

Worden Sports College

Westfield Drive, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1QX

Inspection dates 12–13 September 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.

- Students achieve well. Measures of progress compare favourably with national figures. Since the last inspection, the proportion of students gaining five GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics have risen substantially.
- Students learn well in most subjects. They respond fully to the many opportunities they have to build their understanding through discussion and working with others.
- Improvements in students' attainment have been rapid, substantial and sustained. These, together with other improvements, show the school's excellent capacity to improve.
- Students achieve particularly well in English, physical education and information and communication technology.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons that include varied and interesting activities and build strong working relationships with students.
- Students enjoy school and support it strongly. They treat others with respect and understand the value of working hard.
- Leaders and managers have raised aspirations among staff and students. They have developed a positive ethos in the face of considerable challenges and during a time of substantial change.
- Leaders, managers and governors have an accurate view of the school. They monitor teaching and learning well and identify how individual teachers can develop their skills as well as contribute to the overall school improvement priorities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students' achievement across different subjects is uneven.
- In some lessons, not all students are fully challenged and too few lessons emphasise the building of literacy and numeracy skills.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, inspectors observed 23 lessons, including four that were observed jointly with senior staff at the school.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and the local authority, staff and students. They scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to the work of the governing body and the achievement, behaviour and safety of students.
- Inspectors took account of 12 responses to the on line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Paul Chambers, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Andrew Henderson

Additional inspector

Mary Lanovy-Taylor

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Worden Sports College is much smaller than average for a school of its type.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Almost all students are White British.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- There are more boys than girls in the school.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 attend off-site provision at Runshaw College or Rathbone Training for one half-day per week.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher took up post in January 2012, following over a year in the role of acting headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement overall by reducing the gaps in achievement between different areas of the school.
- Improve teaching through:
 - strengthening whole-school approaches to developing students' skills in literacy and numeracy
 - ensuring that work is consistently challenging for students of all abilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment is average. For example, in 2011, the proportion of students gaining five GCSE passes at A* to C including English and mathematics was 57%, which exactly matched the national average figure. Unvalidated figures supplied by the school indicate that the 2012 GCSE results continue the strong pattern of improvement evident in recent years.
- Students make good progress relative to their generally below-average starting points. Measures of progress compare favourably with national figures: all measures are at least in line with national expectations and some are clearly above. Recent figures showing approximately 90% of students making the expected progress in English are particularly impressive.
- Students achieve well over time because of the good teaching they receive. Evidence from students' books and lessons seen during the inspection shows that teaching enables students to build skills and understanding securely in lessons and as they move through the school. Students learn effectively and respond well to the many opportunities to take part in discussion or paired activities.
- There are no clear differences in the progress made by different groups of students. Disabled students and those with special educational needs respond well to the support they receive and make good progress. Students eligible for the pupil premium make better progress than their peers nationally.
- The small number of Key Stage 4 students who undertake part of their curriculum off-site benefit from the experience. They make good progress and gain appropriate accreditation in areas such as engineering, hair and beauty or motor vehicle maintenance. Managers retain a clear oversight of the attendance, progress and well-being of these students and this contributes to their good achievement.
- Students are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. For example, the unvalidated 2012 results show that every one of the students who left that year gained five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C. However, gaps between students' achievement in different subjects, such as between English and humanities, are wider than in most schools.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching over time is good. The school's records show that the large majority of teaching is at least good and this broadly matches the proportion of good or better teaching seen during the inspection. Evidence from the joint observation of lessons further supports the view that the school has an accurate picture of the quality of teaching.
- Teachers demonstrate fully the qualities outlined in the Teachers' Standards. They use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons that include a variety of learning activities. They build good relationships with students that promote a purposeful working atmosphere. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of disabled students and those with special educational needs through timely intervention and targeted support.
- Where teaching is strongest, teachers convey high expectations, keep a careful eye on students' progress during the lesson and use questioning skilfully to probe students' understanding.
- Occasionally, where learning is less effective, teachers take too little account of the range of abilities in the class and, as a result, not all students are fully challenged by the activities they undertake. On a small number of occasions, teachers' planning focuses more on the tasks for students to complete rather than the expected learning.
- The school has a clear strategy for improving students' reading in Key Stage 3 and this is having an impact on improving their skills. Above-average GCSE results in English show that students make strong gains in their reading and writing. However, teachers throughout the

school could give more emphasis to improving students' literacy and mathematical skills in their subject teaching.

- Parents and carers believe that teaching is good and this view is endorsed by the students who spoke with inspectors. Teachers' marking helps students to know how well they are doing and how to improve. Students value the process where, each week, they undertake a small number of extended homework tasks rather than several short tasks.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students display positive attitudes to learning. They respond readily to the tasks they are set and are keen to do well.
- Evidence suggests that the good behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of behaviour in the school over time. For example, students and staff state that behaviour is good and this is supported by the small number of parents and carers who responded to the Parent View survey.
- Students have a good understanding of the school's system for promoting good behaviour. They appreciate the rewards for good behaviour and the consequences of letting their standards drop.
- Students, staff and governors are confident that behaviour in the school has improved in recent years. The number of exclusions from school is dropping but remains above average.
- A range of internal structures support students' personal and social needs effectively. Staff know students' individual backgrounds well and the school provides considerable support for those students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Students say they feel safe and report very little bullying. They know that bullying is wrong and have some understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. They understand about risks, such as those associated with drugs or using the internet. They know who they can turn to if they experience bullying or other behaviour that makes them uncomfortable, and are confident that any subsequent action from the school would resolve the situation.
- Attendance is broadly average. The proportion of students who are persistently absent from school is low.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have developed among staff a shared strategic vision and a strong sense of working together to improve the school. The priorities for improvement are appropriate and clearly focused on improving outcomes for students.
- Self-evaluation is realistic. Leaders and managers monitor the work of individual staff effectively. As a result, they know the strengths of the school and understand where improvements can still be made.
- The strongly improving trend in attainment, together with improved behaviour, demonstrates the school's excellent capacity to improve. These improvements in outcomes have come about through stronger leadership and management at all levels and a relentless focus on raising aspirations among students and staff.
- The management of teaching and learning is good. Underperformance is addressed quickly and effectively. The school's performance management system is supported effectively by less formal arrangements for improving teaching through coaching and sharing good practice. As a result, teachers have a clear understanding of the school's overall aims as well as particular ways in which they can develop their teaching skills. The school's records show that the quality of teaching has improved over time.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Leaders and managers monitor the achievement of groups and know that no group performs less well than their national

counterparts. The school has used the pupil premium effectively: for example, the purchase of mobile technology has enhanced the Year 7 curriculum and funds have been used to promote attendance at additional out-of-school classes. Gaps in attainment between those entitled to the pupil premium and other students have narrowed. Leaders understand that they could do more to communicate how they have used the pupil premium and to analyse behaviour over time for different groups.

- The curriculum is appropriate and allows students to follow their interests and gain accreditation. Despite its small size, the school has maintained a broad range of options at Key Stage 4, partly through teaching some courses in mixed-age groups. Inspection evidence, supported by the school's analysis, shows that students in these groups make progress in line with students in single-age classes.
 - The curriculum fosters students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, through opportunities to discuss issues of right and wrong. Regular paired and group work in lessons promotes students' social skills and the school's positive ethos helps to develop their self-esteem. Many students take advantage of the school's excellent sports facilities and, in the process, develop perseverance and teamwork.
 - Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.
 - In the light of the school's strong record of improvement, the local authority provides light touch but regular support.
 - The school makes use of a range of methods to maintain effective communication with parents and carers. Regular reports and more informal contacts ensure they are well informed about students' progress. The school recognises that further development of its website would strengthen the information available to parents and carers, such as about school policies or contacting governors.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear view of the school's strategic direction and provide strong challenge and support.
 - The governing body includes a range of well-deployed expertise and has a record of dealing well with difficult issues.
 - Governors have been quick to identify their own training needs and to take advantage of opportunities to develop their skills.
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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	119741
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	401870

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maureen Woodall
Headteacher	Christopher Catherall
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2010
Telephone number	01772 421021
Fax number	01772 456757
Email address	head@worden.lancs.sch.uk

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