

St Augustine's Roman Catholic School, Scarborough

Sandybed Lane, Stepney Hill, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 5LH

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

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		Good	2
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

- From their starting points too few students make good progress, particularly those of middle and lower abilities. Standards in some subjects are below average.
- Too much teaching requires improvement and as a result students are not making good progress.
- Teaching does not always respond effectively to students' different levels of understanding to make sure that all students are given work that gets the best out of them.
- Questioning is not consistently effective and some teachers do not expect or elicit high quality responses from students to extend their understanding.
- Marking does not consistently provide students with precise guidance on how to improve their work.
- The presentation and quality of writing for those students of middle or lower ability requires improvement.
- Over time, leaders, managers and governors have not increased achievement and improved teaching so that it is consistently good.
- Not all middle leaders use the full range of evidence available to them to assess the progress of all groups of students and the quality of teaching in the areas for which they are responsible.

The school has the following strengths

- The overall quality of teaching is improving and progress is starting to increase. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Standards are above average in science, music, drama and religious education.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Students say they feel safe and enjoy school. Attendance is above average.
- Parents are exceptionally confident in the school's work and their children's safety.
- Almost all students leaving at the end of Year 11 continue in education, employment or training.
- The headteacher has developed a strong sense of purpose to drive the school forward.
- Governors have developed a good understanding of how well the school is doing. They are improving their skills to hold the headteacher to account for what is happening in school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons. Six observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of students about their learning in lessons and their safety in school. Inspectors also listened to some students reading.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, school staff and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development plan, subject development plans, school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at students' work in lessons and analysed a sample of students' books.
- Inspectors analysed the 112 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 47 questionnaires completed by staff. One parent had a discussion with an inspector.

Inspection team

James McGrath, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Judith Gooding

Additional Inspector

Christine Kennedy

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most students are White British. A small group of students is from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly Polish and Philippino, and these students speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average.
- The alternative providers used by the school are Scarborough Pupil Referral Unit and the Yorkshire Coast College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which are minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since April 2013 the school has been supported by a National Support School, St Mary's College, Hull.
- The national support school provided an acting headteacher for the school from April 2013 until September 2013. The acting headteacher is now the acting deputy headteacher.
- The new headteacher took up post from 1 September 2013.
- A minority ethnic achievement hub, funded by the local authority, but managed by the school, is located on the site. This serves students with English as an additional language in the school and others in the locality. The hub was not part of the formal inspection process but the impact of its work in the school was evaluated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to raise standards in weaker subjects and accelerate students' progress, particularly for those middle and lower ability students, improve the quality of teaching to good by:
 - responding to the needs of students by providing tasks that match their ability and understanding
 - providing clear information when marking students' work that tells them what they need to do to improve and reach their targets
 - providing enough opportunity for students to respond to their written comments
 - asking questions that draw out high quality responses from students
 - raising expectations of the quality of students' writing and presentation particularly from students of middle and lower abilities
 - eradicating inconsistencies in teaching in those subjects where standards are below average.
- Improve leadership and management, especially of subject leaders, to raise students' achievement by ensuring:
 - subject leaders check the quality of the work of teachers with sufficient rigour
 - that all subject leaders and middle leaders use the full range of evidence available to them to accurately assess students' progress and use this information when setting priorities
 - better guidance and practices are embedded for teaching students with disabilities and special educational needs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From generally average starting points when entering the school, students make the progress expected of them but not enough do better than this.
- Middle ability and lower ability students do not make good progress. They make less progress than the most able students in both English and mathematics and in their other subjects. Work is not always set at a level that enables them to learn effectively.
- An analysis of students' work showed that, although there are some improvements in progress occurring in writing, the overall the presentation and quality of work for those middle and lower ability students requires improvement.
- Students do not make enough progress in subjects such as geography, physical education and art. By the end of Year 11 standards in these subjects are below average often because of inconsistent teaching that does not get the best out of students.
- Over the past three years the standards reached by students at the end of Year 11 have varied considerably. In 2012, there was a significant increase in the proportions obtaining five or more A*-C grades including English and mathematics at grade C with standards being well above average. In 2013, results dipped considerably. Standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 4. The school's rigorous tracking systems shows better achievement for those leaving school in 2014.
- Standards at the end of Year 11 are consistently above average in science, drama, music and religious education. Students make good progress in these subjects because of good and sometimes outstanding teaching that shows in-depth subject knowledge that is shared well with students.
- The very few students attending alternative provision achieve well as their courses are well matched to their abilities. Their attendance is good and they are well cared for by the school and the alternative providers.
- The most able students often make good progress by the end of key stages and achieve well in assessments. However, progress varies between classes and subjects and is sometimes not fast enough when work set is too easy.
- Early entry to GCSE mathematics is used well for a small group of students. Results from November 2013 examinations for the small group of Year 11 students showed that almost all of them attained grade C or above. This is a good indication that results are set to improve in mathematics in 2014.
- Year 7 'catch up' funding has been used to provide teaching assistant support for writing, reading and mathematics. The school information showed good progress for these students in English and mathematics since September 2013.
- By the end of Key Stage 4, the progress made by the small number of students eligible for the pupil premium is broadly similar to others in school. At the end of Key Stage 4 in 2013, free school meals students were two thirds of a GCSE grade behind others in English and almost a full grade behind in mathematics.
- The progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs has been slower than other students because leadership failed to focus well enough on their needs and support was insufficient. Since September 2013 this leadership has improved provision and although progress continues to require improvement, it has improved.
- Those students who speak English as an additional language receive good support through the minority ethnic achievement hub so they make good progress in extending their vocabulary so that they can participate in lessons along with other students.
- Reading is promoted well by the school. Students say they are reading more now and attainment is rising. A well resourced library with computerised facilities and additional support for those not making good progress is driving up standards in reading.
- The school's information, guidance and support results in almost all students leaving at the end

of Year 11 continuing in education, employment or training.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is inconsistent across the school. This inconsistency inhibits students from making at least good progress over time in their studies. In some subjects teachers do not get the best out of their students. Teaching therefore requires improvement.
- Planning is inconsistent and information about students' progress is not always used well to set work at the correct level for students. This leads to some work being too easy for some and too difficult for others and progress that requires improvement.
- The marking of students work is inconsistent across subjects. Some marking is irregular and some does not provide succinct, useful comments to help students to improve their work. Too often students are not given enough opportunity to improve their work and this inhibits their progress.
- Some teachers' expectations of the quality of students' writing and presentation are not high enough, particularly for the middle ability and lower ability students. Students are not given enough opportunity to write at length in subjects other than English. Too many teachers accept poor handwriting and presentation and this fails to raise the quality of students' work.
- Too often questions are not sharp enough and fail to encourage students to think more deeply to test their understanding of what is being taught. Questioning is too general and not targeted at the levels of ability within the class which means that some students do not understand what is being asked. When this is the case, the least able students and those with learning difficulties make slower progress.
- On the other hand, questions are used that are phrased in such a way that a dialogue is encouraged so that misunderstandings can be addressed quickly to ensure good progress for students. This skilful questioning was seen in a Year 10 religious education lesson when lower ability students were studying views on divorce and annulment. Their debate and extended answers, skilfully guided by the teacher, contributed to outstanding progress.
- Students' progress increases when it is made clear to them what they are to do. Consequently, they fully understand what is expected of them right from the start of the lesson and regular checks allow teachers to adjust tasks so that students always work hard. These attributes were seen in science in Year 11 where, through investigation, students extended their knowledge of how plants absorb and lose water.
- The school is considering the skills of teaching assistants and the skills of teachers to deploy them more effectively. This is beginning to show some improvements in the work of disabled students and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. They are keen to learn, follow the instructions of their teachers and enjoy sharing their ideas to support their learning. Occasionally, they do not focus well on their work and some lose interest when teaching is not good.
- Students are very proud of their school and enjoy telling visitors about the good things they do in school. Inspectors noticed that students smile a lot and are very welcoming to visitors. Students wear their uniform with pride.
- Around the school students treat each other with great respect and move sensibly and safely at all times. Students say behaviour has improved since the new headteacher started. They feel 'he has made a huge difference' after an unsettling period of leadership. Students know what is expected of them and behave accordingly.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.

- All of the students spoken to by inspectors said they felt safe in school. The school provides good information through its curriculum and assemblies on how to stay safe. In particular, students know how to stay safe when using the internet and when cycling to school.
- Arrangements to support vulnerable students are good with good links to outside agencies to support these students.
- The vast majority of those parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, said their children were safe and well looked after.
- Students are clear about what constitutes bullying and they say bullying is rare. This was confirmed by inspectors through checking the school's behaviour records. Students are confident that when bullying occurs it is dealt with very effectively by the school.
- Students' self-esteem is high because relationships are good and they know they can talk about any concerns they might have. Students enjoy coming to school and as a result attendance is above average. It was above average on both days of the inspection; there were few students late for school.
- Fixed term exclusions have reduced steadily and are few in number. This is because of the care with which staff resolve issues without recourse to exclusion.
- Parents and staff share the same, positive views about students' behaviour and safety.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, an unsettling period of leadership in the school has led to inconsistent progress for students and teaching that requires improvement.
- Subject leaders have not been checking the work of staff with sufficient rigour and accuracy. As a consequence, they have been too positive about the quality of teaching in their departments and their plans for improvement are unclear about how their actions will improve students' achievement. As a result, teaching is not yet consistently good.
- The coordination of the work of disabled students and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Although provision has improved and progress is increasing staff do not receive enough guidance on how to support these students.
- The new headteacher has quickly gained an accurate view of how well the school is doing and the steps needed to improve it. He has checked teaching and is tackling weak teaching robustly. He has made some key appointments and staffing changes at middle leadership level to drive forward his ambitions for the students. For example, the change in leadership for special educational needs is beginning to improve the progress for vulnerable students. He is reorganising subject leadership within the school to resolve weaknesses in some subjects where standards and teaching are not rising rapidly enough.
- Parents, students and staff show a strong commitment to his vision and support change.
- A thorough system for checking students' progress and tracking their achievement has been introduced by the national support school. Middle leaders are beginning to use the system to check students' progress but this is not yet fully effective in setting priorities.
- Performance management for teachers is now robust and identifies the skills they need to improve. The school is making use of its best teachers to strengthen the practice of others in the school. This is beginning to improve the quality of teaching.
- Teaching assistants and other adults on the school staff have their training needs identified by the headteacher and appropriate activities are planned to improve their skills. This is a good example of how senior leaders promote equality of opportunity.
- The curriculum offers a good range of academic courses and supplements these with good alternative provision for a few students. There is a wide range of extra activities which are attended in high numbers by students including girls' football and many cultural and artistic experiences.
- Music makes an exceptional contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development. The well attended male voice choir, the many other choirs and the jazz band create a love and enjoyment for music amongst the students.

- The local authority is supporting the school well after a difficult time with leadership. They, and the diocese, brokered the work of the national support school and this is showing signs of improvement in teaching. The local authority has provided good support for the development of governance. Governors are now checking the work of the school much more rigorously.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Before April 2013, governors' challenge was not effective enough. Since then, most of the governors have changed. The new governing body is enthusiastic and committed to improving the school. Their fortnightly school improvement group meetings and the improved quality of reporting by leaders gives them a good understanding of the work of the school. Links with leaders provide a good insight into the quality of teaching and progress across the school. Improved checking on student's progress means governors now have a better understanding of the progress being made by students.
- Governors now challenge the headteacher very effectively and support him in moving the school forward. They have approved the use of pupil premium funding and are clear about its impact on the progress of students eligible for this support. They are clear about the arrangement for performance management and use it well to determine teachers' pay. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

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	121714
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	429566

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	502
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dianne Swiers
Headteacher	Mark Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2012
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