

Hipperholme and Lightcliffe High School

Stoney Lane, Lightcliffe, Halifax, HX3 8TL

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- Students make inadequate progress in English, mathematics, science and geography by the end of Key Stage 4. Boys, those supported by pupil premium funding and the most able students are underachieving particularly in these subjects.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Teachers expectations are low as a result students underachieve.
- Weak teaching leads to students lacking interest in their work with some misbehaving.
- Additional government funding to support students eligible for the pupil premium has not been used effectively. These students make slow progress, are absent too often and are excluded from school too frequently.
- Attendance is also consistently low for those students with special educational needs. Too many students are late for the start of the school day. Consequently, behaviour and safety are inadequate
- Senior and middle leaders and governors have been slow to tackle weak teaching and low attendance to ensure students achieve well enough. As a consequence the school's effectiveness has declined since the school became an academy.
- The effectiveness of the sixth form requires improvement. The quality of teaching is variable between subjects and this leads to inconsistent progress for students.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths and how to tackle the school's weaknesses.
- Students taking vocational courses make good progress, with girls achieving particularly well.
- The sixth-form students make a good contribution to the life of the school. They are good role models for others and support the school's reading programme particularly well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons taught by 47 teachers. Five observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to three groups of students about their learning in lessons and their safety in the school. Inspectors also listened to some students reading.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. Meetings were held with school staff, including middle and senior leaders. Additional meetings were held with a representative of the local authority and an external educational consultant used by the school.
- Inspectors also looked at the school’s review of its own performance, its development plan, school policies and the minutes of the governors’ 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 124 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). There were 69 questionnaires completed by staff which were analysed by inspectors.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents and took into account the few letters sent to them by parents.

Inspection team

James McGrath, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector
Peter Eeva	Additional Inspector
Fiona McNally	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), 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

- This school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported by 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 and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most students are White British. There are very few students whose first language is believed not to be English.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The alternative provider of education used by the school is The Maltings College, Halifax, where students study vocational courses.
- Hipperholme and Lightcliffe High School converted to become an academy in July 2011. When its predecessor school, Hipperholme and Lightcliffe High School and Sports College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school enters students early for GCSE mathematics, English and science.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team in recent times.
- The new headteacher took up post in September 2013 and a new deputy headteacher took up post in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the sixth form, so that it is at least consistently good and enables all students to achieve well, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use accurate performance information to plan and set work that matches the needs and abilities of students more closely, especially those with special educational needs
 - have high expectations of what all students can achieve, especially boys, those supported by the pupil premium funding and the most able students
 - mark students' books regularly in order to provide them with the advice they need to improve their work and learning and that they require their students to act on this advice
 - focus on helping students to practise and improve their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects that they study.
- Swiftly improve students' behaviour and safety, including their attendance, by developing effective practices to:
 - reduce the numbers of students who are regularly absent from school, particularly those supported by pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs
 - reduce the number of students who are late for school especially those in Key Stage 4

- ensure improving poor behaviour is given the highest priority.
- Rapidly improve the impact of leaders and managers, including governance, by ensuring:
 - there is a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and students' achievement
 - inadequate teaching is eradicated and that which requires improvement is improved
 - that governors hold leaders and managers rigorously to account for students' achievement particularly in English, mathematics, science and geography and for their behaviour and safety across the school
 - pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement, behaviour and attendance of those students supported by the funding.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- For the past two years, students leaving the school at the end of Key Stage 4 have, given their starting points on entry to the school, made inadequate progress in English, mathematics, science and geography.
- The work set for the most able students continues to lack challenge and this holds back their achievement. As a result too few students reach the highest GCSE grades in many subjects and hence they underachieve.
- For the past two years the proportion of students gaining five or more A*- to C grades, including English and mathematics, has been below average and shown little sign of improving.
- The gaps in progress and attainment between those students supported by the pupil premium and others have widened. As a result, in 2013, those students known to be eligible for free school meals were one-and-a-half GCSE grades behind others in mathematics and almost a grade behind others in English. Weak teaching and poor attendance and behaviour have adversely affected attainment and progress for these students. Consequently, the school has much to do to ensure its commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
- Early entry to GCSE courses in the past has not served students well in driving up standards in English, mathematics and science. Recently, the school has been more selective and is checking more closely on how it is benefiting students. The large majority of those students taking GCSE English early this academic year, made the progress expected of them.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs made better progress than others in 2012 but their progress by the end of Key Stage 4 dipped in 2013 and overall was also inadequate. School information indicates that progress currently is weak in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 for these students as their needs are not planned for as meticulously as they should be.
- Although the school's most recent set of assessment data is showing improvement in students' achievement in Key Stage 4, the reliability and accuracy of the data has yet to be fully tested. Information provided by the school, however, indicates variable progress across subjects at Key Stage 3.
- Vocational courses such as hospitality and catering, equivalent to GCSE and mostly studied in off-site provision, help those students on these courses to achieve well. Girls excel in these courses due to good teaching and being assiduous in their studies. They also achieve particularly well in GCSE design technology (food).
- Students enjoy sport and do well in GCSE physical education and in sports studies.
- The school is promoting reading well and providing additional time and support for younger students to improve their reading. Sixth-form students make a good contribution by mentoring and encouraging students to read. However, the additional weekly lesson for younger students in reading is not always used well by all teachers and so improvements in students' reading are variable.
- Year 7 catch-up funding, (government funds for those entering secondary school with below-average standards in English and mathematics), is providing extra support for the development of English and mathematics during the school day and after school. Effective progress is being hindered as some students are absent too often from these sessions.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. Although overall progress improved in 2013 it has not been strong enough to ensure that students do well in all of their courses and in all of their subjects.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Inadequate teaching over time in too many subjects has led to students underachieving. In particular, boys, the most able students and those supported by the pupil premium funding have

also consistently underachieved due to the weak teaching they receive.

- An analysis of students' work, the school's assessment of students' progress and observations of teaching show that teaching has too little impact on learning over time. This overall weak quality of teaching leaves too many students making slow progress and underachieving.
- Planned work is generally too easy for the most able, providing too little challenge. Generally, the same task is set for the whole class rather than taking into account individual students' previous knowledge and understanding. Work is not demanding enough, or adjusted sufficiently well to ensure that students of all levels of ability make good progress. In these circumstances boys, in particular, lose concentration and their behaviour and progress deteriorates as a result.
- The marking of students' work is very inconsistent within and across subjects. Marking generally does not provide clear comments to help students to improve their work. Even when marking provides useful guidance students are not given time to improve their work and, as a result, their progress is inhibited.
- Expectations are low; for example, an analysis of students' work in science showed there is insufficient challenge for students. Also, boys and those supported by the pupil premium funding are often allowed to have work that is incomplete and presented badly. This leads to them making exceptionally slow progress.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are not reinforced and developed across the school. Students' spelling, punctuation and grammar are left unchecked and there are too few opportunities for students to apply their mathematical skills effectively in subjects other than mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are not always managed effectively to support the learning of those students with special educational needs and, as a result, students are not making the progress expected of them.
- In the sixth form the quality of teaching requires improvement. Students are set challenging and interesting tasks which motivate them well. However, questioning is not consistently good enough to deepen students' understanding sufficiently well. This leads to students' achievements being too variable across subjects, particularly in Year 12 academic courses.
- When close attention is given to the differing needs of students and their misunderstandings are addressed quickly, the learning of these students moves on at a brisk pace. Some teachers typically set high expectations and students link their learning to their own experiences and are very interested in the work. For example, students in a Year 9 physical education lesson were studying how the heart and blood vessels operate during exercise; they were engrossed in their learning and were provided with just the right amount of time to give excellent answers that helped everyone learn very well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of students is inadequate.
- Overall attendance, albeit slightly improved this year, remains below average. This is because of the overall poor attendance of those students supported by the pupil premium funding and those students with special educational needs.
- Too many students are late for the start of the school day, particularly those in Years 10 and 11, and this hinders their learning. They do not have enough urgency to get to school on time to begin their learning promptly.
- The school's procedures and systems for monitoring punctuality are not robust enough. This limits the school's action to improve punctuality.
- When teaching engages students they behave well and follow the instructions of their teachers with some making a good contribution to their learning. In lessons that are uninteresting, or not taught by the regular teacher, the behaviour of a minority of students can be disruptive. Students' attitudes to learning are too variable across the school.
- During the inspection, students generally behaved well around the school and they were calm and well-ordered. Clearly, there are many students who are supportive of the school and its rules for behaviour. However, there is a small minority who are not. The number of students

excluded for poor behaviour is reducing but the number remains above average, particularly for those supported by the pupil premium funding. Generally, students are proud of their school and wear their uniform with pride.

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement. The actions taken by the school is improving attendance but not rapidly enough. Still, more than average numbers of students are regularly absent from school.
- Those students spoken to by inspectors said they felt safe and that they were well taught about how to keep safe and what to do about internet safety. Most parents responded to say that their children are safe at school.
- Students know the various forms of bullying and said that although it occurs occasionally they are confident that it is dealt with appropriately. The large majority of parents responding to the online questionnaire (Parent View) felt bullying was dealt with effectively. Students in the sixth form believe they are well cared for and guided appropriately towards higher education, employment and training. Almost all students find employment or continue in education or training when they leave school.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Over time, leaders, managers and governors have been ineffective in ensuring that the quality of teaching is good enough to prevent many students underachieving. Actions have not improved attendance rapidly enough, especially for those vulnerable students who are falling behind in their learning.
- The effectiveness of subject leaders is too variable. The checking and evaluation of the quality of teaching is not robust enough and has resulted in students' underachieving. Not enough consideration has been given by subject and senior leaders to students' progress and the work in their books for example, to obtain an accurate view of the impact of teaching over time. All of this indicates the leadership's limited capacity for improvement.
- The school is still heavily dependent on external support to drive forward its plan for improvement. Very recently, with the support of external consultants and headteachers of outstanding schools, senior leaders have been able to carry out a rigorous self-evaluation to accurately determine the school's effectiveness. This has given senior leaders a clear idea of the scale of improvement needed.
- The pupil premium funding has not been used effectively to secure improvements needed in achievement and attendance for those students eligible to receive support.
- The new headteacher has a strong desire to rapidly improve the effectiveness of the school. In her quest for improvement, she has streamlined and restructured the leadership team and appointed new middle leaders. She has focused their efforts on checking the progress each student is making and providing additional support to help students do better. It is too early for the impact of these actions on improving student achievement, the quality of teaching and student behaviour to be seen. Responses to the staff survey show overwhelming support for the new leadership and a determination to improve education for all students.
- A much more rigorous system for checking students' progress has recently been introduced by the new deputy headteacher. However, it is not understood well enough by leaders to provide the specific, targeted support for those students with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium funding.
- The systems for managing the performance of teachers are now more rigorous. Teachers are being held to account more for students' achievement. A training programme for improving the quality of teaching has been put in place and has been well received by staff. However, its impact has yet to be seen in improved student achievement. Over time, the leadership and management of teaching and learning has been inadequate.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- Leadership in the sixth form requires improvement as although achievement improved last year

it is not yet good and the quality of teaching is variable.

- The curriculum is ineffective in driving up achievement and providing a broad range of opportunities for students to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy
- The promotion of spiritual and cultural development is appropriate as seen in the high-quality art work displayed around the school, sporting opportunities and students' understanding of cultural diversity and other faiths.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Over time, governors have not effectively challenged senior leaders about key weaknesses such as the quality of teaching, achievement and behaviour. They have failed to tackle underperformance effectively, particularly for students supported by the pupil premium funding and those with special educational needs.
 - The new governing body, established in November 2013, is now receiving more detailed information about the school and students' progress and is in a better position to hold leaders and managers to account for their actions. Governors are well aware of the link between performance management and pay progression and support the headteacher in taking action when teachers are underperforming. Governors are beginning to hold middle leaders to account for students' achievement. They are checking the finances of the school carefully to eradicate a deficit. Governors are ambitious for the school and its students.
 - 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	137036
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	445976

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,465
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Forrester
Headteacher	Helen Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	15 February 2011
Telephone number	01422 201028
Fax number	01422 204615
Email address	admin@hlhs.co.uk

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