

Honley High School

Station Road, Honley, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire HD9 6QJ

Inspection dates	14–15 October 2015
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Good leadership has successfully brought about improvements in pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, the overall effectiveness of the school has improved since the previous inspection and is now good.
- Pupils' outcomes are good across the school in a wide range of subjects, including mathematics and English. This is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan interesting tasks that engage pupils in their learning.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is good. Pupils contribute well to their learning. They treat each other, and adults, with dignity and respect.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to develop a strong understanding of the arts, other cultures and religions, as well as a strong understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Good subject leadership is supporting improvements to the quality of teaching and learning across a wide range of subjects.
- Governors make an exceptional contribution to the leadership of the school. High ambitions and outstanding knowledge of the school's work enables them to make an excellent contribution to the school's improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are a small number of subjects, including science, where not enough pupils are making good progress.
- School plans for improvement are not always sharply focused on the impact that actions are intended to have on improving teaching and outcomes.
- A few subject leaders have not established high levels of consistently strong progress and teaching in their subject areas.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to further raise outcomes for pupils, particularly in science, by making sure that:
 - assessment in lessons accurately determines when pupils, particularly the most able, are ready to move on to more challenging work
 - incisive subject-related feedback is given and pupils respond fully to improve their learning
 - questioning consistently challenges pupils to think deeply about their learning, and assesses the knowledge and understanding of all groups of learners
 - pupils develop their mathematical problem solving skills across a wide range of subjects
 - pupils have greater opportunities to write at length in a wide range of subjects.

- Increase the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders' plans are succinct and crystal clear about how planned actions will contribute to improvements in teaching and student progress
 - all subject leaders are highly skilled in driving forward improvements in teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and governors are a very effective team and are highly ambitious for the pupils. As a result of their actions, and those of other senior leaders, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and outcomes for pupils are now good. Morale in the school is high with a culture of high expectations that is supported by staff.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and its areas for improvement. They have successfully improved the quality of teaching and middle leadership through sharing best practice in school and judicious use of external support.
- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, know what is expected of them. They check the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching using a wide range of information. Overall, subject leadership is good with some that is outstanding, particularly in English and design technology. However, further work is needed to ensure very high quality leadership is the norm across all subjects.
- The school's plan for improvement correctly states the main priorities for the school. However, the plan, and the plans of subject leaders, are not precisely focused on key actions to be taken and how success will be measured in terms of improving teaching and achievement. This is not providing leaders with a sharp understanding of how well these actions are contributing to pupils' success and the quality of teaching.
- The systems to check the performance of teachers are thorough and clearly identify the skills that teachers need to strengthen. The school's substantial programme for teachers' professional development has assisted well in ensuring teaching is now good. Support and training for subject leaders have helped them to contribute strongly to improving teaching and pupils' outcomes. The classroom practice of newly qualified teachers is developing effectively due to the good support they receive.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for their future education and training as there is a good range of subjects taught and an emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The school enjoys good links with business and industry to develop scientific, technological, mathematical and engineering skills. There are many opportunities to learn about the arts as the school regularly hosts the Royal Shakespeare Company and supports jazz festivals. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sporting and cultural activities. Good careers' information and advice ensures that almost every student leaving school at the end of Year 11 continues in education, employment or training.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Assemblies and form time activities, 'Theme of the Week' and 'Thoughts for the Day' contribute well. Pupils have an acute sense of life in modern Britain, supporting the work of the school in fostering good relations and tackling discrimination. Governors are clear about how the 'Co-operative values' of equity, equality and democracy, are effectively contributing to pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain.
- The impact of the school's use of additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is good. It is used to support additional teachers to reduce class size and to focus more strongly on the needs of these pupils as well as providing small-group teaching. As a result of leaders' actions, outcomes are good for disadvantaged pupils and attendance is improving.
- Leadership has established good systems to link with off-site providers. Leaders check the progress, attendance, behaviour and safety of pupils.
- Leaders ensure that the clear arrangements for safeguarding and child protection meet statutory requirements. Staff are appropriately trained and vigilant. Leaders work with parents, carers and other agencies in the local authority so that vulnerable pupils are well cared for and supported. A nominated governor checks rigorously the effectiveness of procedures within school.
- The local authority's representative knows the school's strengths and areas for development very well. She has provided good support to improve the skills of subject leaders. The local authority has helped the school to broker good support from other local schools, including the assistance of a national leader in education. The headteacher has developed effective partnerships with other schools in the locality to share good practice in leadership and the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school**
Governors are highly skilled. They regularly challenge the headteacher and other leaders, including subject leaders, to ensure that outcomes for pupils are improving across the school. They know the quality of teaching and learning in the school extremely well through regularly visiting lessons, speaking with pupils and checking progress with subject leaders.

Governors are well aware of the strengths within the school and the areas that need further improvement. For example, they are clear that a small proportion of parents do not know the strengths of the school and governors have taken action to improve communications with parents.

Governors have a very detailed knowledge of the school's performance information and how it compares with other schools. They oversee the school's finance very carefully. They check the use of the pupil premium funding and understand how disadvantaged pupils are benefiting.

Governors understand fully the link between teachers' performance and pay. They have supported the headteacher in taking action to secure improvements in teaching and leadership. Governors are making an impressive contribution to the leadership of the school.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Good teaching, learning and assessment are supporting pupils' good outcomes. Good teaching is consistently characterised by: the planning of a good range of interesting tasks and activities that engage pupils well in their learning; lessons starting at a brisk pace as pupils know what is expected of them, and high expectations of behaviour and presentation. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- Teachers use good questioning skills to involve pupils in thinking deeply about what is being learned. They give pupils time to respond fully and use pupils' responses to strengthen the understanding of others and to clear up any misunderstandings. However, questioning is not consistently challenging for all levels of ability, particularly the most able. Now and again, the knowledge and understanding of all pupils throughout the class is not assessed fully.
- An analysis of pupils' work by inspectors showed that marking and feedback are completed according to the school's policy and support good learning and assessment. Helpful comments and suggestions provide clear information about what pupils need to do to improve their learning. There are a few occasions when the feedback is not specifically related to the subject and occasions when pupils do not respond fully to strengthen their learning.
- Teachers are quick to view and assess pupils' work in class. They spot those pupils who might be falling behind or who have misconceptions and support them well. Their good subject knowledge enables them to adjust their approach to topics and to use a variety of strategies to help pupils to make good progress. Occasionally, they do not ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, swiftly engage with challenging tasks to accelerate progress.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and research skills across many subjects. However, pupils' good writing skills are not used extensively in a wide range of subjects. Their mathematical problem solving skills are not strengthened across a range of subjects.
- Teaching assistants are well respected and make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils who have been diagnosed as having autistic spectrum disorder.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take pride in their work ensuring that it is usually neatly presented with clear handwriting.
- Pupils told inspectors that they felt safe in school. Parents and staff have a very positive view about pupils' safety and welfare.
- The vast majority of pupils are well-mannered, polite, courteous and confident when speaking to adults. They get on well together at lunchtimes and breaktimes, socialising well together and enjoying each other's company.
- Pupils are well cared for and there are good links with external agencies to protect the most vulnerable pupils. Parents were very positive about how the school looks after their children.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and what to do should issues occur. They are clear about what constitutes bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and cyber bullying. The school has received national recognition for its work in promoting diversity. School records indicate that bullying is uncommon and pupils confirmed this. Pupils said that should bullying occur they were confident that the

school deals with it immediately and appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They follow the instructions of their teachers and enjoy sharing ideas to support their learning. Pupils regularly respond to marking and feedback from their teachers. Occasionally, pupils' responses require more detail for them to make better progress. Overall, pupils make a good contribution to their learning.
- The school's environment is well-cared-for and is litter free.
- Attendance has improved and is above average. The number of pupils regularly absent from school has reduced and is below average, although the proportion of disadvantaged pupils regularly absent is above average. Newly appointed assistant year leaders, with a priority for improving attendance further, are having a positive impact on rates of attendance.
- The school enjoys good links with alternative providers who are used for a very small number of pupils. Pupils are well cared for and staff are vigilant about student welfare and safety. School staff check pupils' attendance, progress, behaviour and safety regularly. As a result of very effective work between the school, the provider and external agencies, attendance is improving for these pupils, as is their behaviour and their personal development.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection. Leaders' determined efforts have improved teaching so that it is consistently good across the school. As a result, pupils make good progress in most of their subjects.
- In 2015, from starting points that were generally well above average, the proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C including English and mathematics was well above average at the end of Year 11. Pupils made good progress in their subjects, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Over time, progress has been consistently strong in English and has improved across many subjects, including mathematics. Overall, the progress being made by pupils across all year groups is good. Although progress in science has not been good over time it is improving because teaching and leadership are better than before.
- Overall, the most-able pupils are making the same progress as similar pupils in other schools, especially in English and mathematics. However, in science and a small number of other subjects pupils are not attaining the very highest grades at GCSE as they are not challenged sufficiently well to extend their understanding. When analysing pupils' work, inspectors found that challenge for the most-able pupils is improving but it is not consistently strong across the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils are benefiting well from the school's use of pupil premium funding. There have been strong improvements in their progress over the past year in comparison to other pupils in school and nationally. Progress for disadvantaged pupils is as good as other pupils in school and gaps in attainment are closing, both in school and nationally, between this group and other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making progress that is as good as others in school. Clear identification of the needs of these pupils is helping teachers and teaching assistants to provide good support which leads to good progress.
- Those pupils who have been diagnosed as having autistic spectrum disorder are supported exceptionally well in the additional resource centre. Pupils are confident and integrate impressively into mainstream classes. Teachers and support staff have received appropriate training to be able to provide good teaching which results in good progress for these pupils.
- The few pupils eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding (government funding for those entering secondary school with below average standards in English and mathematics) make exceptional progress in English and good progress in mathematics. High quality support from teachers and teaching assistants helps these pupils to catch up quickly.
- There are too few pupils attending alternative provision for meaningful comparisons to be made between their outcomes and those of others in the school.
- The school promotes reading well. There has been considerable investment in a well-stocked library that is used regularly by pupils. Computer systems are used well to encourage reading and to check pupils' understanding of what is being read. Pupils said they enjoyed reading.

School details

Unique reference number	107763
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10002114

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

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Wallis
Headteacher	Paul Greenough
Telephone number	01484 222347
Website	www.honleyhigh.co.uk
Email address	office@honleyhigh.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- There are five alternative providers currently used by the school for a very small number of pupils. They are: Ethos College; New Directions College; Edgerton College; Kirklees College and Westfields Pupil Referral Unit.
- The school holds the Artsmark Gold award.
- The school hosts a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. The unit caters for 20 pupils who have been diagnosed as having autistic spectrum disorder.
- The headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection, starting on 1 January 2014.
- The school has received support from a national leader in education, the Principal from Moor End Academy, to strengthen leadership in the school. It has also used support from Penistone Grammar School and Temple Moor High School to check and improve pupils' progress in mathematics, science, history, geography and religious education.
- In September 2014, the school changed its status from a community school to a foundation school, creating The Honley Co-operative Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons. Two observations were undertaken jointly with members of the leadership team.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their learning in lessons and their safety in the school. They also listened to some pupils reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and five other members of the governing body. They also held meetings with senior leaders, the headteacher and a representative of the local authority. Meetings were held with school staff, including middle leaders.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, school policies and the minutes of the governing body meetings. They also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of pupils' books.
- Inspectors evaluated 116 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also analysed a parent survey from the school.
- The inspector analysed 41 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Most pupils from Year 8 were not in school during the two days of the inspection as they were attending a week-long residential course in Cornwall.

Inspection team

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