procedures and records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- The inspection team took account of the 73 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and of the 49 free text responses received from parents. Inspectors also considered the 55 responses to the staff online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clive Hurren, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Hollister	Ofsted Inspector
Marcia Harding	Ofsted Inspector
Annette Patterson	Ofsted Inspector
Pritiben Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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