

# Idsall School

Coppice Green Lane, Shifnal, TF11 8PD

**Inspection dates** 22-23 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 and leave the school with results that are above the national average.
- Students make good progress in all year groups and develop skills in literacy and numeracy at a brisk pace.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Teachers know their students well and lessons are carefully planned.
- Students behave with courtesy and respect around the school and in lessons. They feel safe and are keen to learn.
- Leaders and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and use detailed plans and well-chosen actions to improve the quality of teaching and standards that students achieve.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress, especially in Year 12. The proportion of students staying on into Year 13 is above the national average.
- Students take part in a wide range of good quality activities after school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding, and the aspects of outstanding teaching that exist in the school are not routinely shared with all staff.
- Teachers' marking does not always give enough detail for students to be able to improve their work. Occasionally, tasks set in lessons are not well enough matched to individual needs and this slows down progress.
- The progress that students make in A level courses is not yet as strong as in AS and Applied courses.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 44 lessons in Years 7 to 11. Of these, 13 were jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team or from the schools 'Teaching and Learning Group'. Inspector visited assembly, tutor times and other learning activities.
- Years 12 and 13 were on study leave during the inspection, and Year 11 were following a revision timetable.
- Inspectors held formal and informal discussions with groups of students about aspects of school life, and scrutinised samples of students' work.
- Meetings took place with senior leaders, subject leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation from the school, including relating to attendance, safeguarding, student achievement, behaviour, and the management of staff performance.
- The views of 86 parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent view, were taken into account, along with other communications by parents. In addition, 61 members of staff completed a questionnaire and these views formed part of the inspection process.

## Inspection team

Clare Saunders, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Robert Bourdon-Pierre

Additional Inspector

Michael Marks

Additional Inspector

Sean McClafferty

Additional Inspector

Jane Gaffney

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding from the government to support students who are eligible for free school meals, who are in local authority care, or who are children of a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A very few students follow work-related courses either at Oldbury Wells School, Bridgnorth Endowed School or William Brookes School , or within the Skills Centre at Idsall School for part of the week.
- The school's Sports Centre is used by the community in the evenings.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that all students make consistently rapid progress in their learning, including in the sixth form, by
  - ensuring teachers' marking in all subjects includes information about how individual students can improve their work and allows students sufficient opportunity to respond to advice and comments
  - consistently matching the learning activities so that they meet students' needs and aspirations
  - regularly sharing outstanding practice with all teaching staff.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- For the past three years, a higher proportion of students than seen nationally leave the school with five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics.
- Most students achieve well in Key Stage 3 and attainment is high. Students in Years 7 and 8 benefit from small group tuition and are making accelerated progress in English due to the tailor-made support they receive.
- The year 7 catch-up premium is used to provide extra tuition in literacy and numeracy in very small groups or individually for students who need further help in building key skills. The impact has been very positive and consequently, students use these skills to support their learning across the different subjects they study.
- Most students make good progress in their learning, especially in mathematics. The blip seen in English standards at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2012 has been reversed. School data show that students currently in Year 11 are making good progress in English and are on track to reach higher standards than last year.
- School leaders consider the needs of disabled students and those with special educational needs carefully when they join the school. Effective additional support, within the classroom and in small groups, ensures that students make good progress in all years.
- A very few students spend part of the week away from school studying work-related courses, such as diplomas in engineering and health and beauty, at local schools. Other students learn construction and motor vehicle skills at Idsall School within a specially built centre. The achievement and well-being of all students who do these work-related courses is followed closely by school leaders, and students learn well.
- The school has not entered any students early for GCSE mathematics until this year. Some students now benefit from taking the examination early, and can then focus on improving their mathematics grade in the summer exams. This boosts the confidence of these students, and encourages them to aspire to improve their grade.
- The school makes good use of its pupil premium funding to provide additional staffing, resources and activities to enable eligible students of all abilities to make good progress. Attainment in English and mathematics for students eligible for free school meals has been just over half a grade below their peers. However, the rapid progress made by students means that their attainment is now in line with their peers.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to provide emotional support for the few students from armed forces families. These students typically achieve well academically.
- Achievement in the sixth form in AS subjects and applied courses is good. Performance is particularly strong in physical education and English literature. The vast majority of students stay on into Year 13, and although improving strongly, progress in A level courses is not yet quite as good as the progress made in Year 12.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teaching throughout the school is good and some is outstanding. As a result students learn successfully and their achievement is good.
- In the very best lessons, students extend their skills and apply their knowledge and understanding to new situations very well. This is because teachers repeatedly check how much all students have understood and quickly fill any gaps or move learning forward as required.
- Teachers expect detailed answers from students in response to questions, and these high expectations are generally well met. For example, in a Year 8 science lesson, following a comprehensive introduction, the teacher made sure that all students were involved in answering a series of questions about how light is reflected. They moved on to asking questions of each other to check their understanding was complete.
- In all lessons, the teachers create a positive climate for learning where all students feel comfortable offering their opinions, knowing that they will be listened to by adults and by one another with respect. Additional adults are used effectively to support the specific needs of some students who learn well as a result.
- Homework is often set through the school's website so that students and parents know what they have to do. Students find that homework provides plenty of opportunities for them to reflect on their learning, apply their skills to new situations, and reinforces their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers have a clear focus on promoting literacy skills in the various subjects and in written and verbal activities. For example, there is a weekly discussion that involves students and adults in using vocabulary accurately such as 'affect' and 'effect' and tackling misconceptions. This contributes to students well-developed literacy skills.
- Teachers know the students' abilities, and plan lessons so that they meet the needs effectively of different groups, including disabled students, those with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium. Occasionally, including in the sixth form, learning activities do not enable all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Work in the books of some students reflects this.
- Teachers' written comments on students work, although generally regular and helpful, are not of a consistently high quality. There is some outstanding practice, for example in English, where students know exactly how to improve their work and are encouraged to do so. Sometimes written comments in marking focus on whether the work has been completed or not, and do not provide sufficient information about how the student can enhance their understanding in a particular subject.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Students are very welcoming to visitors, and are polite, respectful and articulate in their interactions with one another and adults.
- They enjoy their learning. They engage well in lessons and are willing to participate in learning activities. Occasionally, where the teaching is less effective, students are more passive, but there is little off task behaviour.

- Students feel safe in school and their parents agree. They know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet.
- Students are adamant that there is very little bullying, and that when it does occur, that it is dealt with effectively. The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination including that which is racial or prejudice-based, and school records show that isolated incidents are taken very seriously.
- Students' attendance is consistently above the national average, reflecting that they enjoy coming to school. It was notable that during the inspection, several sixth form students chose to come into school for private study and additional help despite there being no formal lessons for them to attend.
- Teachers and other adults apply the school's behaviour management policy consistently across the school. Students comment that behaviour has improved over the last two years, and that they know precisely what is expected of them.
- Students relish the opportunity to hold positions of responsibility. There is an active sixth form committee and school council. Students in Year 11 have the opportunity to apply to be prefects where they serve as positive role models for younger students reinforcing expectations of behaviour around the school.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide a lunchtime club for students from armed forces families to drop in and support each other and share any concerns. This is greatly appreciated by the students and their families.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Senior leaders, middle leaders and governors, led by the headteacher, demonstrate a clear ambition to constantly review and improve the school. This is having a positive impact on students' good and improving achievement.
- All leaders are aware of the strengths of the school, and development plans are sharply focused on what the school needs to do in order to improve. Leaders review how well the school is doing regularly, and the impact of any changes implemented. For example, additional teaching of English for lower ability students in Years 7, 8 and 9 has led to raised achievement in English and so leaders are extending this provision for more students next year.
- The robust system for monitoring the quality of teaching is used by leaders to identify areas for whole school and individual training. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their strengths and areas requiring development, and to engage in professional discussion about teaching standards. Clear targets are assisting improvements but the features of outstanding teaching are not shared regularly enough with all staff.
- The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of the students is a strength, as a result of a range of opportunities to develop these aspects. For example, students support a military charity, offering opportunities for them to reflect on right from wrong, while links with Germany and Norway enhance students' cultural awareness.
- School leaders ensure that all students have equal opportunities. They track the progress of

individual students closely, and ensure that all can be involved in a range of activities. Strong sixth form leadership underpins the student's wellbeing and good achievement.

- The school offers a broad range of subjects and courses for students to select, including offering courses such as motor construction and hair and beauty in collaboration with three partner schools. This is supplemented by several trips and additional activities. For example, the art examination groups in Years 11, 12 and 13, have visited New York, and students can choose from a variety of activities after school including sports such as rounders and karate. In the sixth form, the proportion of students staying on into Year 13 is higher than the national average, reflecting the relevance and range of subjects available.
- The local authority provides light touch support, including routine analysis of performance data, for this good school, in recognition of its effectiveness.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have detailed discussions and ask questions about student achievement and the quality of teaching. They provide support for the headteacher and leadership team in looking to constantly improve. They have high expectations of staff, rewarding good teachers accordingly, and not tolerating underperformance. They keep their skills and knowledge up to date. They are aware of how the pupil premium is spent, and that this is leading to the gap in achievement reducing between eligible students and their peers. They ensure that statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123568
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412858

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1282
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Blackstock
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Bourton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2008
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