

Easingwold School

York Road, Easingwold, York, YO61 3EF

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good which slows the rate at which students make progress.
- The headteacher's new vision for future improvement is yet to be tested against improved outcomes for all students.
- The governing body and senior leaders have yet to convince all parents that all which goes on in school meets the needs and expectations of them and their children.
- Governors are not well enough informed about the quality of teaching across the school. They and senior leaders do not know how well the school's use of the pupil premium funding (the extra funding provided by the government for particular groups of students) is helping them to make faster progress.
- There are insufficient links with the progress that students make compared with the pay scale that teachers are on.

The school has the following strengths

- Students are reaching the expected GCSE standards at the end of Year 11. Sixth form students achieve the expected standards at the end of Year 13 and a very high proportion goes on to further and higher education.
- The quality of teaching is good in the sixth form and there is some good and outstanding teaching in the main school.
- There is very little bad behaviour in school.
- The new headteacher has set a clear vision for helping the school to improve and the vast majority of staff are committed to helping the school get better.
- The governing body and local authority are actively supporting and challenging the school to get better.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 33 part lessons, which included a total of 31 teachers. All teachers were offered and received feedback from inspectors. The deputy headteacher joined inspectors for two observations and was observed giving feedback to one of the two teachers seen. Although these lesson observations covered all year groups and a range of subjects, particular emphasis was given to the three core areas of English, mathematics and science.
- The lead inspector looked at the Ofsted on-line questionnaire, 'Parent View', prior to and during the inspection. In total, there were 90 parent responses on line and one written response that were read thoroughly. A further five responses were made after inspectors left the school, but these did not alter the overall findings.
- A range of documents was read and meetings held with senior leaders (headteacher, deputy and some assistant headteachers), middle (faculty) leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and two officers from the local authority.
- Informal discussions were also held with other staff and a significant number of students in planned meetings, during lessons and around the school more generally.
- Inspectors also read 67 paper-based questionnaires returned by staff at the school.

Inspection team

Brian Blake, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Barbara Comiskey	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shirley Fall	Additional Inspector
Steven Goldsmith	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Easingwold is larger than the average-sized secondary school with a sixth form.
- The school site includes a separately organised youth centre.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below that found nationally. The proportion of students supported through school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Students eligible for free school meals, or those who have been in care more than six months, and those whose parents are currently serving in the armed forces are eligible for additional funding called the pupil premium. The proportion of these students currently at the school is lower than average.
- The school provides support for students in other local authority schools who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for learning and progress.
- Following the retirement of the headteacher in February 2012, a temporary headteacher led the school until the end of the last academic year. A new headteacher was appointed and began work at the beginning of September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to at least a consistently good standard by:
 - ensuring that teachers use their knowledge of students' development to plan lessons that help them to make faster progress
 - ensuring that teachers talk less but make all class, group and one-to-one discussions challenge the students to think for themselves
 - ensuring that teachers have planned a range of lesson activities that suit the different abilities in the class
 - ensuring that teachers use a range of more difficult lesson activities for those able students who complete their work very quickly
 - ensuring that all verbal feedback in lessons and written feedback in books, helps the students to know how good their work is, and what they need to do to make it even better.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the governing body and senior leaders develop further their ability to know how good the school should be in all areas of its work
 - ensuring that the governing body and senior leaders know whether any extra funding that the school receives is helping the students to get better
 - ensuring that all teachers receive fair pay for the standard they achieve against the national standards for teachers
 - ensuring that the governing body and senior leaders know exactly how good teaching is in the school because it is always judged in terms of the progress that the students are making in lessons and over longer periods of time
 - challenging and improving any teaching that is either inadequate or needs to improve
 - ensuring that the governors, senior and middle leaders continually assess, and modify and adapt if necessary, the curricular provision across the school.
- In order for the governing body to succeed in these areas, it should seek the support of an external partner or body to help it extend its expertise and knowledge in holding itself, senior

leaders and staff to account for the standards which the students reach.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The vast majority of Year 7 students enter the school with standards that are above average in English and mathematics.
- Although students have traditionally attained above average results at GCSE, over the past two years results have dipped and are now average. Sixth form students' results are also average.
- The progress of students has slowed down in both the main school and sixth form in recent years, particularly for those who are capable of doing better than is normally expected, and for some who have been identified as needing extra support with their work.
- The progress of students who require more specialist additional support is good because their work is more focused on their identified needs.
- This slowing down in progress is due directly to teaching where too little account is taken of the students' previous learning or achievements with work that does not challenge the different abilities in the lesson. There is too much teacher direction, which prevents the students from showing initiative and taking greater responsibility for what they are doing.
- Not all teaching is like this and where it is good or better students make rapid progress because they are interested in what they do, have high levels of enjoyment, and can persevere, unsupervised, with work tasks for long periods of time.
- Students are accurate readers and generally present their work to effectively reflect their good knowledge and understanding within the subject. However, reading for a specific purpose, whereby the students are able to show different reading skills and techniques to aid aspects of their work not directed by the teacher, is more limited.
- It is because of these limited opportunities to make decisions about aspects of their learning that the progress of some more able students slows down; this applies, in particular, to those in the sixth form.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school. It varies in quality and, although there is some good teaching in all year groups, in too many lessons too much time is spent introducing lessons and students all complete the same work, which fails to develop their ability to work independently.
- There is some good quality teaching in the sixth form, with students' progress already showing it to be faster than previously seen. Teaching of this quality enthuses and captures students' interest in their work and promotes good behaviour and positive attitudes in lessons. There remains, however, some teaching that needs to improve.
- Some teaching really enthuses and captures the interest of the students. Some does little more than occupy and repeat previous learning.
- At its best, teaching comprises questions that make the students think, at a pace which is suitable for all abilities in the class. The quality of answers in lessons of this standard show that the students' make rapid progress in deepening their understanding and abilities to use and apply new knowledge sensibly and logically in less well known areas.
- Where teaching needs to improve, there is too much teacher talk, too few opportunities for sustained work and for students to work without adult help, and lesson content that is the same for all abilities in the class. It is this latter weakness which affects the students' progress the most because the work not only fails to develop learning, but leads to a lack of real interest in the subject.
- Some teachers' marking is very good and helps the students to know how good their work is,

and what they have to do to make it better. Some marking is not yet good enough.

- Teaching in mathematics and English shows this variation in quality.
- In mathematics, too much of the teaching is about acquiring techniques and processes to answer questions, rather than using new knowledge to think mathematically. This means that the students do not confidently show the ability required to use and apply mathematics to everyday living.
- In English, teachers have not developed students' reading skills to a point where they confidently and consistently read for a specific purpose, as an aid to them taking greater responsibility for personal research, writing and presentation of their work.
- Across the school, teachers make good use of word processing but too little use of other computer based programs and technology to support learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' behaviour when working with others, listening to teachers, showing respect for the building and the resources being used in lessons is good overall; this includes students in the sixth form.
- Behaviour, however, which focuses on the ability to develop aspects of learning such as personal enquiry and research that are not directed by the teacher is more limited and needs to improve. Students have the ability to develop these essential learning characteristics, but there are too few opportunities in lessons for them to acquire and practise these, and this is particularly evident in the sixth form.
- The school behaviour policy is very clear about the expectations for good behaviour, and the actions to be taken to deal with those who misbehave around school or in lessons. However, this policy has not been amended to include details about the use of a 'withdrawal room', recently introduced into the school. This means, therefore, that senior leaders and governors cannot assess fully the implementation and effectiveness of this important policy because it has not been accurately updated.
- There are very few disruptions to lessons, but the removal to the 'withdrawal room' of those who are misbehaving and disrupting their own and others' learning is generally working well.
- The overall number of behavioural incidents that are formally recorded is low, but there are some parents and carers, responding in 'Parent View', who are concerned about behaviour at the school. There are few incidents of bullying, but in a recent school-based student survey, concerns were raised that it does increase further up the school age range. There is no inspection evidence to support these views.
- Overall attendance and punctuality to lessons are good. However, there is variation in attendance rates for different groups of students. The attendance of those entitled to free school meals, and those who require specialised extra support for their learning is too low when compared with the overall school figure. The school has yet to show that it is successfully addressing this issue.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Since the start of the autumn term, the new headteacher has taken decisive action in providing a clear vision for the future development of the school. This work builds sensibly on the solid foundations and actions taken during the previous two terms by the temporary headteacher, the governing body and the local authority. The plan to improve the school makes clear that the goal is to raise standards for all students, particularly those studying for their GCSEs, A levels and other examinations.
- There is a particularly strong link now being given to the quality of teaching and how this affects students' progress in lessons and over longer periods of time.

- The vast majority of those staff responding to the inspection questionnaire indicated that they already have an understanding of what the new headteacher wants everyone, members of the governing body, staff and students to achieve.
 - New responsibilities and redefined roles for senior and middle leaders have begun, but these are so new that it is not yet possible to see exactly how they are helping the school to improve.
 - Sixth form leaders have not responded quickly enough to a recent local authority review of provision, but they are aware of the strengths and weaknesses, and acknowledge the need to push ahead quickly in order to ensure that the students attain more in line with their known abilities.
 - Although these improvements are helping parents and carers to know that the school is taking its responsibilities seriously, some aspects of this work are yet to be as successful as they should be.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are fully aware that they are responsible, alongside the headteacher and all staff, for ensuring that all students have a right to at least good quality teaching that will help them achieve their potential. However, the members are not well enough informed about the quality of teaching across the school and they do not know how well the school's use of the pupil premium funding is helping students to make faster progress.
 - Members and senior leaders cannot show that the school's use of the pupil premium is helping those who receive it to improve. The school does not target its current spending in a focused enough way to meet the exact needs of these students.
 - The school's judgement on the quality of teaching has been overgenerous because lesson observations have focused too much on the teacher, and too little on whether the teaching is helping students of all abilities to make the progress of which they are capable.
 - The school curriculum has not been judged by governors or senior leaders to see if it is as good as it should be. And, if it is not, how it should be changed to meet the needs that all the students have as they move onwards towards the world of work, further and higher education or training.
 - Although performance management is now being linked much more closely to the standards expected from all teachers, there are currently insufficient links to the pay scale that teachers are on.
 - The new headteacher has quickly assessed these and some other weaknesses and, together with the governing body and senior staff, is quickly pushing forward with the changes that are required as part of everyone knowing how well the school serves the needs and interests of all its students. In tackling these areas, the headteacher has also ensured that the students continue to feel safe at school.
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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	121664
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	402045

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	989
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Harrison
Headteacher	Mr P Benaiges
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2009
Telephone number	01347 821451
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