

# Easingwold School

York Road, Easingwold, York, North Yorkshire, YO61 3EF

**Inspection dates** 8–9 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		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 different starting points, not enough students make the good progress required for them to achieve as well as they should, especially the most able.
- The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students and others in the school has widened.
- Teaching is still too variable to ensure that all students make at least good progress.
- Sometimes the work students are given is too easy for some and too hard for others. When this happens, they do not learn as quickly as they should.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Students do not all make good use of the feedback they are given.
- Homework is not set consistently and, where it is set, it does not always help students to develop and practise their skills.
- Not all students are keen to learn. They lose interest when tasks do not gain their full attention.
- Not all middle leaders have the skills to check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility so that they can fully contribute to driving school improvement.
- Goals in the plan for future improvement are not prioritised well enough. Criteria and responsibility for measuring success in achieving these goals are not clear.
- Strategies to improve students' literacy skills are not fully established across all subjects.
- The sixth form requires improvement because teaching is too variable and in some subjects students do not achieve as well as they should.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders have established systems and procedures that are now starting to secure improvements in teaching and learning.
- Governors' skills have improved and they are now better able to ask searching questions about the school's performance.
- Students who attend training away from the school achieve well.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are well supported and do well.
- Attendance is good and improving.
- The school's work to ensure students are safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe. Students show respect and tolerance for others.
- A high proportion of Year 13 students go on to further and higher education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons and parts of lessons. Feedback was offered and taken up by a majority of the teachers observed. Teaching observations covered all year groups available on the timetable during the two days and across a majority of the subjects on offer.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, two governors, members of the leadership team, teachers with responsibilities for developing the quality of teaching and the curriculum and a group of middle leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the 167 responses to the questionnaire in Parent View on-line before and during the inspection and 53 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to many students in lessons and at breaks and during lunchtimes. They also listened to students reading and spoke formally to four groups of students.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including the school's improvement plans, the school's own evaluation of its work, data for tracking students' progress, students' work, documents and systems related to safeguarding, quality of teaching and its impact. They also looked at reports and records from some of the reviews undertaken by some of the external partners of the school, including 'Challenge Partners' and the local authority.

## Inspection team

Nigel Drew, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Graeme Clarke	Additional Inspector
James McGrath	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Easingwold School is an average-sized secondary school. The number of students attending has declined since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is well below the national average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and children in local authority care.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school uses off-site alternative provision for a small number of students at Askham Bryan College.
- The school has Enhanced Mainstream School Status and provides specialist support and guidance, when required, to other schools in the local area on specific learning difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the impact of leadership at all levels by:
  - ensuring that all middle leaders have the skills to monitor teachers' performance in their subjects and hold them to account, especially in relation to how much students learn and make progress
  - ensuring that milestones and success criteria in school improvement plans are prioritised effectively and that responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating them are clearly identified
  - improving the ways in which information about student progress is collected and analysed so that it gives a clear picture of how leaders and teachers can bring about faster rates of progress for students.
- Accelerate students' progress in all subjects and year groups and in the sixth form by:
  - ensuring that work is hard enough for all students, especially the most able
  - consistently providing students with challenging activities that engage and stimulate their interest and imagination
  - ensuring there is a consistent and effective approach to improving students' literacy and communication skills across all subjects
  - developing positive attitudes to learning in all students through sharing the good practice evident in some lessons which trains students well in how to work effectively in whatever ways they are organised for their learning.
- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better and so raise students' achievement by:
  - making sure that marking and feedback to students is consistently focused on how they can make progress in their learning and that students make good use of this information
  - consistently setting homework that encourages students to develop and practise their skills.
- 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.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- The headteacher has high aspirations for the school and with senior leaders has established systems and procedures which are now beginning to improve the quality of teaching and students' progress. However, across the school, teaching is still too variable and students' achievement is not yet as good as it should be.
- With support from external partners, the headteacher and senior leaders have undertaken some well-considered work on developing school improvement planning and integrating this with their evaluation of the school. This is helping to generate more targeted and effective action-planning. Some of the targets and actions could be better prioritised, however, with more clearly staged milestones and specific identification of responsibilities for the improvements to drive this process more rigorously.
- The system to check on the quality of teaching has recently been improved and is now more helpful to the school. Consequently, senior leaders have a better and growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning across year groups and subjects. However, the information gained from this process is yet to be analysed and used fully to secure consistently good teaching in all subjects.
- Not all middle leaders have the skills to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. As a result they are not yet able to fully contribute to driving school improvement. Where middle leaders are more skilled, they are starting to secure better teaching in their subjects. School records and inspection evidence confirm that there are some examples of improving practice which is focusing, in particular, on making sure that students are given work that gets the best out of them.
- The system to collect assessment information and check on the progress that students make has been further developed recently. However, senior and middle leaders do not collect and analyse this information consistently and well enough so that it gives a clear picture of how leaders and teachers can bring about faster rates of progress for all students.
- Systems to manage the performance of staff have been revised and developed over the last eighteen months and these now link directly to the progression of staff through the pay scales. There is now a consistent approach to setting teachers' targets which relate to whole-school priorities and the progress that students make. However, some of these targets in relation to improving student progress are not yet sufficiently challenging to bring improvement about quickly enough.
- The curriculum fulfils the requirements of national frameworks. A varied range of additional activities helps contribute to students' overall personal development and preparation for their life in modern Britain. For example, in a Year 7 'Ideas' lesson, students were exploring the issue of responsibility and were able to reach some quite sophisticated conclusions through discussion, debate and role-play.
- The curriculum and other activities also offer wider cultural and social opportunities for students which they value and which contribute effectively to their broader learning and development. The curriculum needs to be planned and organised in all subjects to show where students' literacy and communication skills will be developed.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance. They have engaged with the families of any persistent absentees and attendance has improved. Communication with providers of alternative education off-site is regular and school knows if students are attending and how well they are doing in those settings.
- Leaders ensure that students are given appropriate advice and guidance to make choices about their courses at GCSE level, on into the sixth form and beyond. Students spoke appreciatively of this advice and the support they have been given when needing to make these decisions.
- The school meets the statutory responsibilities for safeguarding.
- The local authority works with the school and has provided some wide-ranging support in the last two years. In a recent review of the school's work they indicated some relevant and focused areas for improvement.
- The breakdown of spending of the pupil premium funding is recorded and some analysis of it has been undertaken. However, leaders do not evaluate well enough the impact of how this additional funding is spent.
- The governance of the school:
  - The work and impact of the governing body is much better organised and responsibilities much more clearly identified than at the previous inspection. Governors now have a more accurate picture of the quality of teaching. Since the previous inspection they have worked closely with the headteacher to tackle underperformance in teaching. There has been an audit of governors' skills and an appropriate placing of individual governors on particular sub-committees where those skills can help have the most impact on the school's work. They are now more closely involved in performance management

processes and work from the key principle that salaries and promotion should reflect performance at all levels.

- Governors have received training to help them to understand performance data more clearly. However, the presentation of data by leaders lacks consistency and comprehensive evaluation which means that they do not always have the full view and implications of how well the school and its students are doing.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

**requires improvement**

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- When teachers' expectations of students are not high enough and work is undemanding, students' attitudes to learning vary and there are too many instances when they do not display any real keenness to succeed, losing motivation and interest in their learning.
- Although most students are prepared for lessons and have the necessary equipment with them, they do not always show signs of being organised and proactive in handling resources and equipment in ways which support their learning.
- Some teachers help students to learn to become more independent and take charge of how they organise themselves without constant direction. In these instances, students get more done and make more progress. Sharing this good practice in school would be a valuable development.
- Sometimes students are able to discuss their work and learning in different ways. Students who spoke to the inspectors said that they appreciated this. However, a significant proportion of students commented that there are still too many occasions when they do not really have much opportunity to contribute in some lessons.
- Students behave well in lessons and around school, treating each other with respect and showing courtesy to adults and visitors. Students are proud of their school and their uniform. They take care of communal areas and the school grounds are generally free from graffiti and litter.
- The number of students who have been excluded is very low. The school has introduced an in-school resource for exclusion from lessons and this is working effectively. Students say that it is an effective deterrent and, when necessary, this type of 'time-out' resource along with other strategies, is in their opinion, helping to reduce any low-level disruption in lessons.
- Students who attend alternative provision learn and behave well. There is regular information sharing between school and the providers and students are safe and secure in these settings.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Inspectors talked with many different groups of students during the inspection and they say that they are happy and feel safe in school. This view was endorsed fully by parents who responded to the Parent View on-line questionnaire.
- In formal discussions, inspectors found that students understand the different forms that bullying can take, including homophobic and cyber-bullying, and know how to keep themselves safe from these. Students say that bullying is rare and if it does occur it is dealt with effectively. They know the ways in which they can report bullying and feel confident in these approaches. Evidence from Parent View also showed few concerns about bullying.
- The school has had a strong drive to improve attendance and, as a result, the vast majority of students, including those in the sixth form, attend school regularly. Attendance is above the national average because of a range of successful strategies. The school works hard with the families of any students who are persistently absent. As a result, persistent absence from the school has reduced rapidly and is now well below the national average for secondary schools.

## The quality of teaching

**requires improvement**

- While teaching is improving, it is still too variable across the year groups, including the sixth form, to ensure that students make consistently good progress from their starting points. Work in students' books and observations of teaching indicate that students are not always provided with work that is at the right level. Consequently, sometimes work is either too easy or too hard and as a result students do not always

learn quickly enough.

- Teachers are starting to make better use of the information that they have about how well students are doing to help students make faster progress. However, this is not consistent across all subjects and year groups.
- Sometimes teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are not high enough. Work is not always interesting and does not secure students' full attention. In these instances concentration levels slip and students are less keen to work. Consequently their learning slows.
- Teaching assistants work well with students and they make an impact on students' learning and progress. They understand students' learning needs and demonstrate the skills needed to support them well.
- On too many occasions, the most able students have to wait before they are given more challenging tasks and, in some instances, they are not provided with more demanding work at all. This means that their learning is not as quick as it should be, attitudes to their work become much less positive and they lose the motivation to try any harder.
- A minority of students struggle to complete tasks because teachers have not taken sufficient account of their literacy levels. As a result, expectations of what students can achieve in literacy are not always appropriate and opportunities for extended literacy skills are not consistently promoted in all subjects.
- Although most students are effectively supported to develop their reading skills, there is not a consistent understanding in all subjects about how teachers best help lower ability students with their reading. Some teachers also build in opportunities for students to apply appropriate mathematical understanding but in some subjects opportunities to do this are missed.
- Students learn well when teachers have high expectations of all groups, work is provided at the right level of challenge for the range of abilities and support is targeted at students' needs. Searching questions are asked to get students thinking and to see how much they have understood, and teachers use this information to refine learning further. For example, in a Year 8 physical education lesson, students were invited to explore tactical play and rule-breaking. Clear methods for supporting their analysis, modelled by the teacher, helped them to feed back and coach each other exceptionally well and they made very good progress.
- Some teachers' marking clearly shows students how to improve their work and students are given time to respond to comments and learn from their mistakes. However, while most books are marked regularly, the quality of feedback given to students about their work is inconsistent. Students do not always get the opportunity to respond to the advice or to improve their work.
- Homework is not set often enough to help students develop and practise their skills. Parents and students also comment that homework could be more regularly set overall and more consistently set between subjects.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection achievement has improved. However, students' progress between subjects and year groups, including in the sixth form is still too variable because the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good.
- From their starting points students make the progress expected of them, but not enough do better than this over time so that they achieve as well as they could.
- Nevertheless, in 2014, the proportion of students who made better than expected progress increased and, by the end of Year 11, more students achieved the higher grades, although there was variation between subjects. Inspection evidence and school data show that despite being entered early in Year 10, students consistently do better in English literature because teaching is stronger in this subject.
- Although more students reached the higher levels in 2014, the most able students do not always reach their full potential. This is because they are not always given work that is demanding enough and so their progress is not as fast as it should be.
- However, there is some practice in the school which brings out the best in this group of students. In a Year 10 English lesson, for example, the most able students were invited to use the whiteboard to present information in a way which communicated most effectively with the rest of the class. They had opportunities to be creative and free-thinking whilst working to clear time demands. This provided the most able students with greater challenge and opportunity to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- Generally, students' reading skills are appropriately supported and developed, with some above-average attainment in GCSE English literature, for instance, but there are not enough opportunities to improve their extended writing skills by practising them in different subjects. Literacy has been identified as a point for action by school leaders and this aspect of the school's work to improve the necessary skills for

teachers in all subjects to help develop core writing skills, in particular, for all students needs to be a priority.

- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged students and others are widening. In 2013, on average, disadvantaged students achieved around one GCSE grade lower than other students in the school in English and one and a half grades lower in mathematics. School data indicate that these gaps widened further in 2014, particularly in mathematics to two grades lower than their peers were achieving in school. When the attainment of disadvantaged students in the school is compared to other students across the country, these gaps are slightly smaller at about one grade in English and one and a half grades in mathematics. The ineffective use of the additional funding available means that the progress made by disadvantaged students is not good enough.
- Help and support for disabled students and those with special educational needs has improved in recent years. The approach to identifying needs and communicating advice about ways of securing good learning for this group of students has been improved and their levels of attainment both in the recent Year 11 group and of a majority of the group in school currently exceed expected national levels.
- The small number of students who attend off-site, alternative provision are well looked after and, as a result of the support they receive and appropriate courses for them, they make good progress.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively by the school to support some one-to-one activities with targeted reading improvement activities and a coaching programme with sixth form students helping those students who come in to the school with significantly reduced reading ages. The impact of the programmes in 2013-14 showed that all these students made gains in their reading and more than 60% of the group made gains of between one and two years.

### The sixth form provision

### requires improvement

- Achievement is not yet good in the sixth form because from their varied starting points, students make expected progress but too few do better than this. The quality of teaching is variable between subjects and year groups and so results at AS and A level vary, with a significant downturn in AS level outcomes across the board in 2014. There is also an ongoing group of subjects which perform less well than the majority and this has an impact over time on the achievement and progression of some students.
- Disabled students, those with special educational needs and disadvantaged students make similar progress to others in the sixth form.
- The most able students generally do well in the subjects they study because they are mostly given work that 'stretches' them so that they reach their potential and more. In 2014, the most able did well and achieved a very good and increased proportion of grades in the school at A-A\* at A level.
- Some teaching maintains clear use of analysing progress data and provides well targeted feedback, which then involves a dialogue with students about what they can do to improve their work. Responses are well analysed with students, but this is not consistent practice in all subjects. Teaching was also seen which helped to develop an increasingly effective and sophisticated set of skills for communicating their understanding and ideas to others. Some teaching, however, left students little opportunity to contribute and test out ideas and this meant that their written responses were consequently less well developed.
- Some students are effectively encouraged and supported to enhance their organisation, study and research skills and become more able to make decisions about the approaches they need to take in their learning and study. However, this does not happen in all subjects and some students can remain too dependent and too reliant upon direction from their teachers.
- Sixth form students make a good contribution to school life and there are clear expectations of them in this regard. They help coach and mentor students in the main school, helping with reading development, for instance, and supporting some of the work with students identified with special educational needs. They show positive and mature attitudes towards each other and adults and behave responsibly and with respect.
- The headteacher and sixth form leaders have undertaken a recent review of sixth form provision and are now focusing upon offering a curriculum made up of mainly academic subjects. However, it is too early to assess the impact of these changes fully on students' achievement.
- The prior attainment of students entering the sixth form is lower than in all sixth form contexts nationally. As a result, the proportion of students going on from Year 12 to Year 13 is lower than that in other sixth form contexts. The intake to the sixth form is from across this wide ability range and there is subsequent success for those who stay on to Year 13 and A level in the number of students who go on to further and higher education generally and, specifically, to Russell Group universities.

## 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>	121664
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449088

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,065
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	170
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R. Parr
<b>Headteacher</b>	Phil Benaiges
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01347 821451
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