

# Alleyne's High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124417
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380891
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 December 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Matharu HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	13–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	901
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	187
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Lockley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Lockett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Oulton Road Stone ST15 8DT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 354200
<b>Fax number</b>	01785 354 222
<b>Email address</b>	office@alleynes.staffs.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	13–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	7–8 December 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. They observed 39 lessons taught by 38 teachers, including four joint lesson observations undertaken with senior leaders. The inspection team held meetings with staff, representatives of the governing body and groups of students. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation including information about students' progress, improvement plans, school policies, teaching records and health and safety information. They analysed 102 parental questionnaires, together with 188 questionnaires from a range of Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and sixth form students and 39 questionnaires from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress being made by all students in mathematics.
- The progress being made by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.
- The quality of teaching across the school and whether this is consistently of a good quality to suitably challenge students of all abilities.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in driving whole school improvement.

## Information about the school

Alleyne's High School is a comprehensive school of average size, drawing its students from the area around the Stone district in Staffordshire. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds, with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around the national average, as is the percentage with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school population is very stable, with little movement in or out of the school other than at the usual transfer points.

The school was re-designated as a technology college in 2009. It also holds Arts Mark Gold, Investors in People and the full International School Award.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Alleyne's has improved since its last inspection and is now a good school. There has been a steady improvement in the standards achieved at GCSE for all groups of students. In particular, the underachievement evident in previous years in mathematics has been robustly tackled. Here, results have improved due to the effective strategies implemented, including improved leadership of the subject. However, the senior leadership team is ambitious for greater success in the core subjects, particularly in mathematics as progress levels do not yet match those achieved in English.

The headteacher is passionate about the school's ongoing improvement and leads a strong staff team with purpose. There is a shared vision that places raising the achievement of all students at the heart of the school's work. Considerable attention has been paid to improving teaching across the school; consequently, this is now at a consistently good level. In particular, the improvement work undertaken on using assessment activities in lessons has resulted in outstanding work across the school; teachers routinely use assessment information effectively to help students understand their next steps in learning. Another key feature is the school's systematic use of performance data, which is rigorous in identifying underperformance and highlighting where interventions are needed. This careful tracking is one of the contributory factors in the consistently good progress made by all groups of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable or disadvantaged. The school maintains a sharp focus on these students at an individual level to ensure that any barriers to learning are minimised.

Students consistently behave well and enjoy positive relationships with their teachers; the vast majority of students express enthusiasm for school activities. Their attendance is well above the national average. Similarly, the vast majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school. Several commented positively about the good quality care and support in school, a feature that was endorsed at inspection.

Teaching is predominantly good with, increasingly, outstanding teaching emerging across the school. Occasionally, when teaching is less successful, the expectations of what students might achieve are not high enough and the learning activities selected are not suitably matched to the different abilities of students within the group. Although much marking is of a good quality, some inconsistencies remain. There is potential to share the best teaching in the school more widely. Whilst the attainment

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and progress made by sixth form students is steadily improving, this remains satisfactory overall at present.

Given the improvements at GCSE in the past three years, the good level of teaching across the school and the strengths evident in the leadership team, including accurate self-evaluation, there is good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Accelerate and consolidate the current drive to raise attainment and progress in mathematics through:
  - ensuring consistency of teaching approaches, including of the work that is expected of students in every lesson
  - sharing best practice in mathematics more widely.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching across the school by:
  - ensuring that learning activities are well matched to the abilities of students
  - sharing and disseminating the best practice in school through coaching partnerships
  - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve.
- Accelerate the drive for improvement in sixth form provision so that students achieve more highly.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

In recent years, standards at GCSE have been broadly average. Standards in English improved significantly in English in 2010 but lagged behind in mathematics. However, in 2011, significant improvements were made in a number of subjects, including the core subjects, with results moving above national averages. In particular, the school's robust efforts to address issues of underperformance in mathematics were successful, with attainment rising above the national average. All groups of students made improved progress in 2011, including higher attaining students.

From their broadly average starting points, all students make good progress and enjoy their learning. This is because teaching is good and the school's curriculum provision is well matched to their particular needs. Progress in design and technology subjects is good and improving. Students are on track to sustain good progress in 2012; further good learning and progress was evident at inspection. The school is implementing strategies to ensure that all students continue to achieve well in mathematics, as progress levels here, although on a clear upward trend, remain below progress rates in English. Through effective partnership with a range of

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agencies and the use of suitable learning resources, students with special educational needs/and or disabilities are supported well. Consequently, these students make equally good progress from their starting points.

When learning is at its best, students display confidence when discussing their work. They are able to assess this accurately and identify how they might improve to the next level. For example, in an outstanding art lesson, Year 10 students were challenged to explore and strengthen their understanding of different artists’ styles by their teacher’s purposeful questioning. Students shared their views and opinions with maturity, demonstrating excellent awareness of differing artistic styles. Their sophisticated analyses prompted detailed understanding of their own work and target levels.

Students work at a good pace and typically display enthusiasm in lessons. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are consistently good, as reflected in their excellent attendance, which is high compared to the national average. Their attitudes to visitors are notably welcoming and courteous. Students report that they feel safe in school, well looked after and express confidence in staff to deal with any misbehaviour effectively. They value that they are consulted about important issues, such as the quality of teaching and learning they receive and feel they have a strong voice in the life of the school. During the inspection, many students spoke of various successes and contributions to school life across a broad range of activities. A variety of opportunities are provided for them to assume responsibility, although several students commented that they would appreciate further opportunities for this.

Although this is largely a mono-cultural school, students display tolerance and respect for diversity and difference. Students’ evaluations indicate that they seek greater understanding of life beyond school; as one student stated, they want to: ‘Strive for an inclusive society where difference is celebrated’. Students are prepared well for their future working lives through the acquisition of good basic skills, including enterprise skills, strong teamwork and communication skills. The vast majority of them move into the school’s sixth form, or into further education, training or employment at age 16.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Inspection confirmed that teaching is predominantly good across the curriculum with a significant proportion of it judged outstanding. Strengths were noted in teachers' planning, the pace of learning and a good variety of learning activities employed to motivate and inspire students. In an outstanding Year 9 English lesson, students were highly motivated by role-play activities, introduced to explore the different perspectives of key characters in the novel they were studying. Their empathy and understanding was evident as they responded to events in the text. Several commented that learning is fun; relationships are supportive with students clearly enjoying good rapport with their teachers.

Recent efforts to improve and use assessment in lessons have paid dividends. Students are routinely made aware of the assessment criteria for learning and consistently assess their own and each other's work with confidence and skill. When teaching is outstanding, activities are finely tuned to the needs of students of different abilities in the group, often with an element of choice introduced to ensure that students take responsibility for their learning. For example, in an excellent Year 10 mathematics lesson, after a lively introduction from their teacher, students were required to choose their next activity relating to statistics and probability. A range of exercises had been prepared by their teacher; students used information from a recent test result to determine which aspect of their work required consolidation. The room buzzed with conversations about mathematics as students pressed on, clearly gaining satisfaction from their efforts. This approach ensures that students remain suitably challenged at all times and the pace of learning is rapid. Occasionally, when teaching is less successful, there is little variety of activity, students' attention wanes and progress slows unnecessarily. There is considerable potential here to disseminate the best practice evident in the school more extensively. Many teachers mark students' work with detailed feedback and useful pointers on how to improve. However, some slight variation remains.

The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and, together with an extensive enrichment programme, meets students' needs well. Procedures to provide care and support for students' well-being and promote their personal development are good. Effective work with partners and external agencies and well-coordinated interventions support students, including those whose circumstances make them

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vulnerable. As a result, there is clear evidence of improved attendance, achievement and aspirations for these individuals.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership and management team holds a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher provides strong, purposeful leadership, ably supported by a capable senior team. They have successfully communicated their vision for the school to a strong middle leadership team who are equally ambitious for success. Subject and progress leaders are clear about their roles in driving improvement and contribute well to the school's ongoing improvement. Overall, staff members work well together with morale noticeably high across the whole staff team.

Attention has been paid to securing greater consistency in the school's work in the past three years. Monitoring and evaluation systems are rigorous and provide school leaders with accurate information about the school's performance. In particular, the use of assessment information to track students' progress is a key factor in improving achievement. All staff members are held accountable for the progress of their classes; the management of departments has been strengthened by regular meetings between senior and middle leaders. The attention paid to improving the quality of teaching to a consistently good level has been successful. However, there is capacity to share the best practice more widely both within departments and across subjects.

Governance is good. The governing body demonstrates clear understanding of the school's work and priorities. Its members understand their roles in providing both challenge and support for the school and are effective in promoting and supporting continuing improvement. Close attention is given to supporting students' well-being. The school securely meets the statutory requirements for the safeguarding of students. Staff are well-trained in implementing robust safeguarding procedures.

The school's attention to promoting equalities through close liaison with other agencies to support students from potentially vulnerable circumstances is good. This ensures that potential barriers to learning are significantly reduced. This is a cohesive school where students enjoy good relationships with adults and each other. The links in place with partner schools abroad support students' global understanding well and

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help them to appreciate the world beyond their own community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

Students enter the sixth form with broadly average standards which are sustained. Achievement is satisfactory at present but showing signs of steady improvement. Lesson observations support the judgement that, overall, students make satisfactory progress and some make good progress.

Provision overall is satisfactory at present. When teaching is most effective, it is challenging and well planned with a variety of learning styles employed. Good guidance is provided to support students, with clear systems in place to monitor their progress. Students are highly positive about the sixth form, indicating that they particularly appreciate the excellent relationships enjoyed with staff and the good quality support and guidance offered to them. Students make strong contributions to the life and work of both the school and the wider community.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good; there is clarity about the strengths in provision and areas for improvement and a drive evident to raise achievement, with the impact of this beginning to take effect.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
	3

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The quality of provision in the sixth form Leadership and management of the sixth form	2
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## Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers are highly positive about the school’s work. Several commented favourably on their child’s experience in school, particularly in terms of the approachability of staff and the good quality transition arrangements from middle school.

Ten per cent of those who responded felt that poor behaviour was not well managed by the school. Inspectors considered behaviour carefully throughout the inspection. They found that incidences of poor behaviour are infrequent and suitably robust sanctions are in place to deal with any misbehaviour should this occur.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alleyne's High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 901 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	42	51	50	7	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	45	44	53	52	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	57	56	41	40	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	39	50	49	8	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	35	34	59	58	4	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	21	21	68	67	9	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	10	76	75	10	10	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	23	62	61	4	4	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	43	42	47	46	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	24	60	59	10	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	18	65	64	4	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	46	45	46	45	5	5	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	41	40	55	54	4	4	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



12 December 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Alleyne's High School, Stone, ST15 8DT**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We appreciated your friendliness, courtesy and cooperation.

We enjoyed observing your work, talking with many of you and found your views very helpful. We judged that your school has improved since its last inspection and provides you with a good education. Teaching is good overall and the curriculum on offer is suited to your needs, providing you with every opportunity to succeed. Consequently, the standards you are reaching are broadly average and steadily improving, particularly in English and mathematics. The progress that all groups of students make by the end of Year 11 is good. We were particularly impressed with the atmosphere in school and noted your consistently good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. The vast majority of you are keen to succeed and take responsibility with enthusiasm. Your relationships with adults in the school are very positive and this supports your learning well. Many of you are involved in the wider life of the school and told us how much you value the range of activities available to you.

Your school is well led and managed. Your headteacher provides excellent leadership, supported very ably by a strong team of staff and governors. They are determined to maintain the improvements we noted to ensure that you can achieve even more highly. We have asked the senior staff to ensure that the improvements underway in the core subjects are accelerated and to check that all teachers are planning activities that suitably stretch and challenge all students. We have also asked them to press on with the improvements underway in sixth form provision so that all students can achieve highly.

We wish you well and look forward to hearing of your future success.

Yours sincerely

Judith Matharu  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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