

# South Craven School

Holme Lane, Cross Hills, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD20 7RL

**Inspection dates** 12–13 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b> <b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The achievement of all groups of students is outstanding. In the main school, students make exceptional progress in their studies and reach well above average, and on occasion, exceptionally high standards in academic and vocational subjects by the time they leave. As a result, they are extremely well-prepared for the next stage in their education or for the world of work.
- The excellent curriculum is under continuous review and is designed to meet the needs of individuals. The school is proud to celebrate the legacy of engineering and technology status and all students continue to follow a technology subject in Key Stage 4.
- There is a rich range of academic and vocational programmes in the outstanding sixth form. Students feel valued as individuals and say that the school does all it can to prepare them for the rigours of sixth-form study.
- Students receive outstanding support and guidance during their courses and when they are applying for jobs or for courses in further and higher education. Increasing numbers are entering prestigious universities and former students often come back to school to talk about their experiences or even to take up positions on the staff.
- Comments such as, 'The whole school is united' and 'We recognise individual successes' demonstrate how very proud students are of their school. They are happy in school and feel safe. Behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding and students are very keen to learn.
- An overriding emphasis on improving teaching and sharing exemplary practice with and across departments has led to outstanding teaching in all areas of the school. Teachers are working hard to develop questioning further and to ensure that students have sufficient opportunities to take stock of the feedback they receive from their teachers.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The exceptionally well-informed headteacher and senior team lead by example and their vision for how the school is to move forward is shared by all staff. Subject and pastoral leaders take full responsibility for their areas.
- Governors support the school very well, yet hold leaders to account with rigour. South Craven is a 'thinking' school, in which there is no complacency and in which performance is always under review. It is an inclusive school in which the academic and personal welfare of each individual student comes first.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 45 lessons or part-lessons, taught by 43 teachers.
- They held meetings with four groups of students in the main school and with one group of sixth-formers. They held discussions with members of the governing body, heads of academic departments, pastoral leaders, the special educational needs co-ordinator, and members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors took account of the 85 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and of two letters received from parents. They also scrutinised the 35 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school at work and considered a range of documentation, including internal and external student progress and attainment data, work in students' books and files, school development planning and the school's procedures to enable it to gain an accurate view of how well it is doing.
- They also scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings and documentation in relation to performance management arrangements and staff training opportunities. In addition, they looked at a variety of documentation in relation to safeguarding, child protection, attendance and behaviour.

## Inspection team

James Kidd, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Barbara Waugh	Additional Inspector
Mark Shenton	Additional Inspector
Paul Edmondson	Additional Inspector
Stephen Rodchester	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much larger-than-average-sized school. It converted to academy status on May 1 2011. When the predecessor school, a specialist engineering and technology college, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The percentage of students supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, for those looked after by the local authority or from service families is below average.
- There is a below-average proportion of students from minority ethnic heritages and the percentage of students with English as an additional language is also below that usually found.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is broadly in line with the national picture. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has enhanced provision for students with high-functioning autism and provides outreach support for other schools in the Craven district which have autistic students on roll.
- It is a member of the Red Kite Alliance, a teaching school alliance based at Harrogate Grammar School.
- Small numbers of students attend a range of vocational courses at Keighley College, Craven College and Skipton Fire Station.

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

- Further accelerate students' achievement by:
  - ensuring that all teachers provide opportunities for students to respond to the feedback they receive on their work and progress
  - continuing to develop teachers' questioning techniques so that an even greater proportion of more-able students attain the higher examination grades.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** is outstanding

- Although there are variations from year to year, students' attainment on entry to Year 7 is generally broadly in line with that seen nationally. As a result of an outstanding curriculum, consistently high-quality teaching and focused support for small groups and individuals, all groups of students make outstanding progress and reach well above average standards at least by the end of Year 11. Attainment and achievement in both academic and vocational subjects are equally impressive.
- Similarly, students in the sixth form achieve outstandingly well. From just below average standards on entry to Year 12, they, too, make outstanding progress in their studies and reach above average attainment by the time they leave for employment, further or higher education. Increasing numbers of students are entering universities with a high reputation for academic excellence.
- Detailed monitoring of students' progress in all subjects highlights any possible underachievement rapidly and leads to support sessions which are exactly what students need to get back on track. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work, show that well-above average proportions of students are making more-than-expected progress in English and mathematics and that there is an increasing proportion on course to exceed their extremely challenging targets.
- More-able students are doing very well indeed, but the school would like them to do even better and is now placing emphasis on further developing teachers' questioning in class, in order to enable an even greater proportion of these students to attain the higher GCSE grades.
- Pupil premium funding is spent wisely, for example on 'catch-up' English and mathematics sessions and lunchtime study support. Students known to be eligible for free school meals make outstanding progress in English and mathematics, in relation to similar students nationally, as a consequence. Similarly, disabled students and those with special educational needs progress exceptionally well as a result of outstanding support and modifications to the curriculum when necessary. Students on the autistic spectrum receive outstanding support as do the few students from minority ethnic heritages. They too make outstanding progress in their studies.
- Parents are delighted with the progress their children make. As one parent commented, 'Our son, who is diagnosed with autism, continues to thrive and develop, because of the sensitive support and nurture he receives.'

### **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- Excellent subject knowledge, activities and methods which enable students to learn quickly and many opportunities for students to find things out for themselves are the key features of teaching across the school. Students speak highly of their teachers and of the other adults who work with them and comment, 'Learning is fun but our teachers really make us think!'
- Teaching is outstanding, but senior and middle leaders are not complacent and still place great emphasis on improving classroom practice even further. The sharing of good and exemplary practice is the norm and several departments provide a variety of whole-school training. Staff are encouraged to observe each other in the classroom and newly-qualified teachers and teachers in training benefit from observing teaching, not just in their own subjects, but also in other areas of the curriculum.
- In the vast majority of lessons, students are fully engaged in their learning, have the utmost confidence in their teachers and are never afraid to ask for help when they are unsure. They are delighted to work in pairs and groups and enjoy supporting and challenging each other in their learning. They make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. In a Year 10 Spanish lesson, for example, in which teaching was outstanding students quite naturally questioned each other about how different tenses could be used to ensure that their writing was of grade A and

A\* standard. Similarly, outstanding teaching in a Year 11 English lesson enabled students to identify where they could improve their work in preparation for the GCSE examination.

- Lessons comprise continuous feedback to students on how well they are doing. If teachers believe that progress is not quite as rapid as it should be, they modify their approach to ensure that all students, irrespective of their ability, are on track to reach the learning targets. Marking is regular, accurate and provides students with detailed comment on how they improve their work and raise their standards further. On occasion, however, teachers do not give students sufficient opportunity to respond to the feedback they receive.
- Parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire are generally entirely satisfied with the quality of teaching their children receive.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Parents rightly believe their children are happy and safe in school because, in their view, 'Staff are motivating, friendly and approachable and the support and guidance students receive are outstanding.' Students agree and show how proud they are to attend the school with comments such as, 'We are proud of each other and there is a will for everyone to succeed.' Without doubt, the school's exceptional support for students on the autistic spectrum is mirrored in the support it provides for all groups.
- Indeed, students' conduct and engagement in learning are exceptional: they are invariably polite to visitors, are keen to support and look after each other and display very good manners. They are delighted to show visitors their work and to talk about all aspects of school life.
- They have a profound understanding of the dangers of bullying in all its forms, including cyber-bullying and bullying based on prejudice. They say that bullying does occur, but that it is rare and is always dealt with promptly and effectively by staff. They feel safe as a result, and also value the emphasis the school places on them using the Internet safely.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. For example, as part of their sports leadership programme, sixth-formers support younger students in the inter-form games; sixth-formers also usefully take part in paired reading with students in Key Stage 3. Music and drama play a vital role in students' cultural development and their multicultural awareness is promoted by their partnership with schools in Sri Lanka and Ghana. Students take the lead in organising activities to raise money for a wide range of charities, to support 'Help for Heroes' and the Air Ambulance, for example.
- Students benefit from a variety of extra-curricular subject clubs and other activities, including sport, engineering and recreational games such as chess. They also receive visitors from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, who talk to them about university life and how to aim for the highest standards.
- Staff make regular visits to the local colleges which provide vocational courses for students. Students say they are safe there and enjoy the activities.
- Attendance is well above average and has been so since the academy opened. Students are punctual to school and to their lessons.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- At all levels, leaders and managers have a very clear view of how successful the school can be and have the highest ambitions for students and staff alike. The talented headteacher, supported to the full by the committed senior leadership team, leads by example and shows great determination in driving forward improvements in both the main school and in the sixth form. The school's procedures for checking and improving the quality of teaching are faultless, as are its systems to monitor students' progress and attainment. The school knows itself exceptionally well and its procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are honest

and unerringly accurate. The school has changed its early examination entry policy to ensure that all students reach the standards of which they are capable. Heads of subject departments and pastoral areas speak with one voice about, in their words, 'The approachable and supportive senior leadership team, which has an 'open-door' policy but which holds us to continuous account.' Without doubt, these middle leaders feel empowered to develop the areas for which they are responsible and value the many opportunities they have to share good and outstanding practice with colleagues across the school.

- The curriculum is outstanding and its impact on students' enjoyment of learning and on their academic and personal achievement is continuously under review. Parents, including those who have disabled children or children with special educational needs cannot speak highly enough about how it is modified to meet the individual needs of their children. Students in particular are delighted with the excellent opportunities they have to follow such a wide range of vocational courses.
- Child-protection and safeguarding policies and practice fully meet current requirements. The school promotes equality of opportunity outstandingly well and has a 'zero tolerance' approach to all forms of discrimination.
- The school values the support it receives as a result of its membership of the Red Kite Alliance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is outstanding. Members of the governing body have an exceptional awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development and keep fully up to date with their responsibilities by attending relevant training. They hold senior leaders to account for performance in all areas of school life with the utmost rigour and ask searching questions of all members of staff directly responsible to them. They ensure that performance management procedures are both rigorous and fair and that they reward staff only if classroom targets in relation to students' progress are met. Governors also monitor regularly the impact on students' achievement of pupil premium spending and are actively involved, often through visits to lessons, in the school's on-going emphasis on further improving the quality of teaching and learning. They are regular visitors to school and take a keen interest in the day-to-day running of South Craven. Their support and guidance are valued and trusted by staff at all levels of responsibility.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136736
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403678

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1678
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The Governing Body
<b>Chair</b>	Iain Harris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Andrew Cummings
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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