

Nidderdale High School and Community College

Low Wath Road, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 5HL

Inspection dates

18–19 December 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' achieve well. The progress that they make has improved rapidly and securely since the previous inspection. Attainment has been consistently above average in recent years.
- Teaching is good. Its quality has improved since the previous inspections because leaders and managers have tackled any inadequate teaching firmly. The partnership with another school has been used very effectively to raise the quality of teaching through the sharing of good practice between the two schools.
- Behaviour is good and improving. The number of exclusions has fallen significantly, as have incidents of poor behaviour in lessons and around school. Most students are polite and respectful. They say they feel safe at school. They enjoy school as seen in their above average and improving attendance levels.
- New leadership and management have brought about rapid and sustained improvement to all aspects of the school's work. Parental support for the school is strong and staff work together very well in the pursuit of improving the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of students making better than the progress expected given their starting points is not yet high enough to be outstanding.
- Although the quality of teaching is improving rapidly and securely, a small amount still requires improvement and not enough is yet outstanding. Some marking is not as helpful as it could be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 24 lessons. Two observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle managers, a group of teachers, groups of students, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including: data relating to students' attainment, progress and achievement; school records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's self-evaluation summary; and the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses on Parent View (the Ofsted online questionnaire) as well as the school's own summary data relating to parents' views of the school.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hargreaves

Additional Inspector

Jonathan Woodyatt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Nidderdale is much smaller than the average sized secondary school.
- Nearly all students are White British.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. Pupil premium funding is intended largely for the benefit of pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals.
- The proportion of students whose learning needs are supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- About 20 students in Years 10 and 11 attend part-time vocational courses off-site at Harrogate College, Craven College and Askham Bryan College.
- The school organises and manages a before-school breakfast club for students.
- Since the previous inspection staffing has been reduced by about 5 full-time equivalent members of the teaching staff.
- The school is in a formal partnership with another secondary school, whose headteacher has been acting as the executive headteacher for both schools for the last year. The deputy headteacher from the partner school has been acting headteacher at Nidderdale for about a year. He has been appointed as substantive headteacher at Nidderdale with effect from 1 January 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eliminate the small amount of teaching that requires improvement and increase the amount of outstanding teaching to raise the proportion of students making better than expected progress by:
 - making sure that the level of challenge is consistently high in all lessons for all groups of students
 - ensuring that there is consistency in how well teachers use questioning in all lessons to make students think deeply and give extended reasons for their answers
 - making all marking as effective as the best in showing students exactly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further
 - insisting that students always take pride in the presentation of their written work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join Key Stage 3 with generally average levels of attainment overall.
- In recent years attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 has been above average and rising at a faster rate than the national average. The proportion of students attaining five or more good passes at GCSE including English and mathematics is consistently above average and rising securely.
- By the end of Key Stage 4 nearly all students make the progress expected of them given their starting points when they join the school. The proportion that make better than the progress expected of them in English and mathematics compares favourably with national figures but is not yet high enough to be outstanding.
- Students in Key Stage 3 also make good and improving progress across all subjects.
- Information presented by the school about the progress being made by different year groups, which inspection evidence confirms, shows that in the future attainment and the proportion of students expected to make more than expected progress are set to rise further.
- In recent years, girls' attainment has been generally higher than that of boys. However, higher expectations of what boys can achieve and much closer checking on boys' progress with increased support when necessary has narrowed the gap rapidly and securely.
- Students who are disabled and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because of the effective support they receive from an able team of teaching support assistants.
- Similarly, students known to be eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress because finances have been used astutely to set up the 'flexible learning zone' aimed, primarily, at making sure that these students receive the effective support to which they are entitled. The average GCSE points score for students known to be eligible for the pupil premium generally matches that of other students in the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Leaders and managers have challenged and eradicated inadequate teaching. A small amount of teaching still requires improvement. However, most teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Because of this, students' achievement is rising rapidly and securely.
- Teachers know their subjects well. Most use questioning effectively to encourage students to give extended answers and to justify their opinions and answers. As a result, most students speak fluently and confidently. Occasionally, however, teachers are too quick to answer questions for students instead of encouraging them to work things out for themselves; this slows progress and makes students rely too heavily on the teacher for solutions.
- Most teaching makes good use of information about students' abilities and progress to plan activities that are closely matched to their needs. Occasionally, however, the work set for students is too easy for some and too hard for others. This also slows the progress some students make.
- Where teaching is outstanding students really fly and make excellent progress. For example, in one Key Stage 4 history lesson about the Berlin Wall, exquisitely crafted planning made sure that activities were matched exactly to students' abilities. Intense questioning led students to understand for themselves why the wall was built and its implications for world peace and politics during the Cold War. Students were engrossed in their learning and made outstanding progress as a result. Work in their exercise books was presented with obvious pride and showed that progress since the beginning of term matched the excellence of the progress they made in the lesson.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs, and those who are known to be

eligible for the pupil premium, are supported very effectively in lessons by the team of teaching support assistants and individually in the 'flexible learning zone'. Their progress is checked on meticulously and, as a result, they make good progress and achieve well.

- Most teachers mark students' written work regularly. However, the quality of comments is inconsistent in showing students how to improve their work. Too often, untidy work is accepted without comment or correction.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Students behave with respect to each other and to the adults working with them.
- School records for behaviour in recent years show a decline in incidents of poor behaviour and a significant decline in the number of exclusions. Students say that behaviour has improved because teachers are applying the new behaviour code more consistently and because lessons are more interesting. Very few parents show any concern about the standards of behaviour.
- Where teaching requires improvement students' behaviour sometimes deteriorates. This shows itself in some inattention and chatter. Occasionally, students' written work is untidy.
- Students say that they feel very safe in school and their parents express very few concerns. They understand what unsafe situations look like and how to deal with them. Students have full understanding of the potential risks inherent in using the internet.
- Students' attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection because leadership has tightened procedures and students are more motivated to want to attend school regularly.
- The school is meticulous in checking on the welfare, safety and attendance of students who attend part-time vocational courses at two local colleges of further education.
- Leaders and managers have improved greatly the opportunities for students' personal, social and health education, especially during registration times. Students say how much they get out of it in terms of broadening their outlook on life. As a result, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved and is good.
- The breakfast club for students is a thoroughly civilised start to the school day. It is relaxed, very popular and supervised well by staff and older students to ensure safety.

The leadership and management

are good

- Senior leaders have a high profile around the school. They are passionate believers in improving the quality of teaching as the means of raising achievement and improving students' life chances.
- New leaders have had a dramatic impact on rejuvenating the school's sense of purpose, although they recognise that further work is necessary to increase the amount of outstanding teaching and sustained high achievement. Team spirit among the teaching staff is strong in the pursuit of continuous improvement.
- The partnership with another school has extended the opportunities for students, for example in sharing resources for the teaching of music. It has also led to highly effective sharing of best practice in teaching. The net result has been a rapid rise in the quality of teaching and in students' achievement.
- Leaders and managers check on the quality of teaching accurately. They use what they find from observing lessons as the basis for staff management targets to drive up the quality further. Leaders and managers have been especially effective in tackling and eradicating inadequate teaching. The results of performance management reviews of the work that staff do are linked closely to whether teachers move up the salary scale.
- Leaders and managers know the strengths of the school and where it should be doing better. This is reflected in the good quality development plan which has improving teaching at its core.

- The rapid and secure improvement, especially in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, is evidence of the school's strong capacity to continue its forward momentum.
 - The courses and opportunities offered meet the needs of all groups of students regardless of ability or background. This centres on a successful drive to provide students with equality of opportunity as seen in the good and improving progress and achievement of all groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs.
 - Leaders and managers target pupil premium funding to make sure that students known to be eligible receive the support they need and that they are fully included in the life of the school.
 - Policies and procedures for safeguarding give no cause for concern.
 - The local authority has provided the school with good support in brokering the partnership with another school and putting in place new leadership. As a result, standards have risen very rapidly in every aspect of the school's work.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very aware of the improvements that leadership has brought about and accurately judge the school to be good. They know that the quality of teaching has improved significantly and what lies behind this rapid improvement. They provide full support for improving the quality of teaching, including tackling inadequate teaching. Governors talk knowledgeably about procedures and targets for the performance management of staff. They understand and support senior leaders' use of performance management to make decisions about pay progression. Through regular training and detailed reports from senior leaders, governors understand how well the school is doing in comparison to other, similar schools, including how much headway students known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making. Governors have a firm grip on the budget. They plan effectively for fluctuations from year to year caused by differences in the size of cohorts.
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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	121700
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	406047

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Reid
Headteacher	Ian Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	08 February 2011
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