

Irlam and Cadishead College

Station Road, Irlam, Manchester, M44 5ZR

Inspection dates 4–5 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leadership and management are inadequate. Until very recently not enough has been done to stop the college's decline. Some senior and middle leaders do not have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching over time is inadequate. Too many teachers have low expectations of students. Teachers are not accurately judging what the students know and consequently they are unable to help students make rapid progress.
- Governors have until very recently been too reliant on the performance information they received from the leadership without checking for themselves. As a result, they have not acted quickly enough to tackle the college's weaknesses and have not involved themselves in forward planning. Consequently, their impact has been insufficient.
- Students' achievement is inadequate. The standards of attainment students reach by the end of Year 11 are too low given their starting points. The progress they make in many subjects, including in English and mathematics, is not good enough when compared to their peers nationally.
- The attitudes to learning of too many students are weak and their behaviour in lessons is inappropriate. This slows their progress and that of other students.
- Disadvantaged students, those who have special educational needs and the most able, are also making inadequate progress.
- Provision in the sixth form is inadequate. Too many students, particularly those who study academic courses, are underachieving.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and head of school have a clear idea of the college's strengths and weaknesses and have begun to create a positive climate for improvement. As a result, staff have been receptive to the changes made in recent weeks and morale is rising.
- Advice, information and guidance offered to students are effective and ensured that last year no students left the college without a place in education, employment or training.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching during a range of lessons in different subjects; four observations were made jointly with senior leaders. Additionally inspectors visited several tutorial sessions and observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with eight governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors also held meetings with various leaders across the college, a group of newly qualified teachers and groups of students from every year group. Students were observed and spoken with informally during break times and when moving between lessons.
- Thirty-two responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and 52 inspection questionnaires returned by staff were taken into consideration.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included the college’s action plans for improvement, data on students’ past and current progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, an independent report commissioned by the local authority and records relating to students’ behaviour and attendance. A sample of students’ work was scrutinised.

Inspection team

Pankaj Gulab, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marcia Harding	Additional Inspector
Fiona Dixon	Additional Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized secondary school and there are fewer boys than girls on roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, those supported through the pupil premium, is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below the national average, as is the proportion of students who come from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is approximately twice the national average.
- The college does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- A number of students attend Teens and Toddlers, a child-care centre for work experience; a small number go to the Youth Service; two attend the Canterbury Centre, a mental health support centre; and a further three are educated through Salford's online provision.
- The executive headteacher, who was appointed in October 2014 in an interim capacity, is at the college for three days in the week and the head of school, also an interim appointment, joined the college in a full-time capacity in January 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and secure good or better progress for all groups of students, across all subjects, in all year groups, particularly in English and mathematics, by improving the quality of teaching so it is at least good, by:
 - eradicating inadequate teaching and ensuring all teaching engages students well and makes clear what is expected of them in their learning
 - ensuring teachers' assessments are regular and accurate in order to inform effectively their planning for students' progress in lessons and over time
 - raising teachers' expectations of what students can achieve so that all students, particularly the most able, receive the appropriate challenge and support when needed
 - making sure teachers consistently let students know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, give them the opportunity to act on this advice and then systematically check that learning has progressed
 - making sure students have learned securely what they need to, before moving on to new learning
 - making sure students take more responsibility for their learning through improving their punctuality to college and promoting their eagerness to learn
 - sharing the good practice that already exists in pockets, across the college more widely.
- Urgently improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels, including governance, in order to improve students' achievement by:
 - developing a secure, reliable and robust system for checking on the progress of students across the college
 - ensuring there is effective support for all leaders, especially middle leaders and governors, to address the gaps in their skills and understanding of their roles in order that they can check effectively on what is working well or not and so make the necessary improvements

- making sure all staff have consistently high expectations of students' behaviour and attitudes to learning, including their prompt arrival to lessons
- implementing the changes planned for the curriculum so that it better meets the needs of students in the main school and the sixth form and drives forward the development of students' literacy and mathematics skills in all areas
- ensuring that the plans to address the underachievement of different groups of students are driven well across the college, that appropriate actions taken and that their impact is checked on a regular basis.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Many of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report and subsequent visits by Her Majesty's Inspector have only begun to be addressed recently. Consequently, the actions undertaken have had limited impact on tackling the students' underachievement. Too many leaders at different levels in the college lack the knowledge, skills and understanding to fulfil their roles effectively and contribute to raising achievement.
- The self-evaluation undertaken by the recently appointed executive headteacher and head of school is accurate, and has led to a number of changes, including raised expectations of staff performance. However, this has not yet resulted in significant improvement in the quality of teaching and students' achievement. Until recently, performance management arrangements have not followed the required timescales and have not, therefore, contributed effectively to driving improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Some middle leaders are not effective in driving forward improvements as they still have gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding of their roles, for example, in their checking on their areas of responsibility.
- The provision for disabled students and those with special educational needs is inadequate. The processes by which students' needs are identified are not clear. Staff expertise and training are limited and do not enable the college to effectively meet the needs of many of the students. The exceptions to this are the arrangements in place for students with a statement of special educational needs who receive support from local authority specialists commissioned by the college and trained teaching assistants.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of many students in both the main school and sixth form because it is inappropriately structured. Many students are not enrolled on courses that are suitable for them and the time allocated to some subjects is not enough to cover everything needed to prepare for examinations. Plans to make adjustments are well advanced but will not take place until the next academic year. Numerous curricular and extra-curricular events, including a link with schools abroad, are helping to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A programme, with the aim of preparing students for life in modern Britain, has been produced by the new leader with responsibility for students' personal, health and social education. However, the quality of delivery of the programme is variable during house time. Students are, however, developing their understanding of living in modern Britain, through volunteering and supporting others. They are aware of multicultural Britain and convey the unacceptability of racist comments and behaviour. A measure of understanding of the role of Britain in Europe is developed in Year 11.
- Leaders in the college are not able to account for the impact of the pupil premium expenditure in the last academic year. Accurate information is not available. A new policy and action plan is now in place but it is too early to evaluate its impact. Tracking of students who are making expected and more than expected progress in lower year groups is not rigorous and efforts are currently focussed mainly on Years 10 and 11.
- The promotion of equal opportunity is inadequate because leaders' actions have not been successful in closing the gaps in attainment between the various groups and their peers in the college and others nationally. Advice, information and guidance offered to students are effective and ensured that no students left the college without a place in education, employment or training last year.
- The clear expectations conveyed by the executive headteacher, the opportunities provided for middle leaders to take more responsibility and the robust application of the behaviour policy are having a positive impact on staff morale. Middle and senior leaders show an eagerness to be more effective and have subscribed wholeheartedly to the improvement agenda.
- Joint observations undertaken with senior leaders show they are clear about what contributes to effective teaching and are not afraid to give difficult messages. Teachers, during feedback on their lessons, show they are keen to improve, open to suggestions and willing to make a difference.
- The college's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Arrangements to monitor the safety, behaviour and progress of students attending alternative education are good.
- The support provided by the local authority this academic year is more effective than previously and is contributing to the development of capacity in the college.
- The college may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body have become more aware of the weaknesses of the college this academic year, as

- a result of the findings of an external review and through the executive headteacher's evaluations.
- Governors have formed an executive committee, meeting weekly with the executive headteacher and thereby making it possible for decisions to be taken quickly. Their involvement in considering the strengths and weaknesses of the college and monitoring of the spending and impact of the pupil premium is less developed.
 - The governing body has been too reliant on the information provided by the leaders and has not been involved in the college's long-term planning. While minutes of governing body meetings show governors have challenged the college's senior leaders, the impact of this has been limited in the recent past. Governors' monitoring of the college's performance management procedures is not strong because underperformance has not been effectively tackled and teachers' pay is not effectively linked to performance. Some policies have not been reviewed and updated and are not current. Consequently, the impact of governance is weak.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are inadequate

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is inadequate. Too many students have poor attitudes to learning. Very often they do not want to take up the opportunities for learning offered to them in lessons. Many students disengage when teachers do not convey clear expectations of how they should learn in their lessons. For some this leads to behaviour that interrupts their learning and that of others. Students spoken with say that low-level disruption often disrupts their learning because the teacher's time is taken up with dealing with misbehaving students. Typically, students' behaviour is not conducive to learning according to students, parents and staff.
- Students take pride in their appearance and come to college smartly dressed. This pride, for a significant number of students, does not extend to their work or the environment. Some books and desks are covered in graffiti, some of which is offensive. Some students do not come to school with the required equipment and time is wasted because they need to be supplied with pens and rulers by teachers.
- Students are polite and courteous to visitors. During break times, they engage well with their peers and are responsible when queuing in the canteen. Movement around the college between lessons is generally sensible but, in the open-planned areas, some lessons are disturbed by latecomers passing through areas where teaching has already started. Some students are slow getting to lessons on time.
- Expectations of students' behaviour have been raised through the recently updated behaviour policy. This has resulted in more students being excluded from the college for their poor behaviour. Students say that the inappropriate use of mobile phones and the issue of not wearing correct uniform have been addressed. The focus on expectations in classrooms is now being given more attention, but this has yet to have a full impact on the poor attitudes to learning of some students.
- Students' attendance this academic year from September to the end of January dropped compared to the same period last year and is below average. A series of bouts of sickness have affected a large proportion of students and contributed partially to the proportion of students who are persistently absent rising to above the national average.
- The small number of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) conveyed their concerns about the behaviour of students.

Safety

- The college's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement.
- Inspectors found students generally say they feel safe and are confident that concerns raised with adults in the college are treated seriously and usually addressed well. However, some Year 7 students lacked the confidence to report concerns and older students feel some incidents are not fully investigated.
- The small number of parents who responded to the on-line survey (Parent View) mostly agreed that the college keeps their children safe.
- A programme to make students aware of the different risks they may face using new technologies has clearly had an impact on students as they can speak about how they can stay safe on the internet, deal with sexting and inappropriate messages on their phones, should they occur. They know the risks associated with drugs, alcohol and sexual health as well as the dangers of belonging to gangs. Students speak positively about the support from police in the college two days a week, who convey to them the dangers on the streets and how they can avoid them.
- Students acknowledge there is some bullying but say that, when reported, it is mostly dealt with effectively by adults in the college. Arrangements to tackle bullying allow victims and perpetrators to

explore their roles in an incident and this leads to little or no repetition of incidents.

- Clear arrangements are in place to make sure the few students on alternative provision are safe.
- There is a large welfare team in the college, who follow up absences immediately and have a clear idea of why students are not in school. All have received higher level training in keeping children safe.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching over time is inadequate because too many teachers are not checking the learning of students accurately and, consequently, are not tackling the gaps in the students' knowledge, skills and understanding. This is leading to the students' inadequate achievement.
- Teachers' expectations are variable and in too many lessons; effective planning to secure students' progress is not consistent. Teachers sometimes focus too much on the students' completion of tasks in their lesson rather than on what they need to learn. Often, all students are expected to do the same work even though they are starting from different points and have different targets and needs. As a result, some find the work too easy and others find it too hard.
- The college's work to promote students' literacy skills is weak. Students are not given the chance to use the key words highlighted in lessons and, therefore, do not develop a deeper understanding. This lack of understanding is also reflected in some students' weak writing.
- Some work on addressing weak literacy skills is helping students improve their reading ability. However, the promotion of reading across subjects is variable and students do not always fully understand the specialised language used in different curriculum areas. Approximately half the students spoken with are reading regularly and widely but indications are that this is not the case generally. The development of mathematics across the college is limited; it has not been a priority and cannot be seen in many lessons or books.
- The use of teaching assistants in classrooms is variable. In the better learning seen, teaching assistants are well briefed by teachers, have work planned in advance and guidance on how the topic can be explained. However, this is not always the case and often teaching assistants are not adding to the learning or progress made by students because they are not confident in supporting the topics covered.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers involve students in activities without fully checking whether there is learning taking place. Sometimes teachers set a series of questions or activities for students to complete but do not indicate how much progress is expected to be made and within what timescale. When this happens, students often relax and apply themselves in a leisurely way; consequently they make inadequate progress. In one mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher put up a number of starter questions and offered praise for finishing work without exploring students' answers. The task had been misunderstood and the answers were incorrect. This misconception was not addressed and, as a result, students do not learn from their mistakes.
- Where learning and progress are good or better, teachers have planned well and have a series of checks to explore students' understanding and learning. An example of this was seen in a religious education lesson. The teacher's positive relationship with students had established effective learning habits and clear expectations of how the students were to engage in their learning. The students' strong engagement in a range of activities, along with the teachers' regular checks on their learning, contributed exceptionally well to their learning.
- Scrutiny of students' work indicates that marking and feedback from teachers is developing but not yet consistent across subjects. Teachers are marking work but the comments made they make do not clearly let students know how they can improve their understanding and learning. More often, they comment only on the effort made and sometimes the presentation. In the most effective marking seen, teachers let students know what mistakes they have made and how they may prevent them in future and offer students a challenge to follow up.

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- The standards students reach by the end of Year 11 are low and have been declining for a number of years. Overall, students are not reaching the minimum standards of attainment and progress set by the government. Students join the college in Year 7 with standards that are in line with the national average. However, by the time they reach Year 11, the standards they reach are well below the national average. Last year only 35% of students secured five A*-C grades, including English and mathematics, at GCSE level compared to the national average of 56%. Standards reached in some science subjects, history, geography, French and information technology are low. Current data show that the decline in standards

has now been stopped and attainment is beginning to improve but is still at a level that would be considered poor.

- The progress made by students in English and mathematics is well below their peers nationally and this is also true in a wide range of other subjects. Progress seen in lessons and in books shows that there is still much more to be done to stop students underachieving.
- By the end of Year 11 in 2014, the progress made by disadvantaged students in English and mathematics dropped further behind other students in the college and other students nationally. The attainment of disadvantaged students is close to a grade behind others in the college in English and over a grade behind in mathematics. This gap in attainment is larger when compared to other students nationally, with mathematics being close to two grades behind and English being one and a half grades behind.
- The progress made and standards reached by different groups of students in the college have been inconsistent. Girls often perform better than boys. Disabled students and those with special educational needs are also making inadequate progress because the quality of support they get is too variable. Students with a statement of special educational needs, however, do well, due to some well-coordinated individual support.
- The most able students are not performing as well as their peers nationally, mostly due to not being challenged enough in the classroom. The proportions securing A* and A grades at GCSE level is much lower than their peers nationally.
- No students are entered early for GCSE examinations.
- The students who access alternative provision are successful in securing skills that will help them to move onto employment.

The sixth form provision

is inadequate

- Leadership and management of the sixth form are inadequate. Leaders have only recently stepped into the role and have appropriately identified the features of the sixth form that are not supporting students to make good progress. However, it is too early for any positive impact to be seen. Too many students are failing their academic courses. The guidance and enrolment criteria used have placed too many individuals on inappropriate courses. Consequently, students' standards of attainment are very low compared to the national averages, particularly for those following academic courses.
- Teaching over time is inadequate. Gaps in the learning for a number of students have not been fully addressed and this has prevented them from making good progress. This is particularly true of students studying academic courses. Those on vocational courses, such as sports science and child care, are doing better because the curriculum structure better meets their needs.
- Students spoken with say they enjoy their time in college, feel supported by teachers and are challenged to do well but they are not clear about how well they are doing compared to others nationally. They feel safe and have confidence in the sixth form welfare officer. Behaviour in lessons requires improvement, because students are not always challenging themselves to do better.
- There are no formal arrangements in place to promote students' personal development. Students are only expected to come in to the college to attend lessons, some of which are not always well attended, although this is being addressed.

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	105976
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	444441

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	931
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Cummings
Headteacher	David Lythgoe
Date of previous school inspection	10 April 2013
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