

Falinge Park High School

Falinge Road, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 6LD

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Achievement is good and rising. The vast majority of students make the progress expected of them. The proportion making better progress than this in English is in line with the national average while in mathematics it is above.
- Students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium attain above the national average for similar students. Their attainment is very close to other students in the school. This reflects the excellent support and guidance that they receive.
- For the same reason, students who speak English as an additional language and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs also make good progress and achieve well.
- The school prepares students well for future success. Nearly all go on to further education, training or employment when they leave.
- Teaching is usually good with some that is outstanding. Most teaching is purposeful and promotes very strong relationships between adults and students.
- Students behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- They feel very safe in school and are proud of their school.
- Leaders and managers are exceptionally successful in creating a harmonious school community in which all students, regardless of ethnicity or background, get along outstandingly well with each other.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, know what the school does well and where it could do even better. They have a clear view of how well the school could and should be doing. They are rigorous in monitoring the quality of teaching and improving its quality. This is leading to sustained, rising levels of achievement.
- Students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is outstanding. It is underpinned by the school's strong respect for each student as a valued individual.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the proportion is rising, not enough students make more than the progress expected of them.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding and a small amount requires improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 45 lessons taught by 43 teachers.
- Inspectors held meetings with: senior and middle leaders; a group of teaching staff; a group of teaching assistants; groups of students; four members of the governing body; and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: information on students' achievement; school records relating to the monitoring of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding; school policies; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's own summary of its effectiveness; and the school's development plan.
- Inspectors took account of 25 parental responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) and questionnaires returned by members of staff. Inspectors also took account of summaries of recent questionnaires sent out by the school to parents.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector
Osama Abdul Rahim	Additional Inspector
Thomas Quinn	Additional Inspector
David Woodhouse	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Falinge Park is larger than most secondary schools nationally.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well-above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- About 75 % of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mostly of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well-above average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is well-above average.
- The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- More students than is typical join and/or leave the school at other than normal times.
- A very small number of students attend part-time vocational courses at Hopwood Hall College of Further Education.
- The school meets the current government's floor standards that set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching at least good and make a greater proportion outstanding to raise achievement further by ensuring that:
 - what teachers ask students to do is always challenging enough according to what students already know and are capable of doing
 - students are always more actively involved in finding things out for themselves rather than relying too heavily on their teachers
 - the questions teachers ask always make students think deeply and encourage them to explain their answers at length
 - teachers are always rigorous in checking that students understand important, key words and what they are being asked to do before they start to work on their own.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment that is generally below average.
- In recent years, the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE passes at Grade C and above including English and mathematics has risen and is in line with the national average.
- The vast majority of students make the progress expected of them in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 4. The proportion making better progress than this from their starting points is in line with the national average and rising.
- Students who are disabled or with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those who join the school at other than normal times make good progress and achieve well because of the excellent support that they receive and the outstanding care and guidance that the school provides. This demonstrates the school's highly effective promotion of equality of opportunity.
- There is no significant difference in achievement between students from different ethnic backgrounds - all achieve equally well. This demonstrates the school's success in tackling discrimination.
- Students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium make good progress and achieve well. Their attainment is significantly above that of similar students nationally. These students attain, on average, approximately one third of a GCSE grade lower in English and mathematics than other students in the school. Information about students' progress, show that effective action taken by the school in recent years has closed the gap securely and that the gap is continuing to narrow.
- The school uses Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to provide extra, targeted support for lower-attaining students in reading, communication and writing. The school's records show that these students make good progress and achieve well as a result.
- The progress of the very few students who attend Hopwood Hall College on a part-time basis is checked meticulously. Information provided by the school shows that they make good progress and achieve well.
- The school enters a small number of the more-able students early for GCSE in mathematics and English at the end of Year 10. Those who attain the higher GCSE grades study for an extra GCSE in additional mathematics, further mathematics or statistics in Year 11 and achieve well. Those who do not do attain the higher grades continue to study mathematics and/or English further in Year 11. Data and inspection evidence show that this is a successful strategy that contributes to students' good overall achievement.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly in recent years because leaders and managers have stepped up the rigour with which its quality is checked and have tackled inadequate teaching effectively. This is leading to rising levels of students' achievement.
- The majority of teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons well and set out clearly what it is that they expect students to achieve during each lesson. Students respond positively to the sense of purpose that this brings to their learning. Sometimes, however, teaching does not explain clearly enough important items of new vocabulary or check that all students understand what they are meant to be doing before they start work on their own. This results in some uncertainty and slows progress.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers use questioning to make students think hard and give extended reasons for their answers. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson, for example, where teaching was judged to be outstanding the skilful and probing questioning of the teacher led the students step-by step to understanding how to solve quadratic equations by themselves without the teacher giving any detailed explanations. Learning was, as a result, deep and insightful.

However, some teaching does not use questioning as effectively, leading to students' overreliance on teachers doing the work for them. This results in some passive learning and also slows progress.

- Students respond well to teaching that is challenging and makes them think deeply about what they are learning. In a Year 9 music lesson, for example, where teaching was judged to be outstanding, students made excellent progress because teaching set very clear step-by-step tasks that ratcheted up the level of challenge relentlessly. Students responded with a determination to succeed; their sense of pride in tackling the challenge successfully was obvious. However, teaching does not always set tasks that are appropriately challenging with some that are too easy for some students and too difficult for others.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good with some that is outstanding. As a result students make rapid progress in developing their reading, speaking, writing and number skills. This equips them well for future education, training or employment.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting the learning of students who are disabled or with special educational needs.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly. Their comments are helpful in showing students what they need to do to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students enjoy school and are proud of it. The vast majority behave well around school and in lessons. They get on exceptionally well together. Students who are disabled or who have special educational needs are treated with unerring respect and are encouraged to play a full part in school life.
- Students from different ethnic backgrounds get on with no problems whatsoever. They enjoy each other's company. 'We all get on without any problems. It's a like a big family.' was the opinion of one student, and this sums up the harmonious atmosphere that pervades the school.
- Students have good attitudes to learning in most lessons. This has a positive impact on the good progress that they make and on their good achievement. Disruption in lessons is rare. Occasionally, however, when teaching fails to challenge them fully, students' interest wanes, resulting in some lack of engagement.
- School records show that exclusions for bad behaviour are rare and that the number has dropped significantly in recent years.
- There are very few concerns about behaviour expressed by staff, students and parents.
- Students say that bullying of any kind is very rare. This is confirmed by school records of incidents for recent years. Students say that on the few occasions when bullying happens, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Students say that they feel very safe in school. Students talk knowledgeably about what constitutes potentially unsafe situations and how to recognise, avoid or deal with them. They understand fully the dangers posed by inappropriate use of the internet and social networking sites.
- The school has very thorough procedures for checking on attendance and promoting its importance. Consequently, attendance is has improved and is now in line with the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's dynamic leadership provides the school with a very clear view of how successful the school can be and what needs to be done to achieve this.
- Leaders and managers are outstandingly successful in including every student fully in the life of the school and in making sure that every student has equality of opportunity to succeed. This results in an exceptionally cohesive school community in which every student feels safe and

valued as an individual. The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding.

- Leaders and managers have a clear view of what the school does well and where it could do better. Teamwork is strong in pursuit of improvement.
- Leaders and managers monitor the quality of teaching regularly and rigorously. They tackle weaker teaching effectively. As a result the quality of teaching has improved and students' achievement has risen significantly
- Checking on the effectiveness of subject leadership and management is also now more robust. Leaders have supported and challenged weaker leadership robustly and this too is bringing about secure improvement in students' achievement.
- Tracking of students' progress towards demanding targets has been refined and is used more effectively to hold staff to account. This forms the basis of performance management, which is used effectively to underpin decisions about movement up the salary scale for teachers.
- The curriculum meets students' needs well. It provides students with a good range of opportunities to develop and use their skills in literacy and numeracy across a wide range of subjects. A wide range of sporting opportunities makes a valuable contribution to students' physical health and well-being. The extensive range of enrichment activities in school and in the local community add significantly to students' personal development and their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students are exceptionally well-prepared for life in a multicultural society.
- Very strong relationships with parents have been forged. The vast majority of parents are strongly supportive of the school.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding fully meet requirements. Discrimination in all its forms is rejected.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school and values the school's input into local authority initiatives to share good practice among its schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are passionately committed to the success of the school. The governing body holds the school effectively to account. It uses information about the school's performance well to compare its effectiveness with other schools both locally and nationally, to identify where it could do better. The governing body fully understands the operation of performance management in the school and monitors closely its links with salary progression. The governing body has a firm grasp on the school's finances including the effective allocation of pupil premium funding to close the gap in attainment between students who are supported by it and those who are not. Governors take part regularly in relevant training so that they keep abreast of developments and hold the school to account for its effectiveness.

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	105837
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	426324

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glynis Foster
Headteacher	Robin Lonsdale
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2010
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