

# William Howard School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137252
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	385585
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Peter Cox

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,551
<b>Of which number on roll in the sixth form</b>	335
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Halpin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lorrayne Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	Longtown Road Brampton CA8 1AR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01697 745700
<b>Fax number</b>	01697 741096
<b>Email address</b>	mail@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk

---



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



© Crown copyright 2012

---

## Introduction

### Inspection team

Peter Cox	Additional inspector
Robert Birtwell	Additional inspector
Jim Bennetts	Additional inspector
Michael Blaylock	Additional inspector
Peter Evea	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 57 teachers teaching 57 lessons. In addition, inspectors listened to students reading, visited an assembly, registration sessions at the beginning of the school day and observed the behaviour of students at break and lunchtime. Meetings were held with a representative group of students from all years, two members of the governing body including the Chair, and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school development plan, self-evaluation documents, the school's own monitoring records regarding the quality of teaching and information on current attainment and progress, in addition to minutes of meetings of the governing body. The inspection team also considered an analysis of 145 parental and carers' questionnaires and others completed by students and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.

## Information about the school

William Howard School is a larger than average-size secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below that seen nationally, as is the proportion of students from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of those for whom English is an additional language is very small. Students with special educational needs and students with disabilities represent a lower than average proportion. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has specialist status for mathematics and science and has gained a number of awards, including International School award and Healthy School status. The school became an academy in August 2011.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- William Howard is a good school. Students’ achievement over time is outstanding overall. The mature attitude, resilience and application of most students allow them to learn exceptionally well. It is a caring and safe environment where most speak highly of their teachers and fellow students. Students make significant gains in their learning in most subjects as they move up through the school. The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good.
- Teaching is good overall, including in the sixth form, with some that is outstanding. None was seen to be inadequate during the inspection. Despite some variability in the quality of teaching, students’ overall achievement has been rapid and sustained in most subjects since the last inspection, and students secure significantly better results at the end of Year 11 when compared with other schools nationally. The school’s provision for students with special educational needs and those with disabilities is effective and allows these students to make good progress during their time in school.
- Inspectors judged overall behaviour to be good in lessons and around the school, although occasionally there is a degree of low-level disruption in lessons where the satisfactory teaching lacks active engagement and challenge for the students.
- Leadership and management are good overall with significant strength in senior leaders. Improvements since the last inspection have been secured. Middle leaders are now more accountable for the performance of their departments, although there remains some variability in marking students’ work. By comparison to other high performing subjects, mathematics has not performed as well. However, leaders and managers have put appropriate procedures in place to address this and inspection evidence confirms a secure and rapidly improving trend in students’ attainment and progress and in the quality of teaching across the school in mathematics.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that lesson planning always provides appropriately targeted learning for all ability groups in lessons
  - providing more opportunities in lessons for the active engagement of students in order that they develop further as independent learners
  - ensure the more consistent marking of students' work within all curriculum areas.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

There has been a rising trend in outcomes for almost all students since the previous inspection. Attainment over the last three years has been high. The proportion of students securing five grade C's and above, including English and mathematics, has remained above average and significantly so since 2009, although there was a drop in students' attainment in mathematics in 2011 to broadly average. Inspection evidence confirms the school's accurate monitoring data that show rapid and sustained progress in mathematics this year, matching that in other subjects. In mathematics, students' attainment and progress are rapidly improving in Key Stage 4 and their attainment is securely above average in Key Stage 5. These improvements have been brought about by the introduction of appropriate strategies, including an improved mathematics curriculum, good teaching, effective teaching assistant input, and additional support being offered to students such as after-school and weekend revision sessions. Achievement in lessons is outstanding, as is often the case, when the teaching is strong and students apply their wide-ranging skills to good effect.

Parents and carers accurately believe their child's progress to be at least good in school with a large majority of respondents considering achievement in reading, writing and mathematics to be good also. The small proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals do better than expected when compared with similar groups nationally, as do most of those with disabilities and those with special educational needs. Typically, in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 students act maturely, are highly motivated and follow their studies independently.

Overall, attainment in the sixth form at A level is above average. Attainment in the small number of vocational subjects is also above average but with some minor weaknesses in information and communication technology (ICT). Students enter Year 12 with above-average attainment and make good progress overall.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching is mainly good with some that is outstanding. Teachers have effectively built upon students' above-average attainment on entry to the school by supporting learning, often beyond the classroom. This is a strength and has contributed to improved student outcomes since the last inspection. Students speak highly of the additional support some teachers provide outside of normal lessons. Many teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and deliver their lessons with an obvious passion for their subject, which helps enthuse and

motivate the students. Expectations are often high and good relationships allow learning to take place in a calm and secure environment. Well-targeted and skilful questioning allows students the opportunity to provide often mature, well-considered responses, which help secure and deepen their knowledge and understanding. In the high-quality lessons, students are given timely and informative feedback on their progress and, when learning is not as rapid as the teacher would like, activities are changed to ensure the learning objectives are met. Where teaching is satisfactory teachers provide too few opportunities for students to learn independently, learning tasks are not always fully tailored to match students' different abilities and marking is not as helpful as it might be in pointing out how students can improve their work. This restricts opportunities for students to progress to the maximum of their ability in such lessons. Teachers promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, particularly their resilience and confidence. The curriculum is well matched to the needs and aspirations of the students. Although the sixth form curriculum is weighted towards academic routes with few vocational subjects, this is appropriate and well matched to the needs and aspirations of students. The strength of the curriculum is seen in the outstanding achievement of students, who are highly motivated and demonstrate considerable self-management skills that help to ensure that all students at the end of Key Stages 4 and 5, progress on to further education, training or employment.

The inspection evidence confirmed the view of the majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire and consider their children are well taught. The students' responses to questionnaires record that teaching is good.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

A high proportion of students feel safe in school and that when bullying rarely occurs it is dealt with very well. Some students, who responded in their questionnaires, say that only sometimes behaviour is good in lessons. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that behaviour is good and that their children are safe. A few parents and carers believe that lessons are sometimes disrupted by poor behaviour. Inspectors observed good behaviour overall in lessons and around the school. Students' very positive attitudes to learning allow most of them to secure outstanding achievement over time. Inspectors noted that where behaviour is less good it is in a very small number of lessons that lack challenge and students' active engagement in learning. On these rare occasions, students resort to low-level chatter and only make satisfactory progress in their learning. Students are most often polite, welcoming and friendly. Movement around the school is orderly and safe. Students socialise well together at break and lunchtimes.

Attendance is above average and punctuality is good, considering the distances some students travel and their reliance on public transport. The school has robust systems in place for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and students understand the policy, which is generally used consistently across subject areas. The restorative approach for conflict resolution is a particular strength of the school. Permanent exclusions have not occurred for several years and fixed-term exclusions, when they occur, are at a rate considerably lower when compared to the national picture.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has been very successful in driving improvements in many areas of the school's work, particularly in raising achievement and strengthening the contribution of middle leaders. As a result, the school is demonstrating good capacity to secure further

improvement. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. Lesson observations are undertaken systematically and successful action taken to strengthen teaching. Overall, achievement has improved from good at the last inspection in 2009 to outstanding in 2011. The relatively weaker performance in mathematics has been addressed and improvements in the mathematics curriculum, quality of teaching and overall attainment, particularly in Key Stage 4, are occurring very rapidly.

Performance management procedures are robust and have been used effectively to tackle underperformance, although there remains some further work to do in ensuring stability of staffing in ICT, for example. However, the school is aware of this and other minor curricular shortcomings and has set about making improvements to these areas. The curriculum is good overall and meets all statutory requirements. The post-16 offer enables students to choose courses that suit their needs, interests and abilities. Students receive clear advice and guidance at appropriate stages. Extra-curricular provision is good and after-school buses provided for those who stay behind. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and regularly reviewed. Opportunities for both students and staff are good and equal access for courses and activities is ensured. The school and students do not tolerate any discrimination. The offer of continued professional development for staff is a strength. Teachers are encouraged to undertake appropriate leadership, management and research programmes to improve their practice and ultimately raise attainment even further. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and links with several international schools provide appropriate opportunities for students to develop a broader understanding of other cultures. Other opportunities exist within the well-organised and imaginative curriculum, such as humanities.

The governing body has been reformed since the school became an academy in August 2011. It is effective in holding the school to account and provides sufficient challenge and support to the school.

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



25 January 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of William Howard School, Brampton, CA8 1AR**

Thank you for making the inspection team most welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time with you and are most grateful to those of you who spoke with us in meetings and in lessons. We judge your school to be providing you with a good quality of education. There is much to celebrate and we feel sure that you will continue to work with your teachers in the future to make William Howard even better.

Overall, you achieve outstandingly well during your time at school and by the time you leave Year 11, your attainment is above that seen nationally. All other areas of the school's work we judge to be good. This includes the quality of teaching, your behaviour and the leadership and management of the school. We are leaving the school with an area to improve upon because we feel it can be even better. We consider the teaching to be good overall. Some of it is outstanding and has helped you with your excellent achievement over time, but some teaching could be even better. When this is the case some students' attitudes to learning become less positive. We have asked that the proportion of good and outstanding teaching increases and that lessons provide you with more opportunities to be active in your learning which will promote further your ability to learn independently. Marking is variable in quality across subjects and opportunities in lessons do not always allow you to learn in a way that meets your individual needs and abilities.

You can help the school improve even further by getting involved in learning in a positive and active way and making the most of every opportunity to stretch yourselves by being involved in all lessons and ready to learn at every opportunity.

I wish you continued success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Cox  
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).