

Winifred Holtby Academy

Midmere Avenue, Bransholme, Hull, HU7 4PW

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students make expected progress throughout the school, rather than good progress. This shows improvement on the slower progress students have made in the last two years, particularly in English and mathematics, with further work to be done to ensure students achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to support students' good progress throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Information about the achievement of students of all abilities is not consistently well used to set work that provides good challenge for them.
- Work for the most able students does not enable them to develop the skills they need to achieve their potential.
- Not enough students have the grammatical, punctuation and spelling skills to ensure they achieve well. Teaching does not always give enough importance to key words used in each subject so students use and spell them accurately.
- Middle leaders, who are developing their roles quickly, nevertheless do not have sufficient impact on enhancing the quality of teaching, students' achievement, work and learning of all groups of students in their areas.
- While the behaviour of the older students in lessons and their attitudes to learning are almost invariably good, that of a minority of younger students is immature and slows their learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is being led strongly by the Principal who has very high expectations of the staff and students. He is driving improvements quickly in all aspects of the school's work, including in teaching, achievement and the curriculum.
- The governing body is developing a greater knowledge of the school's performance and is increasingly challenging its work more effectively.
- The students like their school and say it is improving in every way.
- Students feel safe and secure in the caring environment.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a wide range of teaching and learning, including joint observations with either the Principal or with individual members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors talked with students during lessons and at break and lunch times. They met formally with four groups of students to find out their views about the quality of education they receive at the school.
- The inspectors also held meetings with senior, faculty and subject leaders, heads of house and members of the governing body. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner.
- The inspectors looked at a variety of documentation including information about the achievement of all groups of students in the school. They checked the school's development plan, scrutinised students' work, checked records of their attendance and behaviour and reviewed policies to help keep them safe.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took into account the 34 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the phone calls from parents and the 25 responses given in the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sheila Kaye	Additional Inspector
David Pridding	Additional Inspector
Georgiana Sale	Additional Inspector
Frank Cain	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than others of its type.
- Winifred Holtby School became an academy on 6 May 2013. When its predecessor school, Winifred Holtby School Technology College was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.
- Most students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is well-above average and increasing. The pupil premium funding is additional government funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- A few students learn off-site at St Patrick's School, Ashwell Pupil Referral Unit and Rise Academy because they are at risk of exclusion.
- The Principal took up his post in September 2014.
- The school works in partnership with four other schools as part of the Bransholme and District Umbrella Trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is never less than consistently good by ensuring that the work for students of all abilities, especially the most able, is based on the data the school has about them, challenges them well and enables them all to achieve their potential.
- Raise students' literacy skills throughout the school by ensuring that:
 - the school has a clear policy and structure for teaching literacy
 - teaching focuses on strengthening students' grammar and punctuation skills
 - marking better helps students to improve their literacy skills
 - students know and use vocabulary that is important in individual subjects
 - spelling skills are taught accurately.
- Ensure that all students behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning through teachers' prompt and consistent use of the behaviour policy and staff's high expectations of students' attitudes.
- Extend the contribution and impact of middle leaders in promoting the quality of students' work and their progress within their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management needs to improve because teaching is too variable to promote students' good progress. Middle leaders, while developing their roles do not have responsibility for students' work and progress in their areas, in order to strengthen the leadership of the school.
- The Principal has accurately identified the school's most pressing needs and has introduced good systems to drive it forward securely. He is supported by the staff, who are responding to the clear direction he provides and his higher expectations. The Principal has made hard decisions about staffing to promote quicker improvements.
- Under his leadership, there is a much greater focus on students' progress throughout the school, backed by detailed data, including for those educated off-site. Senior leaders probe into the reasons why students do not learn as well as they could, and there are higher expectations by leaders of their achievement.
- The leadership of teaching is becoming more effective because senior leaders have an accurate picture of its strengths and needs and is addressing weaknesses. Teachers' performance targets are now a powerful tool in improving teaching and teachers are not awarded pay rises unless they have met all of their targets.
- Leaders work with determination and energy to develop their roles in driving the academic and personal development of the students. However, many middle leaders are new to their roles and despite developing several aspects of their role effectively they currently do not have sufficient impact on improving students' overall achievement.
- Leaders distribute pupil premium funding carefully, from a well-planned budget that ensures that disadvantaged students have the academic, social and emotional help that they need. Disadvantaged students in Year 11 have made slower progress over time because they have not always had the quality of support they need. The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other groups is narrowing quickly from Year 7 to Year 9 because of good initiatives and careful monitoring of progress.
- Similarly, disabled students and those with special educational needs lower down the school make better progress than those in Year 11. Leaders know it remains too slow in Year 11 and have put in extra support to help them to make quicker gains in their learning.
- The curriculum has been over-hauled to ensure it is balanced and broad and matches students' needs. Students study fewer courses for longer periods of time to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to achieve as well as they can. Students also benefit from a programme throughout the school that promotes citizenship and incorporates British values of respect for each other and the law. In addition, their understanding of different cultures, especially those predominant in modern Britain, are promoted well. The school fosters good relationships between students and tackles discrimination robustly.
- Students at risk of exclusion learn on other sites, but the school has full records of their progress, achievement and behaviour and liaises with the providers to check their progress and well-being and adapt provision where needed.
- The curriculum does not provide equal opportunities for all students because work is too easy for some and too hard for others.
- Students have good careers advice through Year 8 to Year 11, ranging from making informed decisions about option choices and careers to developing skills in applying for jobs, such as interview skills. They are full of praise for the wide choice of after-school clubs, which have become twice as popular this year because of the good range.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developing well, through the curriculum, assemblies and daily activities.
- Attendance and behaviour have improved because the heads of houses check on these regularly. As with most aspects of the school's work, there is more to do to ensure they are at least good.
- The school meets the statutory requirements for safeguarding. The staff have good procedures to help ensure students are safe, including those who learn at other sites.
- The school's improvement adviser provides helpful guidance to the headteacher in his efforts to improve the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are developing a deeper understanding of the school's performance and what needs to improve. This has been helped by the training they have had in aspects such as interpreting data and safeguarding, which they can discuss confidently.
 - Governing body meeting minutes show that the governors check and analyse how well the students are

learning, behaving and developing as young citizens.

- Governors monitor the use and impact of pupil premium funding, including where the gap is narrowing between the performance of disadvantaged students and that of the other students.
- Each governor has responsibility for a specific aspect of the school's work, based on their individual skills, that has helped the governing body to better challenge the school's performance.
- The governors know that the quality of teaching is inconsistent and value performance management as the way to bring about improvements in teaching quickly. They do not agree to pay rises unless teachers meet all of their three individual targets. They ensure that the school supports staff who do not reach their targets, to help them achieve their goals.
- The governors oversee the budget carefully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement
- In some lessons, a small minority of younger students do not concentrate and can behave immaturely. Not all teachers use the behaviour policy consistently so that students understand the boundaries.
- When teaching interests them behaviour is good, and it is increasingly so, all students display good attitudes to learning. They concentrate on their work and learn well.
- Many students are good ambassadors for the school through their industrious attitudes to learning and their maturity around the school and when on placements.
- Most students enjoy school, which they say is improving in every way. They respect the building and keep it litter-free. They wear their uniform smartly.
- Students like the new house system which gives more responsibilities and involvement to them and which is promoting a stronger sense of community in the school. Students value the responsibilities and ownership that they are given. They are responding positively, particularly in Key Stage 4, to the culture of success that is developing in the school.
- Their views are valued. Through the school council, the school promotes citizenship and British values, including students' involvement in democratic processes and their understanding of the need to be considerate and respectful of the views of others.
- There is a supportive ethos round the school because the students get on well with each other.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. This includes for those educated off-site.
- Students feel safe partly because they know that the site is secure. There are good systems to make sure that any students who feel insecure or worried get the support they need.
- There is some bullying but the school takes any incidents seriously. The students recognise different types of bullying and why it is the wrong way to behave. The school emphasises the importance of using the internet safely. Staff use current events well to inform students of issues facing society, such as extremism and radicalisation.
- Most parents who responded to the questionnaire support all aspects of the school's work, citing safety as a particular strength.
- Students' attendance is improving, including for disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs. It is now close to the national average, and the school's systems and expectations indicate that attendance will rise further and quickly. The attendance of those students who learn off-site is variable but overall shows improvement. Persistent absenteeism has fallen because of the higher expectations of the school.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable, including in English and mathematics, to ensure students' good progress over time.
- Teaching does not challenge students sufficiently to ensure they make consistently good progress. Data about students' achievement are not fully effectively used to plan students' work. The most able students do not have enough chances to develop their thinking as deeply or broadly as they could and evaluate

critically what they have learned. The less able students sometimes find the work too hard because they cannot read more-complex texts nor fully understand what they have to do when unsupported by other adults.

- The teaching of literacy skills is not sufficiently well structured or developed. As a result some students have weak grammatical and punctuation skills and do not spell accurately, including subject specific words.
- Reading, however, is taught well. Students' reading skills are improving. They have time to read in all Key Stage 3 lessons and in tutor time. Teachers ensure students understand what they have read by regularly testing them.
- Marking is a strength throughout the school. It tells students what they have achieved and the specific steps they need to take next. Students are expected to respond to the teachers' advice and students do this very well. However, marking does not consistently help students to improve their literacy skills.
- Students get on well with teachers, which encourages them to try hard and to volunteer responses.
- Students like problem solving. This was a strength in a religious education lesson in which the students had very challenging tasks in order to come to a decision as to how the world was made. In mathematics, teaching focuses on equipping students with ways of solving a problem and building-up students' mastery of concepts.
- Students present and lay out their work well.
- Students who find some aspects of learning hard or who lack confidence are supported well by the staff so that they develop their academic and personal skills at an increasing rate.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Not enough students make better than expected progress throughout the school, including in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades, including in English and mathematics, has been below average in recent years, and well-below average last year. This is because over time, expectations have been too low of staff and students, teaching has been very variable and there has been far too little focus on students' rates of progress throughout the school. This year, standards in Year 11 are broadly in line with those expected for age. This is because of improved teaching and students studying courses for a longer period of time. Throughout the school, students are now making improved progress.
- Students' rates of progress are rising securely from Year 7 onwards because of the very sharp focus on progress rather than just on standards. However, although rising, too few students make better than expected progress because students are not consistently appropriately stretched in their work.
- The most able students have not been sufficiently challenged over time to ensure that they develop the necessary skills, including critical thinking and applying what they know, to do this.
- Students achieve well in those subjects where teaching is consistently good, such as in English literature and in some sciences.
- Disadvantaged students have a range of support to quicken their progress and to promote their personal development. In Year 9, disadvantaged students' make better progress in English than that of other groups of students. There are signs of improvement through the school due to a range of better matched support for individual students' needs.
- This is in contrast to 2014, when disadvantaged students' standards in mathematics were one grade behind compared to other students in the school and also compared nationally. In English, there was no gap in attainment within the school between disadvantaged students and other groups, but nationally the gap widened to one and three-quarter grades. In Year 7, there is very little difference in the standards reached by disadvantaged students and those who are not disadvantaged because the school is ensuring provision is good and timely. Compared with non-disadvantaged students nationally, the progress of disadvantaged students in the school is slower.
- The school's data show that students make expected progress in Key Stage 3 in English and mathematics. Again, progress is increasing in Year 7 and 8, with a growing proportion making good progress. This is backed up by students' work.
- Boys and girls make similar rates of progress in most year groups. However, the school has identified that boys learn less well in Year 10, and specific support has been put in place for them.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make faster progress lower down the school, especially in English. Improvements have been slower in Year 11 where students have many gaps in their

previous learning.

- Those students who have not reached the expected standards in English and mathematics by the end of their primary school education, receive specific help through catch-up funding to improve their reading, writing and numerical skills. Most students reach the required standards by the end of Year 7, with the remainder making good progress.
- The school does not enter any students early for GCSE examinations.
- Students who learn off-site, because of their behaviour or other social reasons, make reasonable progress in their learning. Their attendance is variable. Their behaviour, overall, is improving.
- Almost all students go on to sixth-form education, or to further education or training.

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	139629
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	453629

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,321
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Downing
Headteacher	Mark Brown
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01482 826207
Fax number	01482 839589
Email address	enquiry@winifredholtbyacademy.co.uk

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