

Sherburn High School

Garden Lane, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Leeds, North Yorkshire, LS25 6AS

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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 starting points, the proportion of low-ability students and boys who make good progress is below average in several subject areas, including English, mathematics and science. Their achievement requires improvement.
- Gaps in the achievement between different groups of students are not closing rapidly enough.
- The progress of disadvantaged students is not consistently good.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. Teachers do not always check students' understanding regularly or use this information to plan activities which always match the needs of different groups of students.
- The marking of students' work and feedback is variable. Guidance on how to improve their work is not always precise. Students do not always have the chance to make improvements to their work.
- Leaders, including governors, have yet to ensure that there is equality of provision for all groups of students. The strategies and support programmes implemented since the last inspection aimed at raising achievement are not having a consistently positive impact on all groups of students or improving teaching so that it is good.
- Leaders, including middle leaders, do not ensure that the school's strong policies are adhered to fully and consistently well by staff across different departments so that they have a good impact on the achievement of all groups of students.
- Opportunities to use the best teaching practitioners to support the improvement and further training where teaching is not yet consistently good are not fully exploited.
- The effectiveness of the sixth form requires improvement. The achievement of students in different subject areas is not consistently good. A lack of consistently good teaching over time has led to variability in students' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The progress of the most-able students and of girls is good and, at times, outstanding.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Achievement in art, humanities, information technology, and design and technology is strong due to good teaching.
- Students' behaviour has improved. Students are well behaved, conduct themselves well, and continually demonstrate polite and respectful attitudes. The school ensures students are kept safe.
- As a result of effective leadership and support from the governing body, attendance has increased significantly and is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of part lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the deputy headteacher. A tutorial session was also observed jointly.
- Inspectors observed, and spoke with, students during lessons and at break times. They also met formally with groups of students from Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. Inspectors observed an assembly and tutorials.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders. Meetings were also held with governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work to monitor teaching and looked at a range of documents, including students’ work in their books, the school’s arrangements and policies for safeguarding, performance management procedures and the students’ attendance data. Inspectors also looked at information about students’ progress and attainment.
- There were 122 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which were used to help inspectors to gauge the views of parents. There were 48 responses made by staff to the inspection questionnaire and these were reviewed.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Matthew Murray

Additional Inspector

Steven Goldsmith

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hargreaves

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- The large majority of students are White British.
- There is a below average proportion of disadvantaged students. These students receive support through the pupil premium funding, which is additional government funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations. Students do have the opportunity to improve their English and mathematics grades in the sixth form,
- A few of the Year 11 students attend courses at Danesgate College and Askham Bryan College.
- The school collaborates with Tadcaster Grammar in the sixth form. Currently, this affects a small number of courses. However, from September 2015 this will be a full collaboration across the sixth form curriculum.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rates of progress made by boys and low-ability students, as well as continuing to improve the outcomes for students in the sixth form, by ensuring that:
 - teachers check students' understanding regularly and use the information to plan activities which always match students' needs well
 - marking and feedback always matches the best quality seen in school so that students consistently receive precise guidance on how to improve their work, and always have the chance to make those improvements
 - boys and low-ability students participate fully in learning and are encouraged to respond to teachers' questions
 - all students present their work neatly.
- Increase the impact of senior and middle leaders, as well as governors, by ensuring that:
 - the strong policies already apparent in school are adhered to fully and consistently well by teachers, so that they have a good impact on the achievement of all groups of students
 - the best teaching practitioners in school are used to support further training where teaching is not yet consistently good.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership requires improvement because the quality of teaching does not fully meet the needs of all students. Since the last inspection, the achievement of boys has not improved well enough and the gap in progress between girls and boys is still wider than seen nationally. Leaders are yet to ensure that the low-ability students achieve well.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is not fully accurate or robust. Evaluation of Key Stage 3 is more accurate. Here, leaders demonstrate awareness of where groups of students are not achieving well and where the gaps between groups of students' progress are wider than seen nationally. However, they do not take full account of these students' outcomes when judging the achievement of students, especially in meeting the needs of low-ability students and boys in Key Stage 4. Efforts to ensure that different groups of students achieve equally well are not yet fully effective.
- Teaching is monitored regularly. However, there is not enough attention to the outcomes of different groups of students when judging the quality of teaching in different subject areas. As a result, the school's judgements of some teaching are too generous.
- Staff training has had a variable impact. A focus on marking and feedback, together with ensuring that activities suit different groups of students' needs well, has supported good achievement in some subjects, such as humanities, design and technology, art and information technology, and for certain groups of students, including girls and the most able, but not in other subjects or for other students groups.
- Arrangements to appraise teachers have strengthened and are now more effective. The weakest teaching seen previously in the school is no longer apparent. Some current weaker teaching is being addressed and supported. As a result, some teachers have improved their practice well. There are some very strong practitioners. Leaders do not make the most of opportunities to use them to support further training where teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Middle leaders are not fully effective in their roles. They do not always ensure the well-thought-out policies implemented by senior leaders are adhered to. A lack of compliance by some departments and teachers undermines the impact of the policies. Not all students' work is regularly marked and students do not always receive effective feedback. This can slow students' progress, in particular boys and the low-ability students.
- Leadership of the provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good. A good understanding of these students' needs has led to strong training for teaching assistants who work well with students. Consequently, these students achieve well.
- The use of the pupil premium funding is improving, but the achievement of disadvantaged students remains inconsistent across all subjects and in different year groups.
- Leaders work closely with Danesgate College and Askham Bryan College to ensure that students are offered places on courses that match their needs and interests well. They ensure that students attend well, have positive attitudes to learning and achieve well.
- Leaders have effectively improved students' attendance. The school's collaboration with other agencies has also supported families and ensured that very few students are now regularly absent.
- Leadership of the curriculum is effective. It results in a broad and balanced set of courses and pathways for students to follow in Key Stages 3 and 4. The school knows the importance of students being able to access more academic qualifications, where appropriate. An above average proportion of students reach the English Baccalaureate threshold, effectively enabling students to have more options as they move into post-16 pathways.
- Opportunities to enhance students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall. The rotation of daily tutorial sessions and assemblies gives students the chance to discuss important issues, as well as reflect on matters which are important to them. Leaders ensure that there are good relationships between different groups of students and discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. Provision is carefully thought through and links into activities covered in other areas of the curriculum, as well as the extra events and trips students take part in, prepare students well for life in modern Britain.
- Local authority support requires improvement. There has not been enough attention to detail around the achievement of different groups. This lack of rigour has led to an inaccurate evaluation of the school's provision.
- Safeguarding procedures meet the statutory requirements and are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors do not have a fully clear view of the school's performance. They know where improvements have been made and understand that overall students' progress in English and mathematics is

improving. However, they do not have a good level of detail about the achievement of different groups of students in order to challenge leaders effectively.

- Governors are fully aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and of the many systems and support programmes in place. They know it is having some good impact on outcomes for some students.
- Minutes of meetings of the governing body demonstrate that governors are fully involved in the cycle of appraisal of teachers and leaders, and in supporting the improvement of weaker teaching. They support the headteacher and other leaders to tackle any underperformance and so that no teaching is inadequate. However, governors view teaching as consistently good, which is not the case.
- Governors are committed to the school, recently taking part in spotlight reviews in certain areas of the school provision to support school improvement. They have successfully held the school to account for improving students' attendance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Pupils, parents and staff all say that poor behaviour is rare.
- Students consistently conduct themselves well. They are always polite to one another and to adults. Strong relationships are enjoyed between all staff and students. Students describe the atmosphere as 'harmonious' and 'calm'. Students manage their own behaviour well and very little adult supervision is needed during social times or as students move between classes.
- In class, low-level disruption is very rare. Many students work effectively and have positive attitudes to learning. Many readily participate in learning and enjoy taking initiative. They ask questions and are keen to know how to improve their work, as seen by the way they respond to feedback. However, the attitudes to learning of low-ability students and of some boys are occasionally less positive.
- As a result of effective leadership, attendance has risen significantly from being below average at the time of the last inspection to above average. This is an impressive and important improvement. Students enjoy coming to school. Very few students are now absent repeatedly. Effective engagement with parents so that they know the importance of regular attendance, along with effective support when issues arise, has significantly reduced the number of students who are regularly absent.
- The number of serious behaviour incidents has also dropped significantly. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection. Strong leadership of students' behaviour has led to more sustainable solutions to issues some of the more vulnerable students have had. The number of less serious behaviour incidents has also reduced. Fewer sanctions overall are now being used. A calm learning environment pervades, which students, staff and parents appreciate.
- Students who attend Danesgate and Askham Colleges have good attendance and are kept safe. They conduct themselves well and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. This supports good achievement in their courses.
- Students say they enjoy coming to school. They like the tutorial system in place and believe expectations of them in recent months have been raised. Many feel that the use of target-setting and feedback in their work helps them to be much clearer on what they are aiming for, but acknowledge that this is not always the case and that there is inconsistency by teachers.
- Students' enjoyment of school life and pride in their school is seen through their strong involvement in after-school enrichment activities, such as musical, sporting and artistic activities. Although many students present their work neatly and with pride, some do not.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students say they feel safe. They know they can speak to staff if they have any concerns or worries. Students report that the tutorial system that brings different age groups of students together also ensures that they feel safe. Younger students report that older students treat them with respect and are points of contact, if needed. There are no places in school where students do not feel safe.
- Tutorial sessions and assemblies heighten students' awareness of important issues, such as e-safety. They have a strong understanding of how to avoid potential dangers when using the internet and know what to do when they have any concerns in this area.
- As students move around the buildings, despite some crowded areas, there is a calm and respectful atmosphere; students were regularly seen holding the doors open for one another and letting each other pass. As well as contributing to a positive and safe environment, little time is wasted between lessons and punctuality is good.

- Students are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudiced-based bullying. Issues are discussed at various points of time, including in personal, social and emotional development lessons. Students from all year groups believe that bullying is very rare and parents agree. Parents are happy that the school listens to their concerns, and responds promptly and effectively when issues are raised, including issues of bullying. The school logs all bullying incidents, which show that they are rare, including prejudiced-based bullying incidents.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time is not consistently strong. Specifically, the needs of different groups of students are not met effectively through teaching in several subject areas, including English, mathematics and science. As a result, boys and low-ability students, in particular, do not achieve as well as others. Inspection findings from observations and a review of students' workbooks show that, while there has been some improvement, the quality of teaching remains variable across year groups and subjects.
- Students from all key stages are confident that teaching has improved in recent months. More refined training for staff is helping to ensure that students' needs are now met more closely. This is having a good impact on some groups of students, with girls and the most-able students achieving well consistently across all subject areas. However, teaching is not as effective in supporting the low-ability students and boys to make good progress from their starting points. The strategies used are not impacting well on boys' achievement.
- There is not always skilful planning for low-ability students. They are given work which is not accessible and they are unable to make good progress. As a result, low-ability students do not complete their tasks. Gaps in their skills, knowledge and learning are not always appropriately filled by subsequent activities.
- Teaching of the most-able students is consistently good and sometimes outstanding, leading to good progress and, at times, excellent progress. This is seen across different subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Students are challenged well in lessons so that they reach their potential. Teaching assistants work skilfully with disabled students and those with special educational needs, knowing when to allow students to work independently and when more support is needed.
- Effective training has increased teachers' skills most consistently in humanities, information technology, design and technology, as well as art. In these subjects, provision for different groups of students is consistently strong. This is seen in the good quality of marking and feedback, and the teachers' adherence to the school's policy. Students understand what they have done well and how their work can be further improved; they have a clear understanding of how they should respond to feedback. However, this is not consistently the case across other subject areas and this slows the progress of some students. Guidance on how to improve their work is not always precise. Students do not always have the chance to make improvements to their work.
- The quality of teachers' questioning is often skilful. Teachers use this technique well to gauge students' understanding and see where any misconceptions are apparent. Where this is done well, teachers use the information to good effect to amend activities and teaching, in order to reinforce learning or, indeed, move learning on more rapidly, as necessary. However, this is not always the case. At times, teachers focus too much on certain students, mostly girls and the most-able students, responding to questions. Boys and low-ability students fail to engage in activities, particularly in questioning tasks and this impedes their progress.
- The teaching of literacy is improving and particularly for disabled students and those with special educational needs. Overall, however, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is not yet good for all groups of students.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- From their starting points, the proportion of different groups of students making good progress in different subjects, including English, mathematics and science, is variable. In particular, the proportion of boys and the low-ability students making good progress is below average.
- Students enter school with levels of attainment broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of students achieving five good GCSE grades, including in English and mathematics, is also broadly in line with the average, based on their first attempt. However, this proportion has been steadily rising and in Year 11 in 2014 was slightly above average.
- Boys do not make good progress over time across different subjects, including English, mathematics and science. In 2014, the gap in progress between boys and girls was wider than that seen nationally. Girls

make good progress and, at times, outstanding progress across all subjects. Inspection evidence shows that the rate of progress being made by boys and girls currently in Year 11 remains too wide and is not closing.

- Students who enter the school with lower than expected standards of reading, writing and mathematics do not make good progress over time. This relatively slower progress of low-ability students has been apparent for those who have already left the school recently and for those still in the school. Their achievement has not improved consistently in different subjects. In some areas, the gaps between these students and their peers in school have widened.
- The most-able students, who enter the school with standards of reading, writing and mathematics above expectations, make good and, at times, outstanding progress. The most-able students do well as they follow a pathway, which suits their needs very well, pushing them to make the most of their abilities.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Close attention to their specific needs, along with well-trained teaching assistants who work positively with students during lessons and in special programmes, provide effective support. Students who need additional help with reading are supported well and are well taught, with strong systems to ensure their needs are effectively met.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students is not yet consistently good. In Year 11 in 2014, in English and in mathematics, disadvantaged students were about a grade behind others in school and other students nationally. School data and inspection evidence show that gaps between disadvantaged students are not consistently closing in all subjects. Although in English the gap in achievement between disadvantaged and other students in the current Year 11 has been successfully closed, in mathematics, the gap has widened further. The school's analysis shows that where disadvantaged students do not make good progress, it is often because they are low-ability students rather than disadvantaged. School data show better progress for more-able disadvantaged students.
- Those students who attend courses at Danesgate College and Askham Bryan College make good progress in the courses they undertake.
- Achievement in art, information technology, design and technology and humanities is strong due to better teaching. The achievement of students in science is not yet consistently good. Middle-ability students are doing increasingly well and the achievement of these students is improving in science. However, low-ability students in science are not consistently making good progress during their time in school.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- Students' achievement requires improvement. Since the last inspection, student outcomes have been significantly below national average. Students currently are now making better progress than historically, but there remains variability and progress is not yet good across different subjects.
- Teaching requires improvement. While some teaching is good, the variability in students' outcomes identifies inconsistent quality of teaching over time and across different subject areas. Study programmes have been developed to meet a greater variety of students' needs, but these have not yet been in place long enough to support clear progression to the higher levels of attainment.
- The behaviour and safety of students are good. Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection, which has led to improved outcomes than previously. Students report that they enjoy school, which is why they attend well. They also believe that teaching is starting to improve. They conduct themselves well and there is no disruption to learning. Students are articulate and work in books shows that students complete work well; however, it is not always to a high enough standard. Marking does not always identify this precisely enough.
- The school provides good personal careers advice, including guidance on next steps following their post-16 courses. As a result, students believe staff care for them and they enjoy strong relationships with them. None of the students leave the school without moving onto further education, employment or training. Students appreciate this aspect of their learning because it supports better safety and awareness of potential risks to their health and well-being.
- Retention rates are improving, but have been a concern over a sustained period of time. This is a consequence of a curriculum which was too narrow previously. However, this is now widening, particularly for current Year 12 students and the new Year 12 students arriving in September 2015. Effective collaboration with Tadcaster Grammar is supporting more subject and pathway options for students at both schools.
- Leaders of the sixth form have managed to secure improvement within achievement and the personal development of students. However, this has not yet been achieved over a sustained period of time and, as a result, the impact on students' outcomes is not yet consistently good.

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	121695
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	462227

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	747
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Thornton-Eckford
Headteacher	Mrs M Williams
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2013
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