

Heworth Grange Comprehensive School

High Lanes, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 0PT

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Students' achievement has been improving year-on-year and is good. The number of students gaining five good passes at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is above the national average.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form has improved and is good.
- The quality of teaching has improved and is good. There is a very positive climate for learning in the school.
- Students' behaviour and safety are good. Students are very keen to learn and this plays a large part in them achieving well.
- The school deserves its good reputation in the local community.
- The school is very well led and managed and this has been a major factor in the school's improved success.
- There is an increased focus on teachers' professional development and this is helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- The school's specialism in visual and performing arts contributes well to the school's success, especially in raising the awareness of the arts and other cultures.
- Students are especially proud of their new building. They consider themselves very fortunate to attend the school and say that there is nothing they would want to change about it.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and best practice is not shared sufficiently to raise achievement further in all subjects.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not use information about students' progress to plan appropriate work for all students or make it clear to them how they can tell if they are learning well.
- At present not all teachers know clearly how to raise the quality of their teaching.
- The role of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluation is not developed sufficiently.
- Governors do not challenge the school sufficiently about students' achievement and attendance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 38 teachers teaching 40 lessons. Three observations were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, and carried out analyses of students’ books and other work.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, child protection, development planning, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and teachers’ professional development.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, governors, students and the local authority.
- The 18 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 53 responses to the staff questionnaire were analysed.

Inspection team

Alison Thomson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Diane Coleman	Additional Inspector
Lynne Horton	Additional Inspector
Mark Patton	Additional Inspector
Peter Eeva	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is higher than average.
- Almost all students are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students supported by school action and the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are lower than average.
- The school has specialist status in visual and performing arts.
- The school meets the current government floor standards set for the minimum expectations of students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school moved into its new building in April 2012. Prior to this there was considerable disruption for a number of years due to the building work on site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding and eradicate the little remaining teaching that requires improvement in order to raise achievement further in all subjects by:
 - sharing more widely the best practice in teaching that exists within the school
 - always using information about students' progress to plan and deliver lessons that appropriately challenge all students
 - involving students more effectively in checking how well they are doing in lessons by providing them with clear criteria for success that relate to learning.
- Improve aspects of leadership and management to further accelerate improvements by:
 - developing the roles of middle leaders in effective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and of the progress that students are making in their areas
 - focusing more on personalising teachers' professional development to help each teacher know clearly how they can best improve their teaching to maximise the students' learning and progress
 - training governors to offer a greater degree of challenge with respect to academic achievement in each subject and on attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' achievement has risen steadily over the past few years. Attainment is above average on many indicators, including the percentage of students attaining five A* to C GCSE grades and also the percentage of students attaining five A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics.
- Students enter in Year 7 with achievement that is just below average and leave in Year 11 with achievement that is generally above average in most subject areas. This means that their progress in almost all subjects is good.
- Achievement in English is outstanding. There is a strong focus on reading, spelling and vocabulary. Each Key Stage 3 lesson in English starts with sustained silent reading and there is a word of the week.
- Previous underachievement in some subjects is being addressed well, for example in mathematics, history, French and Spanish, through better teaching and a curriculum that is matched more appropriately to the needs of all the students.
- There are some subjects where achievement is not as good and is not rising as quickly as it could. These include geography, German and resistant materials.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good and has improved. Although students generally progress better in Year 13, progress in Year 12 is now also good.
- During the inspection, there were many lessons seen where achievement was good or outstanding. Students are very keen to be involved in their own learning and rise well to challenges. For example, in a Year 11 mathematics lesson on factorising fractions students made outstanding progress. They chose tasks to give themselves a challenge and then reflected on how well they had done and what they could improve upon.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress in line with their peers. This is because of good support through one-to-one and small group sessions. Such a session was observed in a Year 9 science lesson on energy where students practised their basic literacy and numeracy skills before applying their knowledge and understanding to practical situations, such as the benefits of energy saving light bulbs. This was also one of the many lessons that showed how well the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are built into many other subjects.
- Students known to be eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good and in some lessons it is outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge, are enthusiastic and create a very purposeful learning environment. There is a wide range of interesting tasks to engage students and good student involvement is seen in most lessons.
- In the best lessons, work is matched closely to the abilities of all students and makes them think deeply. This was exemplified well in a number of lessons, including a Year 8 music lesson, where students made outstanding progress in their technical ability to use computer software to annotate their compositions. However, in a few lessons work was not matched well enough to the abilities of all groups of students, with some finding it too easy and others too hard. Where this happens progress slows.
- Teachers usually share with students what it is that they should be able to do by the end of the lesson. However, teachers do not always give students clear enough criteria for success to enable them to know how well they are learning as the lesson progresses. Thus, their achievement in some lessons is not as good as it could be.
- Many lessons contribute well to the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Time is built in for reflection and consideration of moral issues, such as in a Year 13 Italian lesson on the decline of marriage in Italy. Students' cultural development is good and is promoted well through the school's specialist subjects.

- Teachers generally mark students' work thoroughly and while many instances were seen of good specific comments on how to improve pieces of work there is some variability in the quality of the comments both within and between subjects.
- The Parent View responses showed that parents agree that their children are well taught.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of students behave very well around school and also in lessons. There were many instances of students being polite and courteous seen during the inspection. It was especially pleasing to see the open spaces in the new building being used so purposefully by students, both for formal and informal learning.
- In lessons, inspectors saw behaviour that was never less than good and in some lessons it was outstanding. Students' very positive behaviour impacts well on their learning. When given the opportunity they enjoy checking their own work and that of others.
- Students shared their views willingly with the inspectors who were most impressed by their confidence, maturity and by the perceptiveness of some of their answers. Most students rated behaviour as nine out of 10 or 10 out of 10. One student commented that he had said 10 out of 10 as he believed that behaviour here was as good as it could possibly be in any school that had children in it.
- Older students confirmed that behaviour has been good for some time, although they said that it is even better now as they have a pride in their new building. They really appreciate the 'vivo system' where they gain points for particularly good work or behaviour.
- Students have a good understanding of all different types of bullying. They say that hardly any bullying occurs and when it does it is just over 'childish' matters and is dealt with very quickly. When asked to describe their school, one student said, 'It's great, I really couldn't pick any bad point at all'.
- Most parental responses on Parent View agreed that behaviour is good. Likewise, most staff who filled in the questionnaire agreed that the behaviour is good.
- Students told the inspectors that their school is a very safe one. They have a good understanding of safety issues, such as e-safety, and they were observed working safely in practical lessons during the inspection.
- Attendance is improving slowly and is broadly average. Strategies such as summer school, targeted mainly at some students who are eligible for the pupil premium, are having a positive effect on attendance and on achievement.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the senior leaders are working very effectively together to drive up students' achievement and to improve the school. There is a determined ethos in the school about wanting the best for all its students.
- There have been many improvements since the previous inspection, including the effectiveness of the sixth form, the quality of teaching and the expectations of both the students and the teachers. Attendance, too, is improving, albeit slowly.
- Senior leaders know well the school's strengths and areas to develop. Tracking of students' progress is rigorous and any underachievement is being identified and addressed increasingly well.
- Gaps between different groups are closing, reflecting the good equality of opportunity for the

students and the school's inclusiveness.

- The school has altered the timing of the day one day each week to use for the teachers' continuous professional development. This is bringing about some improvement in the quality of teaching and, consequently, students' achievement. However, teachers' professional development is not currently personalised enough so that not all teachers know clearly how they can best improve their teaching to maximise students' learning and progress.
 - Staff questionnaires showed that the majority of staff is very positive about all aspects of the school, but some disagreed about the quality of their continuous professional development, reflecting the need to have it more personalised.
 - The quality of middle leadership is variable and this is reflected in the students' achievement. Currently, the role of middle leaders in the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and the progress the students make in their areas is underdeveloped and not as effective as it could be in some subjects.
 - All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.
 - The local authority is providing effective support.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is involved in the school at a number of different levels and is very supportive
 - does not offer enough challenge in relation to students' progress in each subject and with attendance.
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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	108407
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	405167

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1175
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dave Napier
Headteacher	Chris Richardson
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 November 2010
Telephone number	0191 4212244
Fax number	0191 4202320
Email address	enquiries@heworthgrange.org.uk

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