

Hetton School

North Road, Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH5 9JZ

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2013

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' academic achievement is good. It has improved considerably since the last inspection. Previous underachievement has been tackled extremely well.
- The percentage of students gaining five or more passes at GCSEs at grades A* to C has risen steadily and has been above that found nationally for the past three years.
- The vast majority of students in all year groups make good progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and outstanding in some lessons.
- Students enjoy school, feel safe and behave well. Most staff and parents echo this view.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader and works very closely with his deputy and senior leadership team, some of whom are relatively new in post.
- Robust action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching with personalised advice and support. This is making a significant difference to the outcomes for the students.
- Changes to the curriculum are ensuring that courses are better matched to the needs and interests of the students. The impact of this is seen in their improved achievement.
- The governing body supports the school very well. It has helped the school to improve and holds it well to account in all areas.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a few lessons, teachers do not get students to work sufficiently independently on engaging activities or provide them with the skills or opportunities for them to reflect on their learning.
- Opportunities are missed in some lessons to reinforce students' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Not all marking is of the highest quality to enable all students to know clearly how to improve their work.
- Not all middle leaders demonstrate a good level of skill to check and evaluate students' progress and the quality of teaching in their areas with enough rigour.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 35 lessons, taught by 33 teachers. Five observations were conducted jointly with four different members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, development planning and the monitoring of the quality of teaching. They also looked at information about teachers’ professional development.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders in the school, members of the governing body and also with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke to many students in lessons, at breaks and lunchtimes. They spoke formally to four groups of students on the first day of the inspection.
- The 91 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 50 responses to the staff questionnaire were analysed.

Inspection team

Alison Thomson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jim Hall	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector
Julie McGrane	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hetton is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students who are supported at school action is average. The proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are also average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, students in local authority care and those whose parents are in the armed forces.) The school has students in the first two of these groups, but those known to be eligible for free school meals constitute by far the largest group.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school enters some students early for GCSE mathematics.
- The school has specially resourced provision for 12 students who have speech, language or communication difficulties.
- A very small minority of students are educated part-time, off-site, at Sunderland Pupil Referral Unit.
- Over the past three years, there have been considerable changes in staffing, including at senior and middle leadership level.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement even higher by increasing the proportion of teaching that is outstanding and eradicating the small remaining proportion that requires improvement by:
 - ensuring students work independently as much as possible on engaging activities
 - providing students in lessons with the skills and opportunities to enable them to reflect on how well they are learning
 - always giving students the highest quality feedback about their work so they know clearly how to improve it and checking that this feedback is acted upon
 - maximising opportunities in all lessons to promote literacy and numeracy to raise those skills to the highest level for all students
 - ensuring all middle leaders have the necessary expertise to rigorously check and evaluate the progress their students make and the quality of teaching in their areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter Year 7 with broadly average attainment. They leave at the end of Year 11 with standards that are above average on several indicators.
- The proportion of students who gain five GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is rising and has been above average for the past three years.
- Other indicators of attainment at the end of Year 11, taking into account all students' subjects or their best eight subjects, have risen dramatically in 2012/13 compared to previous years, due to much-improved teaching and a curriculum that better matches their needs.
- In all year groups, most students' progress relative to their starting points is good. This includes students who are disabled or have special educational needs, students who are eligible for the pupil premium and also the most able students. Students' achievement overall, therefore, is good.
- There are many subjects that have shown sustained and rapid improvement, including English and design and technology. Mathematics is also improving, but not quite as strongly for the older students where there has been a legacy of some underachievement. However, progress for all groups of students last year was good.
- Addressing any underachievement early has ensured that students who are eligible for the pupil premium funding achieve increasingly well. The gap in standards reached by these pupils in English reduced by half a GCSE grade to 1.5 grades lower than their peers in 2012/13. In mathematics, eligible students were about two grades lower. Nevertheless, the progress from their starting points was good.
- The school enters some students early for GCSE examinations in mathematics, but not the most able, thus maximising their chances of attaining the highest grades. The progress of the most able students compared very favourably with students nationally in 2012/13.
- The progress of the most able students and students who are disabled or have special educational needs is good in most subjects. This is because teachers now plan lessons with activities that match the needs of those students more closely.
- Students who attend the school's specially resourced provision make good progress. The work they do is linked well with their interests. They join other lessons where possible, and are assisted in their learning by teaching assistants who help them to access their work and encourage them well.
- A very small number of students are educated part-time off-site. They are monitored closely and make good progress in managing their behaviour.
- The school has a very close focus on improving literacy, making good use of the Year 7 catch-up money. This is used to boost student confidence and to provide small-group teaching. During the inspection, Year 10 reading mentors were observed listening to younger students read.
- Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are integrated increasingly well into many subjects. However, there are missed opportunities to reinforce literacy and numeracy in some lessons.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire felt that progress is good. The inspectors agreed with this view.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly, through well focused staff development. Most teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Teachers have high expectations and adapt the work well for the different abilities of their students. As a result, all groups of students make good progress.

- In the best lessons, teachers engage their students well with a series of tasks that makes them think deeply and learn well. They ensure that the students get down to independent work as quickly as possible, reinforce literacy and numeracy skills and give students clear criteria for success. This was exemplified well in many lessons, including a Year 11 food technology lesson where students made outstanding progress. Here, students were expertly guided and thoroughly enjoyed evaluating what they and others had produced in 'The Great British Bake Off'.
- However, in a few lessons, teachers spend too long talking to the class as a whole, do not reinforce literacy or numeracy and do not give students sufficient guidance or opportunities to reflect on how well they are learning. Where this happens, progress slows.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in many lessons, for example, issues around social networking chat rooms in English and the devastating effects of tsunamis in geography.
- Teachers generally mark students' work thoroughly and many instances were seen of a good dialogue around helpful comments on how to improve pieces of work. However, this practice is not as widespread as it could be.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire felt that their children were well taught.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The inspectors found the students to be very polite and courteous, and willing to engage with them in conversation and share their views.
- Students told the inspectors that the behaviour of most students is good and has been for some time, especially since the arrival of the headteacher. This was confirmed by scrutiny of behavioural records.
- Students have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying. They say that there is hardly any bullying and any that does occur is dealt with swiftly. They told the inspectors that there is always a peer mentor or an adult they can turn to.
- Students are very keen to be involved in their own learning and they work very well together in groups. This was seen in many lessons, including a Year 7 personal, social, health and economic education lesson. Here, students made excellent progress discussing the content of letters to tobacco companies. This lesson also stressed the moral aspects of tobacco companies and health promotion.
- Students describe their school as very safe and they were observed working very safely in practical lessons.
- The school has increased attendance to be in line with that found nationally. This has been by working closely with families and students that have been persistently absent in the past. Punctuality has improved considerably.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agreed that the school helps their children to behave well. Almost all staff who returned the questionnaire agreed that students' behaviour is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school very effectively, delegating responsibility well to his senior leaders. Significant improvements have occurred in students' progress, behaviour and in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have successfully improved learning by regularly observing the quality of teaching in lessons and by providing staff with training. A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted, which is linked to the pay scales.

- The role of middle leaders requires further development. Currently, not all are sufficiently skilled at holding their staff to account for the progress that students make or for the quality of their teaching.
- Most staff are extremely positive about all aspects of the school. Many indicated strongly how proud they are to work at the school and how well they feel supported.
- Systems for checking how well students are achieving are extremely thorough. Any student who is in danger of underachieving is identified early and helped to catch up well. As a result, gaps between the performances of different groups of students are closing rapidly. This reflects the inclusiveness of the school and its intolerance of discrimination.
- The curriculum has been skilfully adapted to the needs and interests of the students and this has helped to widen the range of subjects in which the students do well. There is a wide array of clubs and visits, and the students told the inspectors how much they value the opportunity to visit cities such as Madrid and New York. The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong.
- All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.
- The local authority has recognised the strong capacity of the school to move forward and has reduced its support to 'light-touch'.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body works very closely with the school. It has played a key role in the allocation of the budget, including the pupil premium funding, and this has improved the progress of eligible students. Governors have a realistic view of the quality of teaching. They ensure that the pay of teachers is linked closely to their performance and that any underperformance is tackled swiftly. They undergo training, including training to understand data. The governing body holds the school to account increasingly well for the performance of its students.

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	108862
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	429596

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	720
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Wilkinson
Headteacher	Phil Keay
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2012
Telephone number	0191 553 6756
Fax number	0191 553 6760
Email address	hetton.school@schools.sunderland.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

