

# Rye Hills School

Redcar Lane, Redcar, North Yorkshire TS10 2HN

## Inspection dates

16–17 March 2016

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders have not taken effective steps since the last inspection to improve teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- While senior leaders have an understanding of how to improve the school, they do not check carefully or regularly enough that the actions they take are making improvements to pupils' learning.
- Governors have not challenged leaders about the school's performance rigorously enough to bring about sustained improvement.
- Middle leaders do not yet play a strong enough role in checking pupils' progress and improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching, although improving, is not consistently good across subjects and within some subjects.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, particularly for the most-able pupils. Work set can at times lack challenge and teachers too often accept poorly presented work.
- The impact of pupil premium funding is not being tracked and measured clearly enough.
- Attainment at key stage 4 is not improving fast enough because some groups of pupils, and in particular disadvantaged pupils and the most-able pupils, have not made the progress required to achieve well.
- Attendance remains below the national average. The achievement of too many pupils is held back because they do not attend the school regularly.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has high aspirations for pupils and for the school, and has begun to take steps to make the required improvements. Teaching, learning and assessment are slowly improving.
- The school's work in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe at school, in the wider community and online.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that staff will address any problems that arise.
- The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that progress is at least good in all subjects and for all pupils by:
  - developing and implementing a clear, straightforward and effective school-wide strategy for improving teaching, monitoring its impact and holding staff closely to account
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of all pupils and adapt learning activities so that the most-able pupils are challenged to master more complex ideas and concepts
  - ensuring that all teachers comply fully with agreed policies, for example in marking
  - insisting that pupils' work is always completed and presented to a high standard.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - setting clear timescales and deadlines for improvement, together with well-defined targets by which to measure success, so that the pace of school improvement increases
  - ensuring that middle leaders are fully involved in evaluating pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility, so that they are held accountable for tackling any identified inconsistencies and weaknesses
  - ensuring that funding provided through the pupil premium is used more effectively in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils
  - rapidly developing robust systems and procedures to monitor and improve the attendance of all groups of pupils, and to reduce the proportion of pupils excluded from lessons and from school.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the actions leaders have taken to strengthen the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement have been too slow. Leaders, including governors, did not act with sufficient urgency following the last inspection in 2013 and too many pupils who have left the school since then have underachieved. Challenge by governors and the local authority has not secured rapid improvement, and pupils who are currently in the school have not made as much progress since the last inspection as they should have.
- Self-evaluation is overgenerous and is based on an inflated view of the quality of teaching. When making their judgements, senior and middle leaders rely too heavily on observations of teaching in lessons and not enough on understanding the impact that teaching over time is having on pupils' learning. They do not check well enough the presentation and quality of pupils' work, including making sure that the work set is challenging and consistently marked in agreement with school policies. The headteacher has accurately identified many of the areas which require improvement but the school development plan fails to focus specifically enough on the actions, targets and timescales which will overcome these weaknesses.
- Systems to check pupils' progress have recently improved and are now more accurate. Pupils who are falling behind are identified and supported to improve their progress. However, middle leaders do not yet carefully check the progress of groups of pupils within their subject areas and, as a result, it has been difficult for the school to rapidly target additional support where it is most required.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium money to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils but until recently have not checked closely enough the impact this funding is making, and so were not always aware of which strategies were making the most or least difference to pupils' achievement. Leaders' work to ensure that these pupils attend well still needs further development.
- The curriculum is well planned and contains a good balance of subjects. In key stage 4, pupils are able to select and follow different curriculum pathways which are best suited to their individual interests, skills and abilities. Effective careers guidance helps pupils choose their next steps when leaving at the end of Year 11. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being, and pupils are well informed about diversity in British society. They are taught to respect and value different cultures and beliefs, and recognise the importance of democracy.
- Communication with parents is not yet strong and a number do not recognise recent improvements in the school. However, parents are able to access detailed and up-to-date information through the school's website.
- School leaders have not always been well served by the local authority. Reports seen during the inspection gave an inaccurate and inflated view of improvements at the school. More recently, the local authority has brokered effective support from the headteacher of an outstanding local school to support improvements in leadership and teaching.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The local authority carried out a review of governance following the previous inspection. Governors are now better able to hold school leaders to account, particularly in terms of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors know the school and its context well. However, they are still not fully effective in challenging leaders so that the changes required to bring about and secure improvements in pupils' achievement are monitored and sustained consistently.
  - The governing body is involved in making decisions about whether teachers should receive pay rises, and has appropriate procedures for managing staff underperformance.
  - Governors have a clear understanding of their statutory duties, in particular about safeguarding, and confirm that the required checks are carried out and recorded carefully. They have ensured that all statutory information required on the school's website is accurate and up to date.
  - The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff training is fully up to date and policies follow the latest guidelines. Staff and the majority of parents are confident that the school keeps children safe and that they are cared for well.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved over time but remains inconsistent within and between subjects. Actions taken by senior leaders and governors have successfully eradicated inadequate teaching and leaders now check the quality of teaching more closely, but there is still a need to consider more carefully the link between the teaching observed during lessons and pupils' outcomes as seen in their books and assessments over time. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are overly complex.
- Teaching, particularly in key stage 3, is improving because of higher expectations of what all pupils can do. Middle leaders have ensured that the new school assessment system, based on the revised National Curriculum, has been designed to raise expectations for these pupils. When accurately pitched work is set, pupils apply themselves with enthusiasm and determination and enjoy their lessons.
- In Key Stage 4 the work set for pupils is not consistently challenging and so not all pupils, from a range of different starting points, make the progress of which they are capable over time. This is particularly evident with most-able pupils, who do not have enough opportunities across the curriculum to demonstrate the higher-level skills and knowledge appropriate to their age and ability.
- The majority of teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, although there is a whole-school approach to marking and assessment, not all staff follow it. As a result, there are inconsistencies of expectation between subjects and across year groups. Pupils are not always clear about how they should respond to teachers' marking, and teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils have done what is asked of them.
- Too many pupils do not take enough pride in their work and too much of the work seen in books is untidy. In some subjects there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets, which limits the development of pupils' writing skills and reduces their opportunities to write at length. Pupils spend too much time filling in short answers to problems rather than developing their understanding and skills with more 'open-ended' and challenging activities.
- Teachers do not always use questioning effectively enough to ensure that pupils, including most-able pupils, make good and better progress. Too often questions from teachers and other adults focus on 'what' rather than 'why' and 'how'. As a result, opportunities are lost to explore complex ideas and resolve more difficult problems.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and the support provided by teaching assistants is usually good. Inspectors saw examples of pupils being supported very effectively in mainstream classes and when receiving targeted support both individually and in small groups.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Procedures and policies for safeguarding are fully in place and are reviewed regularly by senior leaders and the governing body. Staff receive appropriate training in managing pupils' behaviour and in safeguarding.
- Pupils spoken with were able to talk knowledgeably about online safety and the potential dangers of social media, and have a clear understanding of what makes an unsafe situation. They are aware of different forms of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying, and know how to report their concerns if they witness or experience any form of it. Pupils report that bullying is rare at the school, and that they are confident that when it does happen staff deal with problems quickly and effectively.
- The school supports pupils' understanding of issues such as the dangers of extremism, potential radicalisation and sexual health, and works closely with a range of external partners, including the police and the health service. The school has a well-established programme of careers advice and guidance.
- Pupils are monitored well by the climate for learning team when in the alternative provision based on the school site. However, the safety and progress of pupils educated off-site, and those who are excluded from school, are not checked closely.
- Pupils take on responsibility in a number of roles. The school council is active and effective, and makes an effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils told inspectors that they are confident that adults listen to their opinions and respond positively.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The attendance of pupils has remained too low since the previous inspection, in part because far too many disadvantaged pupils are absent from school, and it is not improving rapidly enough. Staff have not been successful in working with parents to improve the attendance of pupils who are frequently absent from school.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is often good but, in a small number of lessons where weak teaching does not challenge or engage pupils, poor behaviour can disrupt learning. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour around the school site has improved since the introduction of the choices, rewards and sanctions system, and that this is applied consistently by the majority of staff.
- Pupils do not always take enough pride in their written work and in some lessons it can be untidy, poorly presented and incomplete. However, pupils' conduct around school is good and they wear their uniform well.
- Levels of fixed-term exclusion and repeated fixed-term exclusion remain high. The analysis of exclusion data by school leaders is not robust or timely and this has slowed improvements in this area.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils completing Year 11 have not been good enough since the previous inspection, although pupils who are currently in the school are making better progress than they have in the past, particularly those in Years 7, 8 and 9. Variations in the quality of teaching have, over time, led to pupils' outcomes requiring improvement across the school.
- In 2014, those pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 11 made too little progress in many subjects, and in particular in mathematics and science. School leaders adopted a rapid recovery plan which sharpened school systems to identify more accurately pupils who were falling behind and required targeted support. By the end of Year 11 in 2015, pupils' GCSE examination results for five A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, were slightly above the national average. However, there remains too much variation across subjects and groups of pupils.
- In 2015, the average point score reached by disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 11 was equivalent to around one GCSE grade lower in English and one half grade lower in mathematics than other pupils in the school. Current school information indicates that these gaps are unlikely to narrow this year. However, the progress being made by disadvantaged pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 is improving.
- The most-able pupils have not achieved as highly as they should. Their progress across the school has not been tracked carefully enough and, as a result, the work they have been given often lacks challenge. These pupils do not achieve the A\* or A grades they are capable of at GCSE in a wide range of subjects.
- The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is variable and there remain gaps between the achievement of many of these pupils and others. The teacher in charge of supporting these pupils is not yet fully involved in monitoring this aspect of provision.
- The progress of the pupils attending the off-site provision requires improvement. Their progress is not closely monitored and they are not challenged well enough to make good progress.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111742
<b>Local authority</b>	Redcar and Cleveland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002052

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	841
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Iain Fuller
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Appleby
<b>Telephone number</b>	01642 484269
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ryehills.co.uk">www.ryehills.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:contactus@ryehills.rac.sch.uk">contactus@ryehills.rac.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5–6 November 2013

## Information about this school

- This school caters for pupils aged from 11 to 16 and is slightly smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is slightly above the national 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.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for special educational needs or disability is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The school's Austen Centre supports a small number of pupils with social and emotional needs. Pupils travel from across the local authority to access this provision.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision including the Education Other than at School Service (EOTAS) run by the local authority.
- Few pupils leave or join the school other than at the beginning and end of the school year.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the government's minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 35 lessons and part-lessons, some of which were observed jointly with senior and middle leaders. Lessons were observed in a range of subjects and were taught by teachers across all year groups in the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and other members of the leadership team, middle leaders, the chair, vice-chair and three other members of the governing body. The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority and a local headteacher who has been providing support to the school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation including the school's view of its own performance, monitoring records, information about pupils' progress, improvement planning, minutes of meetings of the governors, and records of behaviour and attendance. They looked closely at records relating to safeguarding and child protection, and at policies, including those published on the school's website.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils were doing in lessons and over time in their books.
- Discussions were held with four groups of pupils about the quality of their educational experience and the standard of behaviour in the school. Inspectors also spoke with pupils in lessons and at various times during both days of the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 36 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, three responses to the online pupil questionnaire and 95 responses to the online staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

David Brown, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Campbell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Cleary	Ofsted Inspector
Julie McGrane	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

