

South Holderness Technology College

Station Road, Preston, Hull, HU12 8UZ

Inspection dates 19–20 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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
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

- Achievement requires improvement. Not enough students, especially boys and disadvantaged students, make good progress overall in a range of subjects including mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement. It is too variable and slows students' progress over time. This is especially so in Key Stage 3, where the quality of teaching shows the greatest inconsistency.
- Teaching is not sufficiently challenging or engaging to ensure that students of all abilities remain attentive and consistently do their best work.
- Students do not have enough specific opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in lessons other than in English and mathematics.
- Not all students attend sufficiently regularly to help ensure that they learn at least as well as they should throughout the school.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Not all subject leaders carry out their responsibilities for checking on the quality of students' work and tackling weaknesses effectively enough.
- Senior leaders are not consistently effective in promoting strong teaching and achievement across the school because they do not have a fully accurate picture of the impact of teaching on students' achievement.
- The sixth form requires improvement because teaching and progress are variable. As a result, too few students make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting deputy headteacher, well supported by the executive headteacher and governors, has made a good start to improving the school's performance, particularly the quality of teaching and students' achievement.
- Students are achieving well in English.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- The governing body is improving the challenge it presents to the school's leaders to continue to improve rapidly, most particularly around students' achievement and teaching. Students behave well around the school. They feel safe and secure.
- The unit for students with autism provides well for its very few students.
- Looked-after students make good progress in their social and emotional development because of the well-matched support for their needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a broad range of teaching and learning throughout the school. It included seven joint observations 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 five groups of students to discover their views about the quality of education they receive at the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior and subject leaders, and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at a variety of documentation such as information about the achievement of all groups of students in the school. They analysed the school's development plan, scrutinised students' work, checked records of students' attendance and behaviour, and reviewed safeguarding policies.
- Inspectors took into account the 95 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, telephone calls from parents and the 69 responses given in the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nell Banfield	Additional Inspector
Paul Copping	Additional Inspector
John Downs	Additional Inspector
Judith Gooding	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-size secondary school. It serves a wide catchment area and 20% of students travel from Kingston-upon-Hull.
- Almost all students are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is below average. 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 below average.
- The school operates specially resourced provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. It is the designated provider within the East Riding of Yorkshire for students with autism. It has currently four students on roll who spend time both in the special resource unit and in mainstream classes, according to their needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- Sixteen students with attendance and/or behavioural difficulties attend off-site provision either full or part-time at five alternative providers: Bishop Burton College; Motorvation; the Etton Hunt; Withernsea High School; and Quality Personal Development.
- The sixth form is open to all students.
- An executive headteacher has led the school every Tuesday and Wednesday since January 2015, following the absence of the headteacher, who has now retired. The acting deputy headteacher was appointed at the same time. A permanent headteacher is to be appointed for January 2016.
- Since the last inspection, there have been many other changes to staffing across the school.
- The school works with Rossett School, Harrogate and with The Healing School, Grimsby, to develop and strengthen senior and subject leadership.

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 promotes rapid progress, particularly in mathematics and science and especially for boys and disadvantaged students, by making sure that:
 - activities in all lessons are matched closely to students' differing abilities and needs to provide effective challenge
 - teachers, especially in Key Stage 3, have higher expectations and so promote students' engagement in their learning
 - teaching in all subjects provides students with regular opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Improve attendance by ensuring that students understand the importance of attending school regularly and by making targets for attendance more challenging.
- Strengthen the impact of leaders and managers in raising achievement by ensuring that:
 - all subject leaders are trained to carry out their monitoring roles more effectively and so held accountable for raising standards
 - senior leaders have a more accurate view of how well the school is performing to shape their planning and to enable them to set more sharply focused targets for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Achievement and teaching have not improved to good as quickly as they should. This is because leaders and managers did not have a fully accurate picture of students' work and learning across the school. Instead, in their monitoring, leaders have focused on the mechanics of teaching rather than the impact of teaching on students' learning.
- The executive headteacher and acting deputy headteacher work well together in this ambitious and improving school. They have a clear commitment and determination to move things forward. To enable this, they have now implemented good systems to check the quality of teaching, students' progress, behaviour and attendance. This is a significant step forward, which is leading to concerted improvements in these areas.
- Students' learning is now assessed frequently and the information is analysed in detail. An increasing number of subject leaders are accountable for ensuring that class teachers respond to the data and act on what this information tells them to promote the more rapid progress of all groups of students. Subject leaders are becoming more effective in this role. They are overseen by senior leaders and governors who check the regular reports from subject leaders and make sure they are acting on them. However, several subject leaders are new to post and are still developing the skills to carry out this monitoring role effectively.
- The local authority, governing body and senior leaders work effectively together. An example of this emerging good partnership is their joint work in developing and checking progress towards achieving the priorities within the school's action plan. The action plan provides a good structure for the school's improvement and is easy for all staff to understand.
- Everyone in the school community is pulling together to strengthen all of the school's work, including the ongoing focus on improving students' literacy skills and their attitudes to learning. Teachers' performance targets are measurable and challenging. They are improving the quality of teaching. Many teachers appreciate the range of support and training now available to them that is strengthening their teaching and developing further their leadership skills. This includes the sharing of best practice within teaching.
- Partnerships with other schools are effective in bringing about improvement. For example, they ease students' transition from primary to secondary school and are developing leadership skills across the school.
- Attendance and behaviour in lessons are improving as a result of better monitoring and more effective strategies, particularly to tackle poor attendance. Even so, leaders' expectations of students' regular attendance are not high enough. Students are engaging more readily in lessons where teaching is good.
- Gaps in attainment between students who are disadvantaged and others in the school are closing because leaders and managers are taking effective action to support the learning of disadvantaged students, especially in Key Stage 3.
- Subject leaders are developing their leadership skills quickly. The leader of the sixth form ensures that the enrichment programme provides a good springboard for students to move on to the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- The leadership and management of provision for disabled students or those who have special educational needs are effective in making sure that these students' needs are met well. The unit for students with autism is led and managed well. As a result, learning activities are planned well to match students' needs and to include these students effectively in the life of the school.
- The manager responsible for overseeing the spending of the pupil premium and its impact ensures that information about disadvantaged students' individual needs is now used more effectively to boost their achievement, which is improving.
- Leaders and managers take safeguarding very seriously. They ensure that policies and procedures for safeguarding are fully in place, meet requirements and are effective. Strong care, guidance and support for the school's most vulnerable students ensure that they attend regularly and are supported very well. Consequently, their behaviour is improving and their progress is accelerating.
- Students who learn off-site are equally well cared for. The school's records show leaders make regular checks of their progress, behaviour and attendance.
- The curriculum highlights the school's commitment to ensuring students' all-round development through a comprehensive programme. This includes careers education, finance, relationship and health and safety issues. As a result students are armed with the information they need at the end of Year 11 to make informed choices about their future and also on how to keep safe.
- Teaching and daily routines promote students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

This includes British values, which students increasingly adopt and understand to prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, they learn about democracy and personal responsibility, which were key themes in the recent mock general election. The school is a harmonious community in which discrimination in any form is not tolerated and good relations are fostered. However, until teaching is consistently good, students do not all have equal chances of success, including in the sixth form.

- The school has planned well for the changes to the curriculum so that students continue to have choices that match their aspirations and interests.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is now effective in holding the school to account because it understands the breadth of its role and has the skills to support and challenge the school's leadership. Governors ask probing questions about many aspects of the school's work, based partly on information given to them by the executive headteacher or the acting deputy headteacher. Increasingly, they use information they have gathered themselves.
- Governors work with a range of subjects and aspects, including attendance and safeguarding, about which they are very knowledgeable. They attend staff training days and parents' evenings and meet regularly with students to make sure they gather a wide range of views about the school. The quality assurance days the governors organise enable them to make comprehensive checks on the school's work, including joining senior leaders for learning walks around different parts of the school.
- The governing body speaks knowledgeably of how pupil premium money is spent and its impact, which members know are improving outcomes for disadvantaged students. They know the gaps in attainment and progress are closing and at a faster rate.
- They value the management of performance and its role in strengthening teaching. The governors have high expectations of teachers' performance and do not agree to pay rises unless staff meet all of their targets. They know which teachers need support to address underperformance. They check that this is in place and its impact on improving teaching.
- The governors know which groups of students need to improve their learning most. This is helped by their understanding of national data, which forms part of a regular training programme. Although they know teaching is improving from what the current data show, they also know that some inconsistencies remain, which they check regularly.
- The school's budget does not currently balance. There is a five-year recovery plan, which the local authority oversees and which is progressing to plan.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. In lessons where students do not learn well or make good progress, some students do not pay full attention. They chat to their classmates and produce too little good-quality work.
- Too many students do not take enough pride in the presentation and layout of their written work. Too much of their handwriting is untidy.
- Students behave well round the school, including in the dining hall. They are polite and welcoming to visitors and get on well with each other and the staff.
- Students like their school and show respect for the building and site by keeping it tidy. There is very little litter.
- Students value the school council and the democratic principles on which it is based. They feel their views are valued through the changes that the school makes.
- The school's records show that behaviour is improving, with a marked decline in incidents of poor behaviour that lead to exclusion.
- The information leaders gather about the behaviour of students who learn at other sites shows that this is improving. They like what they are learning and are trying harder to succeed.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agreed that the school keeps students safe and looks after them well.
- Students feel safe and secure in school because they trust the staff to help them with any problems that

they have. The site is secure and maintained well.

- Students who learn at other sites also feel safe because the school follows good procedures to check they stay safe, including during their journeys to and from the alternative provision. Staff check regularly on their behaviour and attendance.
- Students say that bullying is uncommon and that the school deals with isolated incidents effectively. Students from Year 7 onwards know it is right to treat everyone the same way as this promotes harmony in society.
- Students are aware of potential risks to their safety, such as through using the internet. The school ensures they understand how to use it safely and as a tool for helping them to learn.
- Attendance has increased from below average in recent years to average last year. Current data show that this improvement has been sustained. Even so, expectations of students' attendance are not high enough to increase rates significantly and to help ensure that students make the progress of which they are capable.
- The percentage of students who are persistently absent has fallen and is now average. This is because the school checks attendance promptly each day and monitors students who are frequently absent.
- Most students educated off-site attend these settings regularly. Students who are looked after attend very regularly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is variable rather than consistently good. It requires improvement because, over time, teachers' expectations are too low and so not enough students make rapid progress through the school, including in the sixth form.
- There are inconsistencies in teaching, both within and between subjects, which do not sustain good progress and positive attitudes among all students, especially in Key Stage 3. This is because senior and middle leaders have focused more attention on the method of teaching rather than the impact of teaching on students' learning.
- Students' level of engagement in their learning differs from lesson to lesson. They learn less well when teaching does not interest them because they find it harder to concentrate.
- Work is sometimes too hard for lower-ability students because it is not matched closely enough to their needs and skills. Conversely, sometimes the work set for the most-able students is too easy and does not enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching is improving because of the increasingly high expectations of leaders and the support given to teachers. This includes in science, where the school's records and inspection evidence show there is stronger teaching than previously. Where learning is most effective, teachers adapt their teaching to match what they have found out about students' understanding as lessons proceed. As a consequence, students are more enthusiastic about their learning and this accelerates their progress.
- Inspectors saw students making good progress in a Year 10 English lesson about the use of language in a Shakespearean text. The teacher knew her subject very well and made sure students understood the purpose of what they were doing. She checked their understanding regularly to ensure that the students made good progress in appreciating how the author used language effectively.
- The school has worked effectively to improve the quality of marking and much is now of good quality, such as in history. Leaders continue to bring all marking up to the standard of the best and students are increasingly responding to the advice that teachers give. Consequently, students know how to make further progress and how to make it more quickly.
- The school ensures that Key Stage 3 students have very regular opportunities to read, including fortnightly visits to the library and during form period. Students who find reading difficult have one-to-one help in pronouncing and spelling words accurately.
- There are a few opportunities for students to practise specific literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than in English and in mathematics. Leaders acknowledge that this is very much work in progress, especially with regard to numeracy.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive good support to secure, particularly, their literacy and numeracy skills. This is based on staff's accurate understanding of their knowledge and skills. Provision is also good for the very few students in the school's autism unit.

The achievement of pupils**requires improvement**

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough students make the good progress they should from their average starting points in Year 7. This is particularly the case for boys and disadvantaged students, and especially in mathematics and science. Over time, teaching has been too variable in quality and courses have not always been matched well to students' needs.
- Standards at the end of Year 11 have improved over the last three years in terms of the proportion of students attaining five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics. Standards in English have risen and are now average. In mathematics, they are also average.
- Due to more effective teaching, good systems to check and assess students' progress and higher expectations of the staff, the school's data show that achievement is improving this year. In English, for example, the proportions of students making expected progress and exceeding expectations are now similar to those proportions seen nationally.
- In mathematics, the proportion of students making expected progress is increasing and is now broadly in line with national figures. Until recently, not enough students made better than expected progress in mathematics but this is improving as teaching continues to strengthen.
- Leaders have an increasingly accurate understanding of the rates of progress made by all groups of students. They know that some inconsistencies remain and they are addressing them with determination. In Key Stage 3, there is more evidence of impact of improvement, such as the narrowing of the gap between boys' and girls' progress in English and mathematics.
- The performance of different groups of disabled students and those who have special educational needs has varied in recent years. Most students now make good progress because information from assessments is used well to set appropriate tasks for their needs and support is effective.
- The achievement of the very few students in the school's autism unit is good. Staff tailor support to their needs and ensure they have a positive experience of schooling.
- The most-able students throughout the school do not always make good progress because there are still too many teachers who do not have high enough expectations of what these students can achieve. Boys are learning at a faster rate than previously. Even so, the gap between the attainment of boys and girls remains because girls' rate of progress has also increased. However, this is an improving picture and, increasingly, teachers are taking carefully into account how boys prefer to learn. This keeps them engaged in their work and on track to achieve better.
- Students who learn off-site make at least expected progress in their courses because they are working on activities that motivate them and they are interested in what they are learning. School leaders regularly check their progress.
- Those students who have not reached the expected standards in English and mathematics by the end of primary school receive specific help in Year 7 through catch-up funding. Last year, the large majority of these students reached the expected standards for their age in English and mathematics. The others made good progress towards these standards.
- Students' ability to read fluently and to show understanding of what they have read is improving through opportunities for regular reading time, especially in Key Stage 3. The library is well stocked and Key Stage 3 students have fortnightly reading time in the library, as well as reading at the start of English lessons.
- Disadvantaged students receive a range of support, including help to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and to help them settle into Year 7. At the end of Year 11 in 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged students in English was one-and-a-quarter grades behind that of other students in the school and other students nationally. In mathematics, their attainment was one-and-a-third grades behind other students in the school and one-and-a-half grades behind other students nationally. The gap had widened in both subjects from 2013 to 2014. Disadvantaged students made slower progress in English and mathematics, compared to other students in the school and other students nationally.
- The attainment and progress gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers currently in the school are narrowing in both English and in mathematics as support for them improves.
- Looked-after students make similar, expected rates of progress to their peers. They make good progress in their social and emotional development because of the school's good knowledge of their needs and the range of good quality, individual support they receive.
- The school does not use early entry for GCSE examinations.

The sixth form provision**requires improvement**

- About half of Year 11 students stay on in the sixth form. The percentage staying on into Year 13 is lower than average.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement because too many students do not reach their potential. This is particularly so for the small number of students who study vocational courses. Students reach average standards by the end of Year 13. This represents expected progress overall through the sixth form from broadly average starting points. Too many students do not carry their AS courses on to attain a full A-level qualification.
- Last year, 10 students joined Year 12 without having achieved at least a 'C' grade in either English, mathematics or both. Three of the 10 students achieved at least a 'C' grade in English after further study but none did so in mathematics. Even so, the school's information shows this group of students made good progress from their individual starting points.
- Teaching in the sixth form requires improvement. Teaching is variable in terms of the quality of teachers' subject knowledge and how well this helps students to reach their potential. This is particularly evident in some science subjects where, at times, teachers do not delve deeply enough to probe and extend students' knowledge and understanding.
- As well as their chosen AS and A2 courses, students have a broad enrichment programme, which enables them to study for other qualifications and to develop many skills for life.
- Students value the education that they have in the sixth form, which encourages them to be aspirational, incorporates careers education and attention to their personal safety. They receive useful guidance to help them to make progress and to make important decisions about their futures. This includes a programme of support for those who need additional help.
- Students provide good role models for the younger students through their mature behaviour. They supervise lunchtimes, support younger students with their reading, organise charity events and have their own president's committee to discuss the sixth form and how it can be improved. They demonstrate many examples of British values through their actions. Sixth-form students feel, and are, safe in school.
- Almost all students leave Year 13 to go onto further or higher education, training or employment.
- Leadership and management in the sixth form require improvement. Although pastoral care is good for sixth-form students, inconsistent provision overall is not supporting these students to achieve well.

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	118080
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	462267

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	1,592
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elaine Agar
Headteacher	Mrs J Pickerill
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2013
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