

Pennine View School

Old Lane, Conisbrough, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN12 3LR

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not ensured that all required checks on the suitability of staff have been carried out. Consequently, they have not adequately met their duty to safeguard pupils.
- Governors have not kept up to date with safeguarding requirements. They have not met their statutory duty to publish information on the school's website.
- Leaders do not have high enough expectations for the progress pupils could make. This is because leaders and governors do not check whether they are doing as well as other pupils, with similar starting points, in other schools.
- Leaders do not always focus on the progress pupils make when evaluating different aspects of the school's work. So they do not ensure that more effective teaching develops quickly enough.
- Senior leaders do not consider carefully enough how the time spent on different subjects, including English, mathematics and science, helps or hinders the progress pupils make.
- Overall, teaching does not ensure that pupils make good progress over time. This is because expectations are too low in reading, writing, mathematics and science across all key stages. As a result, by the end of Year 11, pupils do not achieve the qualifications they are capable of.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged are excluded from school for short periods of time far more often than other pupils. Disadvantaged pupils make less progress in writing than other pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make strong progress in their personal development. Most pupils' attendance and social skills improve during their time in school.
- Knowledgeable staff work hard to develop positive relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and begin to believe in themselves.
- Staff work effectively with other agencies to support pupils who face significant challenges in their lives.
- Pupils are polite and thoughtful. The wide range of activities and opportunities the school provides ensures that they develop tolerance of other people.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors must take urgent action to ensure that all required checks on the suitability of staff who work in the school are carried out. They must ensure that all aspects of safer recruiting are in place and always followed, including maintaining staff records in an appropriate way.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the headteacher and governors keep up to date with changes in statutory duties, including those relating to safeguarding policies and procedures
 - governors keep up to date with their statutory duty to publish information
 - leaders increase their expectations of the rate of progress and qualifications pupils can achieve, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science
 - leaders compare the progress and attainment of pupils, with similar starting points and needs, to those achieved in other schools, using published information and through links with high-performing schools
 - leaders keep a tight focus on the impact different activities have on the progress all pupils make in order to achieve the best use of the pupils' time in school
 - leaders' support and guidance to all teachers and teaching assistants are based on their analysis of the most effective practice in securing faster rates of progress.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - teachers and teaching assistants have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - the most effective teachers have more influence on improving less effective practice
 - lesson time is spent on activities that are effective in improving the progress pupils make
 - teachers and teaching assistants consistently use the school's policy for making clear to pupils what they are learning and how to improve their work
 - teachers and teaching assistants provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in all subjects, including writing longer pieces
 - teachers and teaching assistants develop skills in how they use questions to help pupils expand their thinking and reasoning skills.
- Improve pupils' personal behaviour and welfare by developing more effective strategies to support the behaviour of pupils who are disadvantaged so that they do not experience a disproportionately high level of fixed-term exclusions.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Leaders do not implement their own safer recruiting policy effectively. The absence of required checks on some staff, poor record-keeping and a lack of appropriate questioning at interviews means that leaders cannot be confident that pupils are safe. The headteacher recognised the serious nature of these omissions when they came to light and worked to rectify the gaps, but could not do so within the period of the inspection.
- Aside from the crucially important safeguarding omissions, the headteacher has led, at a measured pace, significant and much-needed change in many aspects of the school's work. In particular, she has started to reinvigorate teaching and learning through a more robust performance management system. Equally, she has increased leadership capacity through the introduction of specialist teachers as subject leaders for English, mathematics and science.
- The impact of new developments has been limited by leaders' lack of precise analysis of what is working well and what is less effective. For example, leaders' evaluation indicates that disadvantaged pupils make the same progress as other pupils in the school when in fact they are making significantly less progress in writing. Lack of precise analysis means that leaders have missed this underachievement.
- Leaders introduced a new system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress at the start of this school year. The system is based on the progress pupils made in the past, without comparing it to pupils with similar starting points in other schools or with rates of progress in high-performing schools. As a result, they have continued to set targets which are far too low, especially for the most able pupils and for the majority of pupils who do not have complex needs in addition to moderate learning difficulties.
- Senior leaders have increased choices by widening the range of subjects pupils study. Opportunities to work in mixed year groups for special activities, such as 'ECO days' and arts week, contribute to pupils' social development as older pupils help younger pupils. Theme days on different faith groups contribute positively to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The personal, social and health education programme supports the strong progress pupils make in their growth as young British citizens. However, the time allocated to English, mathematics and science is limited, restricting pupils' opportunity to achieve Level 1 qualifications.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in their personal development as do other pupils. Their attendance is improving. Leaders use the pupil premium to make sure that this group of pupils do not miss any of the enrichment activities and access a range of specialist interventions if needed. However, leaders do not analyse precisely which activities result in improving pupils' achievements. As a result, they do not know if they are getting best value from the additional money provided to support this group of pupils.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision away from the school site. Leaders rely too much on the local authority alternative provision service to undertake checks on the quality of provision and the outcomes for the pupils.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for the school since the previous inspection. The local authority shares leaders' and governors' over-optimistic view of the school's effectiveness.
- The small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, () are very positive about the school and appreciate the progress pupils make in their personal development. Staff are also very positive about the work of the school and appreciate the training opportunities provided.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors' checks on the record of the suitability of staff to work in the school are not thorough enough. They have not ensured that the required checks are in place and that they are recorded appropriately. As a result, they cannot be confident that pupils are safe.
 - Governors accept information from leaders about the progress pupils make without checking if this compares favourably with progress similar pupils make in other schools. Consequently, they do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders to drive up the effectiveness of teaching and ensure better outcomes for pupils.
 - Low expectations influence governors' evaluation of the effectiveness of the school resulting in an overly optimistic view. They accept information from leaders which does not detail the impact different activities have on pupils' achievements. These two factors lead to poorly founded decisions about how resources are used, including specific government grants such as the sports premium.

- Governors play an active part in the life of the school and are developing their skills and approach to governance. However, the developments are not sufficiently embedded to ensure that they have the impact they should.
- Governors do not ensure that they meet requirements to publish key information on the school's website.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
 - Leaders could not provide evidence that they had undertaken all required checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work in the school. This means they cannot be sure that pupils are safe. Out-of-date safeguarding policies on the school's website contributed to a small number of staff not being fully aware of how they should respond if they were concerned about the conduct of a colleague. An up-to-date safeguarding policy was agreed by governors during the inspection.
 - Other aspects of safeguarding are effective. Pupils who need additional support because they are more vulnerable than others receive the help they should. Staff work diligently with other agencies. Records show that leaders are tenacious in securing additional support when other services do not respond promptly to the school's concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Not enough teaching leads to pupils making good progress. This was seen in the work in pupils' books and during visits to lessons. As a result, the quality of teaching requires improvement in order to be good.
- Some teachers, across a range of subjects and year groups, do not plan work that moves pupils on from what they already know, understand and can do. In these lessons, the most able pupils are not challenged and the least able pupils do not get the support they need to make progress. Some teachers plan low-level cutting and sticking activities or use work sheets that restrict even the most able pupils to writing single-word answers. Pupils make slow, if any, progress in these lessons.
- Some teachers and assistants do not question or discuss ideas with pupils in a way that encourages them to think about their ideas and express them more clearly. Sometimes, errors and misconceptions are not picked up so pupils plough on without having grasped key concepts. Pupils' books show there is inconsistent use of the school's recently introduced marking policy.
- Some teaching is characterised by more strengths than weaknesses, particularly in some English and mathematics lessons. In some English lessons, pupils' reading and writing are inspired by the use of a good range of age-appropriate texts. This, combined with specific interventions to support pupils' reading and writing skills, has led to improved progress in reading and writing over the last two years.
- In mathematics, some teaching leads to strong progress for pupils with different starting points and different needs. This is because regular and thorough assessments give the teacher a detailed understanding of the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Activities are designed to help pupils fill the gaps in their understanding, for example of concepts underpinning basic number skills. As a result, pupils make more progress in mathematics than any other subject.
- Pupils read with varying levels of skill but most read with confidence. Pupils talk about enjoying reading and taking books home to read for homework.
- Pupils are making more progress in writing since the previous inspection. However, there are still inconsistent expectations in different subjects of how much and how well pupils should write. This slows pupils' overall progress in developing their writing skills.
- There is a wide variation in the effectiveness of support provided by teaching assistants. Sometimes too much help is given and prevents pupils making progress, for example by providing answers to questions rather than making sure that pupils think for themselves. Most achieve an effective balance of support and encouragement to work independently. Support provided by teaching assistants for personal and social development is strong.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils say and indicate that they feel safe in school and the majority of pupils make significant progress in their personal development. However, as safer recruitment procedures are not followed robustly, leaders recognise that they have taken unnecessary risks to pupils' welfare and so personal development and welfare, overall, require improvement.
- Pupils make strong progress in developing their social skills and independence. Staff skilfully work to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence through a wide range of activities including residential trips. About a tenth of the pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and in a range of different situations. Personal safety, including safety linked to emerging sexuality, is taught through a range of lessons and the appropriate use of visiting groups and agencies. Leaders provide good support to parents who need help to ensure that their children are safe at home, for example when using computers and the internet.
- Leaders make sure that the risks involved in different activities are properly considered. As a result, perceived risks do not prevent pupils developing crucially important independence skills. For example, a good number of older pupils learn to travel independently and benefit from off-site work experience.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In lessons, pupils are compliant as they want to earn points that lead to rewards for themselves and their houses. However, activities that do not challenge pupils, such as colouring-in, do not generate enthusiasm for learning. When lessons are planned to challenge pupils at the right level, pupils respond with more enthusiasm.
- The increased capacity of the student support team and the professional development of these staff have improved the quality and impact of support for pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult. This has led to a reduction in the number of pupils experiencing fixed-term exclusions. However, pupils who are disadvantaged receive a disproportionate number of fixed-term exclusions.
- Pupils say that most of the time behaviour is good. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour around school was good. Pupils are polite and thoughtful to each other and adults. They demonstrated genuine pride in their school and achievements that are special to them, for example building a complex Lego model.
- Pupils say they worry when other pupils occasionally get upset and angry. They know whom to talk to when they are concerned and appreciate that staff help these pupils keep calm. Records indicate that support for pupils who experience difficulties in managing their behaviour is effective. As a result, the number and severity of incidents are reducing, especially those involving physical restraint.
- As a result of leaders' actions, pupils' attendance has improved this year. This reverses a three-year decline. Many pupils join the school having experienced periods of very poor attendance at their previous schools. The support they receive at Pennine View means that a significant proportion of these pupils quickly develop good attitudes towards attending school.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Over time, low expectations have led to not enough pupils making the progress they are capable of to gain qualifications in a wide range of subjects. Too few of the most-able pupils do not gain Level 1 qualifications in English, mathematics and science before they leave school at the end of Year 11.
- Leaders' information shows that over the last three years the progress of too many pupils across year groups has been too slow in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current assessment information and work in pupils' books show that progress is beginning to improve as a result of gradual improvements in teaching and an increasing range of effective interventions. Current Year 11 pupils are predicted to achieve a wider range of qualifications than in the past and plans are in place to introduce more Level 1 qualifications next year. This year, entry level science has been introduced for Year 10 pupils. It is too early to say if these developments will result in better outcomes for current Year 11 pupils or will be sustained into next year.

- Pupils' outcomes in their personal and social development are much stronger than in academic subjects. Most pupils make good progress towards achieving the non-academic outcomes in their statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans. Work experience opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' progress in developing employability skills and personal independence. Over the last few years, a substantial proportion of Year 11 pupils achieved GCSE art.
- Over time and currently, leaders have ensured that pupils and their families have good advice and guidance about post-school options. As a result of this advice, combined with sound taster and transition arrangements, pupils move on to further education and remain in their chosen placements for two or three years.

School details

Unique reference number	135545
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10003680

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was converted to a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julianne Duffy
Headteacher	Jo Barker Carr
Telephone number	01709 864978
Website	www.pennineviewschool.org.uk
Email address	office@pennineview.doncaster.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2012

Information about this school

- Pennine View School provides education for pupils who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans that identify moderate learning difficulties as their primary need. Many pupils have additional needs including social, emotional and mental health needs, physical disability, visual and/or hearing impairments; speech language and communication needs and/or a diagnosis of autistic spectrum condition.
- The school is an average-sized special school. The number of places available has increased over the last three years and the school is oversubscribed. Pupils placed in the school come from across the borough of Doncaster. A small number of pupils live in adjacent local authorities.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils are from a range of different backgrounds with an increasing proportion from Eastern Europe. A small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A much higher than average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional government funding allocated for pupils who are in known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school provides advice about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to teachers in mainstream schools. This provision was not reviewed as part of the inspection.
- A very small number of pupils receive their education at alternative provision. The provision used at various times are Opencast, DRFC and Enhancement Training. The school uses the services of Doncaster council's off-site provision coordinator to manage this provision.
- The school offers breakfast to pupils as they arrive in school. A weekly after-school club is provided for pupils who choose to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a number of lessons for varying amounts of time. The majority of the visits were with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. During the visits to classes, the inspectors spoke with pupils and reviewed the work in their books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of teaching assistants, the chair of the governing body and five other governors. A telephone conversation was held with the consultant commissioned by the local authority to support the school.
- The views of pupils were considered through discussions with pupils in class and at breaktime, a meeting with Year 11 pupils and a meeting and tour of the school with Years 7 and 8 pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents, through three free-text responses to Parent View and a discussion with two parents. The inspectors also took note of 30 responses to the school's parent survey from summer 2015.
- The views of staff were considered through the 34 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and through discussions in meetings.
- A joint review of the information, assessments and books of pupils from each year group was undertaken by the inspectors and leaders as well as a review of a range of science books.
- The inspectors considered a wide range of documents, reports and information provided by the school covering all aspects of the school's work. This included a check of the school's records of the suitability of staff and pupils' safeguarding information and records.
- At the time of the inspection, the school's website did not meet statutory requirements.

Inspection team

Susan Hayter, lead inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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