

Regency High School

Windermere Road, Warndon, Worcester, WR4 9JL

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding		1
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Sixth form provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and senior leadership team set high expectations for students' achievement and their health and well-being, and ensure all staff share these.
- Disabled students, those who have special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged achieve well.
- Students achieve well in the sixth form, gaining a range of appropriate qualifications, including English and mathematics.
- Students' behaviour and safety are outstanding. Students love school, are very proud of their work and have excellent relationships with staff.
- Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are comprehensive. As a result, students feel safe, secure and confident.
- The behaviour support and well-being team works closely with students and their families. Staff provide very good support for students and ensure they are able to learn well in lessons.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and middle managers are constantly making improvements in teaching and achievement. They regularly share good practice with staff, who are keen to learn from others.
- The curriculum is imaginative and highly relevant to students' needs. It provides a firm basis for their good progress.
- The school provides a good careers programme, work experience opportunities and links with further education for students. It prepares Key Stage 4 and post 16 students well for the next stage of their education and adult life in modern Britain.
- The outreach service provides valuable assistance to local mainstream schools, helping them to support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The governing body maintains a good oversight of the work of the school. It is well informed and effectively holds the school to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able students are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons.
- Occasionally, teachers do not match activities well enough to the individual needs and abilities of students.
- While they reinforce new learning well, teachers do not always check that all students have fully understood what they are learning in lessons.
- The school's priorities for improvement, including those related to teachers' performance, do not have sharply focused and easily measurable criteria, against which the impact on students' achievement can be evaluated.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 29 lessons in all key stages. Four of these were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed other activities such as students' behaviour at the beginning and end of the day and at break times.
- The inspectors heard students read and looked at a range of students' work from each key stage.
- They also scrutinised a wide range of school documents, including development plans, the school's self-evaluation report, monitoring files, information on teachers' performance management, and documentation and policies on finance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with a group of students from Key Stages 3 and 4 and with students from the sixth form. They also spoke informally to students, including those in the sixth form during and between visits to lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body and the governor with responsibility for safeguarding as well as with teachers responsible for different aspects of the school's work.
- The inspectors analysed 21 responses to the online questionnaire 'Parent View', spoke to two parent governors and took account of their comments. Evidence from the school's own parent questionnaires was also examined.
- The inspectors considered the 65 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kathy Hooper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector
Rowena Green	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Regency High School is a special school for students with moderate, severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Many of the pupils have additional special needs, including specific learning difficulties, difficulties on the autistic spectrum, behaviour, social and emotional difficulties and speech and language difficulties.
- All students have a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- Almost all students are White British and live in Worcestershire.
- The school has a much higher proportion of disadvantaged students who are supported by the pupil premium than is the case nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care. However, the numbers eligible in each year group are very small. Therefore, a comparison is not made in this report of the attainment between these students and others when they leave the school.
- The majority of students are brought to school by minibus and taxi.
- The school converted to become an academy on 1 October 2013 and this is its first inspection. It has not changed its name since it was last inspected on 12-13 September 2011 when it was judged to be good.
- In line with many other schools catering for disabled students and those who have special educational needs, there are approximately twice as many boys as girls in Key Stages 3 and 4. The proportion of males and females in the sixth form is roughly equal.
- All students move on to further education colleges when they leave school.
- The school provides an extensive outreach service to local schools in the north, west and south of Worcestershire.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching and learning, particularly of the most-able students, by
 - matching activities and learning outcomes more closely to students' individual needs and abilities
 - ensuring activities consistently provide appropriate levels of challenge for the most-able students
 - increasing the range of opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning during lessons.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that whole school priorities for improvement, including those to continue to improve teaching, have easily measurable criteria against which the impact on students' achievement can be evaluated.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior management team set high expectations for students' achievement and their health and well-being. The school provides a warm, stimulating and enabling environment within which students behave outstandingly well and flourish. Parents, visitors and staff confirm that the success and well-being of students have the highest priority.
- Leaders check students' progress regularly to ensure that all students are making good progress over time. They appraise teachers' work on a regular basis and set them targets for the following year to improve provision.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium. Leaders check the progress of disadvantaged students' progress on a regular basis and take action to help them narrow any gaps with their peers. Consequently, there is no difference in the progress of disadvantaged students and others because extra resources are used effectively to support students who show signs of falling behind.
- All students enjoy the same good opportunities to succeed. Staff have a good understanding of the nature of the learning difficulties facing individual students and provide them with good support, both within school and with the help of outside agencies.
- Middle leaders lead their areas of responsibility well. They check students' progress, their attendance, and their behaviour and well-being very well. They have clear priorities for extending provision and good practice is shared effectively.
- The behaviour and well-being team is strong and maintains close oversight of all students' welfare. Staff have excellent links with other staff, students and their families. There are informed and effective working relationships with outside agencies, including health professionals.
- The curriculum is good and meets the needs of students well. It is being reviewed in line with national guidance and the school is in the process of designing a new assessment scheme to match what is being taught. A good range of accreditation to cover students aged 14 to 19 supports their progress to the next stage of their education. A good programme of careers education, work experience and team enterprise complements students' experiences in school very effectively.
- The school's support of students' health and physical well-being is good. All students are engaged in regular and demanding physical activities such as the 'Rebound' activity, where students are helped to control their limbs and their balance by bouncing on a safe trampoline structure. The many different sports activities offered by the school are very well attended.
- The school uses a good range of visits, visitors, events and community work very effectively to support students' understanding of the wider world. Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and is reflected across the whole curriculum. There are many opportunities for students to reflect on their lives and work. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong and have high levels of social skills. Students' entry to the Malvern Spring Show was 'Highly Commended' by the judges. Some students achieve the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- Discrimination is not tolerated. A recent 'election' held at the time of the national election enabled students from all key stages to present their manifestos and speak about them before the whole school. The rest of the students then voted for the most convincing speaker. Through these experiences, students learn about British values, especially citizenship, tolerance and fairness, and this prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Their understanding is further extended and reinforced through their daily discussions during form time and during personal, social, and health education lessons as well as through their experiences in 'forest school' activity.
- The school's outreach service is very successful in supporting mainstream schools to meet the needs of physically disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Full and rigorous evaluations

against specific and measurable targets show clear and positive impact on provision for those supported.

- The school's priorities in its development plan relate, rightly, to continuing to improve teaching. However, these priorities do not have measurable indicators of success against which the impact on students' progress can be evaluated. Similarly, targets set for teachers through performance management are not matched closely enough to the impact on students' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body maintains good oversight of the school. Governors visit frequently to talk to students and identify any issues raised by staff. They are well trained and have a wide range of appropriate skills, including those necessary to monitor the spending of the school's finances.
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching through feedback from the headteacher and their visits to classrooms. They have regular reports from the senior and middle managers and their questioning is rigorous. They understand their responsibilities to reward good practice and do not automatically promote staff through the pay scales.
 - They receive regular data about students' progress and have good information with which to ensure that extra funding, such as pupil premium, is well targeted and used effectively. They regularly check, through reports from the headteacher, that all students are making good progress and that disadvantaged students achieve as well as their classmates.
 - Together with leaders, governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and meet statutory requirements. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive. A named governor visits regularly to examine practice and reports to the governing body.
 - Although whole school development planning is very detailed and based on evaluations from monitoring, it does not identify priorities in a way that allows governors to easily measure the school's success in achieving them. The links between the progress of students, the work of teachers and whole school priorities are not always clear enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students are extremely well engaged in lessons. They persevere very well and want to learn. Some of them are very determined and keen to work problems out for themselves rather than wait for help from teachers. They have excellent social skills, and hold good conversations with their peers and with adults and discuss their work productively in lessons.
- Students enjoy school and have been involved in making improvements. They form trusting relationships with adults. They know that adults will support them should they have a problem that they feel they cannot deal with. They are proud of their achievements and frequently offer to show visitors what new skills they have learned, for example, in photography, French and design and technology lessons.
- Students say that there is very little bullying and school records reflect this. If there is any thoughtless behaviour, staff deal with it quickly and effectively. Any name-calling is immediately addressed.
- Staff manage students' behaviour very well. Students understand the consequences of their actions and believe that the school's system for rewards and sanctions is fair. The behaviour and well-being team is strong and immensely supportive of students and their families. These specialist staff help the students with behavioural difficulties to develop the ability to control their emotions and behaviour. Records show that the number of instances of unacceptable behaviour has declined since the previous inspection for these students and exclusions are extremely rare.
- Students' self confidence and their positive regard for others are skilfully promoted. Specific initiatives, such as music therapy, support students' social and emotional development well. A wide range of physical activities, such as hydrotherapy, swimming and sports effectively promote their health and well-being.
- Attendance is in line with that of other schools nationally because staff are diligent about following up any absences and reward students whose attendance is good. The school has a warm, friendly and stimulating atmosphere and many students have a smile on their face when they arrive in the mornings. Several

parents commented on the marked improvements in their children's behaviour since joining the school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding and central to all its work. A comprehensive safeguarding policy and frequent training and discussions make all staff highly aware of students' individual needs and circumstances. The school checks the background of all staff, including support and specialist staff carefully and ensures visitors to the school are accompanied at all times. One of the governors is a frequent visitor and rigorously checks that safeguarding policy is being appropriately applied.
- Each student's social, emotional and physical needs are carefully assessed and addressed. There are detailed feeding plans and risk assessments for individual students and for a variety of activities within and beyond school. The school works in partnership with parents to ensure that the oversight of each student's safety is seamless. Escorts and bus drivers are well briefed, sensitive and vigilant.
- Students and their parents are taught well about safety when using computers. Insofar as they are able, students know how to keep themselves safe, albeit by calling on the help of adults. Staff, students and their parents confirm that students feel safe while in school.
- Those students with profound and multiple learning difficulties interact very well with staff. Their individual needs and abilities are well known to staff and they are treated with great sensitivity and dignity.
- Staff are highly trained to keep students safe and are able to deal promptly and effectively with an increasingly wide range of medical and physical needs and eventualities. The school has very close partnerships with parents to make sure that students experience consistently high levels of support both in school and at home.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Students learn well because teachers know and understand their needs and abilities very well. Highly individualised activities, particularly for those with severe learning difficulties, ensure most students make good progress. Occasionally, for students with moderate learning difficulties, the work they are set does not match their abilities as well as it should. As a result, the most able students are not always sufficiently challenged.
- Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties activities develop their ability to communicate with others significantly well because adults provide stimulating and imaginative activities at all times. For example, students were able to respond correctly when asked whose turn it was next in a singing song. Teachers use communication aids such as switches, tablets and symbols effectively to ensure that students are able to communicate their needs.
- Staff use well-designed resources to help students with severe learning difficulties to sound out letters and words. Staff make sure that computer programs are geared to individual needs and use these effectively to check students' understanding.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and understand the specific needs of the students they teach because they are well trained. They share their experiences regularly, for example, how to teach Shakespeare to students with severe learning difficulties. They are committed to improvement and make good use of opportunities to discuss their work with a visiting consultant to improve their practice.
- Teaching assistants are experienced, knowledgeable and well deployed to support learning. They help students to make the best progress when they work closely with them in small groups and check their understanding. In a business studies lesson with Key Stage 4 students, for example, they skilfully engaged students in the activity, encouraging them to express their ideas and opinions.
- Teachers use many imaginative resources and engaging strategies to support students with severe and

complex learning difficulties to develop their communication, literacy and reading skills. They use information and communication technology effectively to support students' learning, particularly those with difficulties in speaking and those who find handwriting difficult.

- There is good provision for students to have individual and small group sessions to support their reading. The teaching of writing is good. Students learn how to spell out letters and words and how to remember them. Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties enjoy regular story times, songs and chants that help them understand the meaning of the words.
- The teaching of mathematics is also good. Students learn to apply their understanding of number using resources from everyday life. For example, inspectors saw Key Stage 4 students engaged in an activity involving the dilution of squash, which helped them to develop their understanding of proportion. Others used real coins to add up in units of ten.
- Lessons are generally well planned. All have clear learning objectives and describe intended activities for the whole class. Where teachers planned outcomes closely matched to the needs and abilities of different students, progress was good. However, not all teachers ensure activities fully reflect the needs and abilities of the students they are working with, particularly, the most able.
- Marking of students' work is consistent and helps students to improve. Teachers make good use of learning logs to help students to evaluate their own progress.
- Staff assess students' progress systematically and regularly against the course requirements. Teachers check that any accredited courses the school intends to offer are suitable and fully reflect what their assessments are telling them about students' needs and progress. The older and most-able students are encouraged to assess their own work and that of others. This helps students to learn from each other as well as reinforcing their learning. However, not all teachers check as well as they should what each student has understood in the course of the lesson to promptly clarify any misconceptions.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement for all groups of students is good. For some students, it is outstanding. There is little difference between the achievement of disadvantaged students and others. Differences in achievement between boys and girls are due to the difference in their starting points when they enter the school rather than their gender. This year some most-able students are being entered for GCSE mathematics and English for the first time.
- Students read a range of books according to their ability. The most-able students read accurately because they have been carefully taught how to sound out letters and words. Some are able to use symbols and pictures, for example to follow the plot in a Shakespeare's 'Comedy of Errors'. Those with profound and multiple learning difficulties regularly experience stories and songs. Their understanding is supported by the use of different resources so that they feel the meaning of the words through all of their senses.
- The most-able Key Stage 3 students use punctuation accurately when writing sentences. They present their work carefully. They can add up amounts of money to calculate the change from £10, and they weigh ingredients accurately when cooking.
- Some of the most-able Key Stage 4 students write at length in a lively style, for example when writing a story about 'space'. Their work is well presented using information and communication technology. They carry out research and measure accurately when making well-constructed storage boxes for an identified purpose, such as compact discs and electrical leads or make-up. They take responsibility in activities such as when helping a group of their peers in a photography session to learn new skills.
- Students complete an increasingly wide range of accredited courses from Key Stage 4 until they leave school. This enables them to continue to improve the number and level of accreditations. Results show good progress overall. Nevertheless, not all of the most able students are equally well challenged in all lessons to extend their achievement even further.

The sixth form provision is good

- Good leadership and management ensure teachers have consistently high expectations for students' success and their good achievement. Students' good progress is clear as they gain increasingly higher levels in English and mathematics and a range of accredited vocational courses.
- The most-able students achieve Entry Level 2 and 3 in English and mathematics. The courses they take prepare them to care for themselves, if possible, and to gain employment. Students take different life skills courses that are carefully tailored to their needs, abilities and aspirations, such as, looking after yourself and your home, photography, preparing to be a volunteer. Others take courses in motor vehicle maintenance, catering and hospitality, various sports, animal care and information and communication technology. All students move on to further education.
- Good teaching ensures that students have feedback that helps them to improve their work. Students' workbooks show that some of them assess their own work and act on the advice they are given by teachers' marking. In lessons, students have good attitudes to their learning and make good contributions to class discussion.
- The curriculum is appropriate and provides good opportunities for students to learn about the world of work and life in modern Britain, for example, through their work in the community. There is a good careers programme, work experience opportunities and chances to be involved in college courses.
- Students' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstanding. Their confidence and maturity are often impressive. College staff, visitors and members of the community frequently comment on their excellent social skills. There are many opportunities to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Sixth formers have a high profile in many of the whole school activities and are excellent role models for younger students. Team enterprise provides good opportunities for students to develop their functional skills of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology skills in everyday contexts.
- There are robust measures for safeguarding students within school and when they are out of school. Students value the high levels of trust that are built between students and with adults. Students say that bullying, racism and homophobic comments are not an issue in the school.
- Occasionally, the learning outcomes that teachers plan for lessons are not sufficiently precise. This makes it difficult for them to check how well individual students are learning.

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 students 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	140261
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	450339

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathon Pearsall
Headteacher	Francis Steel
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01905 454828
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