

# Norham High School

Alnwick Avenue, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE29 7BU

## Inspection dates

25–26 May 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	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes have declined in recent years. By the end of Year 11, fewer pupils than nationally make or exceed expected progress in English or mathematics.
- Pupils' rates of progress across the school vary, especially in mathematics and science. Outcomes in art, music and French are not improving fast enough.
- The quality of teaching, although rapidly improving, is not yet consistently good across subjects and within subjects.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- In some lessons, pupils do not concentrate sufficiently and disrupt the learning of others.
- There are inconsistencies in the pride and care that some pupils take in their written work.
- Not all middle leaders hold their colleagues to account with enough rigour to ensure that pupils make at least consistently good progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and senior leaders bring ambition, enthusiasm and high expectations to the school. Since the beginning of the academic year, they have successfully driven improvement and tackled many weaknesses in teaching.
- Senior and middle leaders work well as a team and are taking effective action to raise pupils' outcomes.
- Governors know the school well. They make good use of the information that they receive on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement to hold the school's leaders to account.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. However, it is taking time for this better teaching to overcome previous levels of underachievement, and weaknesses remain in some subjects.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs or disability, especially in the communication resource base, is good.
- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare are good. Most pupils attend regularly and behave well.

## Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

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

- Build on recent improvements so that teaching is consistently good, by ensuring that all teachers:
  - plan and deliver challenging lessons that are closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities, especially those of the most able
  - check carefully the progress pupils make in lessons, adjusting work accordingly to meet their needs
  - have high expectations of pupils' levels of concentration and perseverance, so that the learning of others is rarely disrupted.
- Raise students' outcomes, especially in mathematics and science, by:
  - checking more rigorously the progress pupils make in developing skills that enable them to use confidently the knowledge they acquire
  - providing regular opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Hone the skills of some middle leaders, by:
  - supporting them in identifying more precisely the rates of progress all pupils are making in lessons, and in their work over time
  - raising their expectations and heightening their confidence in holding all members of their teams to account for consistently good and better teaching
  - ensuring that they enforce rigorously the school's marking and assessment policy, so that pupils know exactly how well they are doing.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Some parts of the areas for improvement from the last inspection have not been consistently and rigorously addressed over time. As a result, teaching requires improvement, especially in mathematics and science.
- Pupils' outcomes across the school still vary, and are not improving fast enough in art, music and French. The weaknesses in the teaching of these subjects limit pupils' cultural development, and also the full entitlement of all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Not all middle leaders hold their colleagues to account with enough rigour to ensure that teaching is consistently effective and that pupils make at least good progress. As a result, in some lessons pupils have not yet developed sufficiently positive attitudes to their learning, as seen through the quality of the work that they produce in books and in their general disposition in class.
- Since the arrival of the executive headteacher at the beginning of the academic year, the momentum of improvement within the school has gathered significant pace. His high expectations and thirst for success have intensified the school's drive to improve teaching and raise pupils' outcomes.
- The newly formed senior leadership team has risen to the new challenges introduced by the executive headteacher. Senior leaders share a clear vision for improvement and have created a culture of supportive team work which has led to rapidly improving morale throughout the school.
- Leaders, including governors, now have a clear and accurate view of where the school is performing well and where it could do better.
- Senior and middle leaders hold regular meetings where the progress of pupils is discussed and arrange support for those who may be at risk of falling behind. There is a strong sense of collective commitment among staff to improving the outcomes for pupils.
- Senior leaders provide staff with good professional advice and guidance in school. Teachers also benefit from support from Churchill Community College, a local outstanding school, and local authority specialists. This support has helped to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and to provide external checks on the accuracy of assessment information.
- Staff indicate that they are proud to work in the school and feel well supported in collectively achieving the school's priorities.
- The executive headteacher has strengthened appraisal systems, and has linked teachers' pay rigorously to their performance, measured closely against the national teachers' standards.
- Leaders and managers ensure that they track pupils' progress carefully. As a result, different groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability, make increasingly good progress.
- Adults' willingness to confront rigorously the rare instances of discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour demonstrates their commitment to the school's strong sense of community.
- The curriculum largely meets pupils' needs and aspirations. Pupils have improving opportunities to reinforce their literacy skills across all subjects but these are less well developed for numeracy. An appropriate range of academic, and some vocational, courses ensures that almost all pupils continue into education, training and/or employment when they leave school.
- The vast majority of pupils follow a GCSE course in religious education. Together with well-conceived weekly assemblies and daily tutorials, and carefully tailored 'Respect' days, these experiences help to develop pupils' good all-round appreciation of British values.
- In addition, the array of extra-curricular activities on offer all effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These include: the Duke of Edinburgh's Award; sporting and performing events; technology-related activities; and visits to London and local places of interest. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain and are well informed about community cohesion and issues surrounding extremism and radicalisation.
- Leaders work well with off-site providers to support a small minority of pupils who require some alternative provision to meet best their individual needs. Leaders check pupils' attendance and progress, and that the provision provides a safe learning environment for the pupils who attend. These arrangements help pupils to become more successful learners.
- Leaders use appropriately the Year 7 catch-up funding (additional government funding for pupils who did not reach the expected levels in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6). Last year, the additional support helped a large majority of supported pupils to make good progress in reading, spelling and

mathematics.

- Leaders' use of pupil premium funding has helped to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The school's information shows that current eligible pupils are making good progress in most subjects and across the year groups, and catching up with their peers.
- Pupils, staff and parents completing school and Ofsted online questionnaires are positive about the school's work. A large proportion of parents believe that their children enjoy school life, and would recommend the school to other families.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors have improved their working arrangements since the previous inspection. Membership of the governing body has been reviewed and committees re-organised. These changes have led to governors carrying out their roles with increased confidence and rigour.
  - Governors are regular visitors to the school and ensure that they share their findings directly with the relevant committees. They check the information that they receive from the school's leaders against reports received from an external school development partner and local authority personnel to make sure it is accurate.
  - Governors are confident in their understanding of how well the school is doing, and in holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance and its safeguarding arrangements.
  - Governors update frequently their general skills with targeted training on educational issues, particularly safeguarding and pupils' performance. Consequently, they understand well the information they receive on the school's work to keep pupils safe, and to ensure that all appropriately achieve.
  - Governors keep a close watch on how leaders spend additional funding, such as the pupil premium, to meet priorities, and check whether this is having the desired impact. They have a clear appreciation of the quality of teaching and its impact on outcomes for pupils.
  - Governors know about the management of teachers' performance and the links between this and teachers' pay progression. They have adopted rigorous arrangements for evaluating the executive headteacher's annual performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have been trained according to the latest guidelines and are alert to identify possible concerns such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. The school works well with parents, providing good advice and guidance on the dangers of the internet and the threat of extremism. As a result, pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Improvements to teaching have not yet resulted in pupils' overall achievement being good in a number of subject areas. However, senior leaders have correctly focused on improving the quality of teaching in the school and have been largely successful in this work.
- All teachers are supported through a targeted and individual development programme. Visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that standards are rising as teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving increase.
- In a minority of lessons, particularly in mathematics and science, teaching is insufficiently challenging of some pupils. Not all teachers check carefully enough the progress of pupils in lessons and adjust activities to continue to develop individuals' skills to the full.
- In a number of subjects, including art, music and French, work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs and abilities and, on occasions, is insufficiently inspiring and interesting. In these lessons, some pupils' levels of concentration and perseverance lapse, and low-level disruption sets in.
- Teachers' feedback is increasingly effective in ensuring that pupils understand what they have learned and what they need to do to improve, as more of them consistently follow the school's marking and assessment policy. Work in books shows that pupils are making better progress in many subjects, especially in English, and that many take pride in the presentation of their work. However, on occasions, leaders do not ensure that teachers follow the school's marking and assessment policy rigorously enough, and this can slow pupils' progress.
- The majority of lessons are planned with a variety of activities that interest and engage pupils. Where pupils make good progress, teachers use their knowledge of pupils' previous learning to make sure work is set at the right level and ignite pupils' curiosity with thought-provoking activities. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson pupils responded enthusiastically to the examples provided by the teacher to craft their own descriptions of the emotions of characters in the novel they were studying. Similarly, Year 9

pupils were absorbed in discussion about the use of animals for medical research in a religious education lesson, developing mature arguments for and against this work.

- The teaching of the most able pupils is improving, but remains inconsistent. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the highest-attaining pupils can achieve, and are insufficiently demanding of them in the activities that they plan.
- The teaching of literacy across subjects is improving. In many subjects, particularly history, geography and religious education, teachers help pupils to sequence their ideas in a logical manner, support them to write increasingly complex sentences, and use a variety of language and punctuation for effect.
- The teaching of numeracy across subjects is less well-developed. Opportunities are missed by some teachers, especially in science, to encourage pupils to calculate mentally, record findings with precision in a variety of charts and graphs, and interpret data in detail.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs or disability, especially in the communication resource base, is good. This is because teachers and teaching assistants have a detailed knowledge of individual pupils' needs, tailor work carefully to sustain their interest and concentration, and enable them to achieve challenging outcomes.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop into confident young people. They enjoy coming to school and are welcoming of visitors.
- At breaktimes and lunchtimes, in the dining room, outside areas, corridors and classrooms, pupils behave in an orderly and sensible manner. They make positive contributions to school life through their roles as school councillors, their organising of charity fundraising events, and their work as mentors and buddies for younger pupils.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are helped to stay safe in different situations through, for instance, hearing speakers talk about internet safety, and learning about drug and alcohol misuse and, more recently, about the threat of terrorist and extremist activities.
- Pupils are well aware of different types of bullying, particularly homophobic and cyber bullying. They report that it only occurs rarely, but feel confident that, when it does occur, it is dealt with appropriately by staff. As a result, pupils feel safe and well looked after.
- The school has a well-established programme of careers advice and guidance. Pupils say how much they value the time taken by all of the adults to help them with decisions and choices they make about their future lives. As a result, almost all continue in education, training or employment when they leave school at the end of Year 11.
- The small number of pupils who are educated away from the school site benefit from support that meets their specific needs. This results in their attending regularly, behaving well and achieving appropriate qualifications.
- School leaders know individual pupils and their particular circumstances well. They provide high levels of care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and for their families. Staff work closely with a range of external agencies, including health professionals, educational psychologists and social care workers, to support the pupils in their care.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is often good but, in lessons where weaker teaching does not challenge or engage pupils sufficiently, low-level chatter disrupts learning.
- There are inconsistencies across, and within, subjects in the ways in which some pupils organise their written work, complete activities in full, request more challenging work when they find initial tasks too easy, and respond to the feedback they receive from teachers.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. As a result, attendance is above average and persistent absence is low. Pupils arrive punctually to school and move across the school campus quickly in order to arrive at their lessons on time.
- The majority of pupils, parents and staff responding to the Ofsted online questionnaires, as well as the

school's own questionnaires, indicate that pupils' general conduct is strongly improving, and that school is a calm and orderly place to be.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because until recently their progress has been too slow.
- Outcomes for pupils completing Year 11 have not been good enough since the previous inspection. In 2015 the proportion of pupils achieving five good GCSE qualifications including English and mathematics was well below average. Too many pupils made insufficient progress in English and mathematics.
- Outcomes for pupils in most year groups are now rising. The school's most recent assessment information indicates that the outcomes of Year 11 pupils are likely to rise significantly this year, particularly in English and mathematics. These assessments were checked by representatives of the local authority and expert practitioners from Churchill Community College. Observations of teaching, evidence from pupils' books and discussions with pupils confirm that pupils are making better progress in many subjects, notably in history and geography.
- There is still some variability in the rates of some pupils' progress in mathematics and science, especially in low-attaining classes and in key stage 3. Outcomes in art, music and French are not improving fast enough. This is because teaching is not consistently good in these subjects.
- The most able pupils have not achieved as highly as they should. Until recently, their progress across the school has not been tracked carefully enough and, as a result, the work they have completed in lessons has often lacked challenge. This situation is improving, although not rapidly enough in all subjects. Visits to lessons and work in pupils' books confirm that some teachers are still not probing sufficiently the most able pupils with questions that deepen their thinking. They are not testing their abilities to infer, deduce and formulate ideas for themselves.
- In 2015, the average point score reached by disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 11 was much lower in English and even more so in mathematics compared with other pupils nationally. Current school information indicates that these gaps are likely to narrow significantly this year. Senior and middle leaders have improved the way they use and check the impact of pupil premium funding in order to target support more carefully. As a consequence, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils throughout the school is improving.
- The outcomes of pupils with special educational needs or disability are good in lessons and in the communication resource base. Improved systems are now in place to check on how well pupils are doing and to provide appropriate and effective additional support where required.
- Pupils who have fallen behind and need to catch up in their learning also achieve well. This is because they all benefit from careful assessment of their needs and well-targeted support which helps them to learn effectively.
- The school has an effective support base, 'The Bridge', where staff provide successful advice and guidance for pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties. A small number of pupils also attend alternative off-site learning experiences. The progress of these pupils is regularly checked by school leaders, and information indicates that pupils benefit from these opportunities.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108628
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011686

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>	329
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David W. Bavaird
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Baldwin (executive headteacher)
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 200 5062
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.norhamhigh.com">www.norhamhigh.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:norham.high@northtyneside.gov.uk">norham.high@northtyneside.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12–13 November 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is average.
- The school has a bespoke communication resource base with provision for pupils with language and communication difficulties, including those on the autistic spectrum.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant staffing changes, including the appointment of an executive headteacher, and changes in the senior leadership team and in teachers. Membership of the governing body has also changed. A new chair of governors is in place, and governors' committees have been reviewed.
- The school receives support from Churchill Community College, a local outstanding school, and from the local education authority.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A very small minority of pupils experiencing difficulties in mainstream education in Years 8 and 11 are educated at Personal Achievement Through Learning Support, managed by Churchill Community College on behalf of the local education authority. In addition, a small minority of key stage 3 and 4 pupils at risk of exclusion attend Moorbridge pupil referral unit. Small numbers of key stage 4 pupils access YMCA courses and the 'Moving on Project' at Southlands School, two days a week.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of different lessons, of which three were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also made visits to three tutor groups and a key stage 3 assembly.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in lessons in a range of subjects. In addition, English, mathematics and science work from Years 9, 10 and 11, and history and geography work from Years 8 and 9, was sampled separately.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of documents, including: the school's own information on current pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; minutes of the governing body's meetings; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils in Years 7 to 11, with governors and with school staff, including those with management responsibilities. In addition, a discussion took place with a representative from the local education authority.
- The number of responses by parents to Parent View was too low for inspectors to analyse. However, inspectors did take into account the views of four pupils and 55 members of the school's staff who completed the Ofsted online questionnaires. In addition, inspectors considered recent responses by parents and pupils to the school's own questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Andy Swallow, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Bernard Sénier	Ofsted Inspector
Joanne Owens	Ofsted Inspector
Judith James	Ofsted Inspector



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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)  
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