

High Well School – South Hiendley

High Well Hill Lane, South Hiendley, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S72 9DF

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement in literacy is inadequate. Students are not improving their reading and writing so as to close the gap between their performance and that of students of the same age nationally. They are not given enough opportunity to read and write and as a result, their progress is inadequate.
- Achievement in mathematics requires improvement. There are too few opportunities for students to learn number skills, and develop their ability to calculate and solve problems.
- The significant number of students who do not attend school regularly, including the many who are persistently absent or are excluded, are making poor progress in all areas of learning.
- Too many teachers lack the expertise to engage students in lessons and inspire them to enjoy learning. Some teachers do not manage students' behaviour effectively.
- Lessons are often not challenging enough. In most subjects, teachers do not expect students to do much reading or writing and give them too much help to get through the lesson.
- Overall, behaviour is unacceptable. While students feel safe too many lack the motivation and positive values to behave well, cooperate and have regard and respect for staff. As a result, there are many exclusions. Persistent absence is at a high level.
- The work of leaders and managers is not leading to improvements in teaching or students' achievement. Checks on the school's work lack rigour and leaders' evaluations are over-generous in their assessment of teaching and students' outcomes.
- Governors do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders on how well the school is performing. Consequently, the school's effectiveness has declined since its previous inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- When taught well, most students who attend school regularly enjoy learning and make good efforts to complete work.
- Some students value the good relationships with staff and other students which help them settle, learn and achieve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons involving two of the school’s eight teachers and a higher-level teaching assistant. One lesson was observed jointly with the Key Stage 4 coordinator.
- Meetings took place with senior leaders, staff, a representative of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector examined a wide range of school documents including development plans, a summary of the school’s evaluation of its work, external reviews of the school, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, policies for keeping students’ safe and data showing students’ progress.
- A sample of students’ workbooks was scrutinised.
- There were too few responses made by parents to Ofsted’s on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to be able to access them.

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- All of the students have a statement of special educational needs identifying behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are many more boys than girls on roll. Students come to the school at any point during their secondary education. The very large majority are White British.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, those from armed services families, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- Alternative provision used by the school includes Skills Exchange and Elite who offer vocational experiences and training and Hotch Potch, an art group providing activities in school.
- The permanent headteacher has been away from the school for over a year. There have been three temporary headteachers since then, the latest being in post for just over two weeks at the time of the inspection. The deputy headteacher is also away from the school and is due to return in June 2013. A temporary deputy headteacher, seconded from a school in the local authority, took up post very recently.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be consistently good or better in order to raise achievement rapidly across all year groups by:
 - developing teachers' knowledge and skills so that in all subjects they plan their lessons using methods that engage, challenge and give students the scope to take charge of their own learning and the motivation to work hard
 - raising teachers' expectations in relation to students' behaviour, their cooperation and positive contribution to lessons
 - increasing the pace of learning and ensuring students are encouraged to read and write often and have good opportunities in mathematics to improve their skills in number, calculation and problem-solving
 - making the assessment of students' starting points and progress consistent in rigour and accuracy across the school
 - ensuring teachers use assessments to plan work for students that is precisely matched to their level of attainment and builds systematically on what students already know and can do.
- Improve students' behaviour and attendance by:
 - ensuring that all staff develop the insights and skills to manage students' behaviour with consistency and to good effect
 - reducing significantly the high level of exclusions prompted by students' unacceptable behaviour

- redoubling efforts to reduce the high level of absence through the work of the family support adviser and the school's incentives to encourage good attendance.

■ Improve leadership and the capacity to improve the school by:

- developing and implementing a comprehensive scheme of rigorous checks on the school's work especially in relation to teaching and students' outcomes
- improving leaders' skills in observing and evaluating the quality of teaching so that they give teachers clear feedback on their areas for improvement
- strengthening the part played by teachers' performance management and their professional development in improving teaching
- ensuring the tracking of students' progress is accurate and clear in showing which students make expected progress and which make less or more than this, leading to an accurate judgement on the school's effectiveness in promoting good achievement
- making more effective use of pupil premium funding
- reviewing the curriculum and amending it as necessary to ensure it offers good opportunities for literacy and numeracy in all subjects.

■ Improve governance by:

- making sure governors are given comprehensive reports and accurate evaluations of the school's work so that they can challenge leaders effectively and set them clear expectations that will lead to improvement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Over time, students' achievement in literacy is inadequate. Across the school, many students' knowledge and skills in reading and writing are well below what is expected for their age and not sufficient to prepare them adequately for employment, training or further education. Not all students succeed in moving into employment, training or further education on leaving school.
- Students are not improving their reading and writing fast enough and the school is not helping them close the gap with students of the same age. They do not spend enough time working on improving their literacy skills because the school's expectations are too low. The significant proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium are getting insufficient benefit from this extra funding in terms of improving their achievement overall and developing their reading and writing in particular. Leaders do not have a clear enough picture of how well the performance of students known to be eligible for free school meals compares to that of other students.
- The support given to students known to have particularly low reading skills is helpful in that it offers students opportunities to practise reading, however, because there is no school-wide approach or sufficiently good teaching of reading, their progress is too slow. Too many students leave school without the requisite skills to search for information and gain a good understanding from reading.
- Students are reluctant to write and this reluctance is not tackled robustly by teachers. Students produce very little writing in English and other lessons that extends beyond single sentences. Where they do produce pieces of writing, these often show a limited range of language and are poorly handwritten and punctuated.
- Students make better progress in mathematics and make up ground lost before coming to this school. However, achievement in mathematics requires improvement because teachers do not ensure students are making good enough progress in their skills with number, calculation and solving a variety of number problems. For example, in Key Stage 3, students do not show in their workbooks how they have added large numbers. The amount of work they do involving knowledge and skills of number is low, whereas work with graphs, angles and shapes is more evident.
- In 2011 and 2012, a small number but not a sufficiently good proportion of Year 11 students gained passes in GCSE English and mathematics. Key factors hindering better examination results, but also contributing to low achievement overall, are the many students not attending school every day and the high level of persistent absence. Adding to this is the large number of exclusions from school for poor behaviour which takes away from a significant minority of students their opportunities to learn on the days they have been sent away from school.
- The data collected on students' progress are not given the rigorous analysis required to gain a detailed and accurate insight into the proportions of students making expected progress or more than this. The outcomes for students attending alternative provision are not reported or made clear in a detailed analysis.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is not strong enough and teachers' skills are not sufficiently developed to engage students in learning. Teachers are not effective in encouraging students to learn, make progress and inspire in them the confidence to tackle new and challenging work. Too many lessons are inadequate and, over time, there is not enough good and better teaching to ensure students achieve well.
- In some lessons teachers do not manage students' behaviour and this disrupts learning. Not all teachers manage to help some students overcome their reluctance to learn. The relationships

between teachers and students are occasionally not strong enough to enable teachers to set high expectations and to promote the right attitudes to work and learning. While a few teachers manage behaviour well, not all are skilled at achieving good behaviour and cooperation from students.

- All teachers write their lesson plans in detail, setting out learning objectives that are informed by the knowledge and skills students need to learn. However, assessment arrangements are not developed sufficiently well and students' knowledge and skills are not measured accurately. This undermines the teachers' ability to put their plans into action.
- Where teaching is inadequate the pace of learning is slow. Teachers do not expect much contribution or a good amount of work from students. They give students few opportunities to work on their own or together on assignments. Students are not actively encouraged to read and write.
- Without the wherewithal to engage students and challenge them, some teachers do most of the work in lessons. Teachers do not manage time well enough in lessons, for example they give overly long explanations and they are too ready to provide the answers to questions or solutions to problems; consequently, teachers often hinder students' learning. As a result, students do not deal with challenges effectively or enjoy working hard and achieving, all of which, given the right circumstances, they are capable of doing.
- Where teaching is good the relationship between teachers and students is strong and secure. This gives students' confidence and they are more willing to cooperate and learn effectively. In a Year 8 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher kept students well involved using a constant flow of positive prompts and praise. Expectations were high, students' full cooperation was achieved and teaching and learning proceeded at a good pace.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- Too many students lack the positive outlook that would motivate them to promote their own well-being, behave well and treat others with respect and consideration. The school's values are not consistently and strongly established and projected with the strength required to inspire students to be openly thoughtful and polite.
- Disruptive behaviour, poor conduct and disrespect for staff occur too frequently. According to the school's records, the high number of temporary exclusions is caused most often by assaults or threats of assault on staff, but seldom threats or assaults on other students.
- Students feel safe and some get on well with staff and each other and value their relationships. Physical bullying between students is rare. Verbal abuse is more prevalent but the amount is not excessive and, generally, students get on together well.
- Most students have a strong antipathy to school and similarly a reluctance to learn. Low self-esteem and self-confidence are barriers to many students achieving, which the school is not well equipped to break down. Overall attendance remains stubbornly at a low level and is exacerbated by a high level of persistent absence despite the constant efforts of the school's family support adviser, the local authority and other agencies to improve attendance.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The school currently lacks the strong leadership it urgently needs to provide vision, ambition, high expectations and drive for improvement. Leaders do not provide clear direction and are uncertain about the school's immediate and long-term priorities for improvement. Leadership across the school is not developed sufficiently well to have the capacity to fill the vacuum left by the lack of permanent leadership at the top. At present, the leaders' capacity to instigate change and sustain improvement is inadequate.
- The local authority keeps a close check on the school although its impact on supporting

improvement is hindered by the constant changes in the school's senior leadership. The local authority has ensured the school has a temporary senior leadership team and that students are kept safe. A team of three local authority support teachers has very recently begun to help with reviewing learning, the curriculum and the management of behaviour.

- The school has lacked a concerted drive to improve teaching. The quality of teaching is checked but the overall view is too generous because evaluations are not rigorous or accurate. As a result, the aspects of teaching that need to be improved are not clearly highlighted and dealt with. Leaders' skills in observing teaching and learning have not been developed sufficiently. Teachers are not given clear guidance on what they need to improve. Opportunities for teachers' further professional development are few and not focused sharply on refining their teaching skills so they have a greater impact on students' learning, behaviour and attitudes.
- The management of teachers' performance is not well established. While performance management takes place and teachers have objectives to pursue, these are too broadly based and not focused precisely on the areas in which each teacher needs to improve. There is no clear link in the performance management process between the quality of teaching, its improvement and teachers' pay. The extent to which teachers are held to account for students' progress is too limited.
- The collection and analysis of data about students' progress are not robust enough. The impact of pupil premium funding on students' learning and progress is not effectively analysed and evaluated. The quality of data gathered is undermined by teachers' assessments, which are not always thorough or reliable. The accuracy of assessment is not secure because the school is not learning from any good practice that exists in other schools or sharing their assessments with others to validate and moderate their accuracy. There is not a sufficiently clear understanding of students' progress. As a result, students have less opportunity to achieve and be prepared well enough for the future, which is their entitlement. Consequently, the school's promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate.
- Leaders are beginning to reconsider the curriculum to make it more effective in providing for students' emotional and behavioural needs and to make sure that programmes of study and projects are better balanced to meet these needs through academic and vocational opportunities. The provision for literacy is inadequate and, overall, the curriculum is not promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as effectively as it should.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has been successful recently in recruiting new members who bring useful experience and expertise. The Chair of the Governing Body is well qualified to steer governors towards an effective engagement with the school. However, governors are not in a strong position yet to challenge the school about teaching, students' outcomes, the use of the pupil premium, behaviour and attendance. They are hindered by a lack of good quality information on the school's work and by the interim arrangements for the school's senior leadership.

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	131526
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	406438

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Bowen
Headteacher	David Hulbert
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2010
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