

# William Howard School

Longtown Road, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 1AR

## Inspection dates

11–12 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Not previously inspected</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The actions taken by leaders and governors over the last two years have not ensured that all pupils in the school make the best progress possible.
- In 2016, overall provisional progress figures were broadly in line with expectations from pupils' starting points. However, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils was significantly below that expected from their starting points, particularly in mathematics.
- Despite the school's strong focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils, the differences in outcomes between this group of pupils and other pupils nationally are not diminishing rapidly enough.
- Leaders at all levels have not ensured that the school's policies for teaching and assessment have been consistently applied. As a result, there is too much variability in the quality of teaching and feedback both within and across subjects. Not enough teachers challenge pupils to make the best possible progress.
- The curriculum at key stage 4 does not support high expectations and aspirations for all pupils.
- Reading and writing across the curriculum are underdeveloped. Too many pupils do not read widely and do not take pride in their work.
- Pupils make significantly less progress in mathematics than in English across key stages 3 and 4.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher has identified key areas for improvement and is establishing more robust leadership systems to tackle areas of concern.
- As a result of strong teaching and a personalised curriculum, the provision in the sixth form is good. Students' achievement has improved and both academic and vocational outcomes are good.
- Pupils behave well around the school. They are polite, friendly and wear their uniform with pride. Relationships in the school are positive.
- Personal development and the welfare of pupils are a high priority for all staff. Staff work well with parents and other agencies to keep pupils safe and ensure they are well cared for.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that leaders at all levels consistently implement and monitor the school's teaching and assessment policies so that pupils are able to make good progress in subjects across the school.
- Improve the progress pupils make in mathematics between key stages 2 and 4, particularly for the disadvantaged pupils.
- Provide a key stage 4 curriculum that raises expectations and aspirations for all pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations of what their pupils can achieve
  - ensuring that teachers use their analysis of assessment to plan learning that will provide the right level of challenge and support for their pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Two years ago the headteacher of the school was seconded by the local authority to lead two other schools in the area. In her absence the deputy headteacher was appointed to the post of head of school. This reduced the school's leadership capacity. The multi-academy trust, established in 2015, brought the three schools under the overall leadership of a chief executive officer. As a consequence, the trust has now appointed a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher to strengthen the school's leadership team.
- Although the headteacher has been in post only a few weeks, he has already identified significant areas for improvement. He is working with the leadership team to establish robust systems to improve teaching, learning, assessment and marking.
- The deputy headteacher, appointed to post substantively in September, is establishing a robust assessment system and rigorous processes for monitoring, evaluating and improving teaching. These include a marking policy to ensure that teachers provide pupils with advice that helps them to improve their work and the time to respond to that advice. However, it is too early to see the impact of these policies and procedures on pupils' learning and progress.
- Middle leaders are establishing their own systems for monitoring and evaluation. However, they are not yet having the required impact on the quality and consistency of teaching and assessment that would secure better outcomes for some groups of pupils. This is because teachers are not consistently applying the agreed school policies.
- Increasing the progress of disadvantaged pupils is now the highest priority across the school. The pupil premium funding is being appropriately used to improve the attendance and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils throughout the school. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved during the current school year.
- The strategies used by the school did not have the required impact on the achievement of the disadvantaged Year 11 pupils in 2016. While other pupils achieved in line with expectations, the progress of disadvantaged pupils was well below expected levels from their starting points overall and in mathematics. The school's own current progress information shows that the differences between the disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are still wide in Years 10 and 11. This indicates that the impact of interventions on the progress of disadvantaged pupils is not rapid enough. Differences are diminishing lower down the school, in Years 8 and 9.
- The use of catch-up funding and some of the pupil premium funding is making a positive difference to the progress of those pupils who enter the school with attainment at the end of key stage 2 in English and mathematics that is well below average. Intensive English and mathematics teaching provided for this group of pupils in Year 7 last year, for example, had a significant impact on the reading, writing and spelling of pupils. Pupils increased their reading ages by over two years in a six-month period.
- The progress and attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities rose in 2016. Support for this group of pupils is strong across the school and they are making good progress.

- Some pupils made less progress on the new measure because the learning pathway they had chosen did not allow them access to a full English Baccalaureate curriculum and some pupils did not have enough subjects in their option choices to achieve the best progress they could.
- Pupils' reading across the curriculum is under-developed. Too many pupils do not read widely and for pleasure and boys' progress in reading is well behind that of girls. The new director of English is considering ways in which a reading programme can be developed and better use made of the library and librarian to improve pupils' reading.
- There were examples of good extended writing in some subject areas. However, writing across many other areas is limited and work in many books is incomplete and poorly presented. This weakness is not always challenged by teachers.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed through assemblies and a broad programme of personal and social development. Pupils said that there is still some discriminatory language used. However, this behaviour is challenged and tolerance of different faiths, cultures and sexual orientation is promoted.
- The leadership of behaviour and attendance is strong. Consistent use of behaviour management systems and effective behaviour support has resulted in a reduction in exclusions in the last year. Leaders have focused significantly on the improvement of attendance, particularly for the disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are clear signs that attendance is improving and is much higher for all groups of pupils this term.
- Teachers spoken to have valued the training and induction they have received; new staff are particularly appreciative. A programme of training is planned to improve the use of the assessment system. Staff who responded to Ofsted's survey are very positive about the school and support the new headteacher.
- Parents receive regular, useful information about the progress their child is making in the school. Responses to Ofsted's online survey, 'Parent View', are generally positive.

### **Governance of the school**

- The trust and the local advisory board have taken decisive action to strengthen the leadership of the school.
- The board provides robust challenge to leaders about the performance of pupils in examinations, the use of the pupil premium funding and pupils' progress.
- The minutes of the trust board meetings confirm this challenge. However, it is also clear from the minutes that the responses to their queries have sometimes been vague and inaccurate. For example, in the September 2016 minutes, the board was told that the progress of disadvantaged pupils had improved when it had not.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The trust, together with school leaders, has developed strong procedures to ensure that no safeguarding issues are overlooked. Staff and governors receive relevant induction and the protocols and practices for record-keeping are robust. Staff engage

effectively with parents and a wide range of partners to ensure that pupils are supported and safe. Staff and governors have received appropriate training to identify signs of radicalisation, forced marriage and child sexual exploitation.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable both within and between subjects. Some pupils benefit from strong teaching but this is not consistent throughout the school and this prevents pupils from making the best possible progress.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not challenge the most able pupils. The pace is often too slow to sustain pupils' interest because teachers do not use their understanding of pupils' abilities to plan learning that meets their needs. This lack of challenge is preventing some pupils from making good progress. Teaching, particularly teachers' questioning, too often limits rather than extends pupils' learning.
- The school's policy for marking is not applied consistently within and across subjects. Some teachers provide helpful feedback on how to improve work but too many pupils fail to respond to this or act upon the advice given and most teachers do not follow this up. Consequently, there is still limited evidence of teachers' marking and feedback helping pupils to make better progress. Too many teachers are prepared to accept incomplete and poorly presented work. Pupils often do not use appropriate equipment to underline or to draw charts and tables and this often goes unchallenged.
- The positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils clearly contribute to learning in most lessons. However, in some lessons, where teaching fails to maintain their interest, pupils lose their concentration and indulge in off-task chatter and activity that impedes their progress.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers use their expertise and strong subject knowledge to enthuse pupils and involve them in their learning. Lessons are planned to challenge pupils and questioning sharply probes and effectively extends their learning. Marking addresses misconceptions and enables pupils to understand how they can improve their work. There is evidence of particularly strong teaching in English, physical education and history and in most sixth form lessons.
- Pupils with lower literacy levels are beginning to make better progress since the introduction of the transition group programme for those pupils in Year 7 who move from primary school with below average levels of literacy and numeracy. The staff leading this programme are highly skilled and passionate about their work and pupils are very well supported to make rapid progress, especially in their reading.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive strong support which helps them to progress at a good pace. There is a comprehensive monitoring of pupils' progress, with targeted interventions for pupils. However, boys' reading in general is still well behind that of girls.
- In some subjects, such as English, history and modern languages, there are good examples of extended writing at key stage 3 but across many subjects this is limited. Many teachers do not focus on pupils' literacy when they mark books. Consequently,

writing is under-developed across all subjects and presentation is often poor.

- Pupils' written work and observations of teaching indicate that homework is given regularly in the majority of subjects.
- Pupils who follow courses away from the school in Years 10 and 11 enjoy learning that is linked to topics that engage their interest. The school makes regular contact to track attendance and progress and the attendance of some of these pupils has improved well this year.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. There is a strong pastoral system that includes a leader of standards, a non-teaching pastoral leader and an engagement team of three non-teaching staff which supports pupils' behaviour. As a consequence, staff know and care for their pupils very well. Nearly all pupils report that they are happy and feel safe in the school.
- Pupils' views indicate that bullying is rare and, when it occurs, it is dealt with effectively. Some pupils say that there is some use of homophobic language and, in the past, staff have not always taken it seriously. However, leaders are aware of this and not only is it now challenged but perpetrators are engaged in after-school discussions about their behaviour, followed by restorative conversations with victims. The engagement team runs a lesbian, gay and bisexual group in school and the school has achieved an award for its practice in this field.
- Leaders ensure that there is a wide programme of personal development that promotes British values and an understanding of British democracy and justice. There are strong links with the local community and with international schools. Pupils take part in extensive charity work and in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- The careers information, advice and guidance pupils receive ensure that they successfully progress to further education, training and employment when they leave school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and friendly. They wear their uniforms with pride. They behave well around school, including at breaks and lunchtimes. Even in crowded conditions their behaviour is mature and calm.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and a strong behaviour management policy is consistently applied. An internal exclusion system is used well. Pupils removed from lessons are supported to address their behaviour and this includes restorative conversations with the teacher. As a consequence of these good processes, exclusions have reduced considerably in the last year for all groups of pupils and are low in the current school year.
- Leaders have been determined to improve attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, for whom

attendance was particularly low. The school is challenged in many ways to ensure that pupils attend school well. Many pupils come from a long distance and 38 buses bring them to school. If they miss their bus pupils find it difficult to get to school.

- Pupil premium funding has been used to employ a home-school worker to work with the families of those pupils. She makes home visits and also works with the pupils in school supporting both attendance and progress. The monitoring of, and focus on, attendance is rigorous at all levels of the school.
- The overall attendance of pupils in 2015/16 was adversely affected by local flooding, which meant some pupils could not attend school. However, this masks some good improvements for groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement in key stages 3 and 4. In recent years, pupils have come into the school with prior attainment at about or above the national average and outcomes at key stage 4 have been broadly average overall. However, the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils in 2016 was well below that of other pupils nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress on average than expected from their starting points overall and particularly in mathematics. The progress of disadvantaged pupils in the English Baccalaureate subjects is almost a grade below their expected levels and the progress in the option subjects is a grade and a quarter below expectations.
- In 2015 value added was low in mathematics and humanities. In 2016 the progress of most pupils on the new measure was average overall compared to starting points but progress in mathematics was well below expected levels. Progress in the option choice subjects was also lower than expected. Middle-ability pupils and the most able make more progress than the least able pupils.
- Differences in progress between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the cohort remain wide in the current Year 10, especially in mathematics, according to the school's own tracking information for the end of Year 9. The school's tracking information shows these differences diminishing in Years 8 and 9 but progress made in lessons is variable.
- The progress of least-able pupils in Years 7 and 8 is improving as a result of the effective use of the school's support programme.
- Five pupils who attend a nursery for a day per week are making good progress in achieving vocational qualifications in child care.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Provision in the sixth form is good because there is a broad and personalised curriculum and teaching is strong in almost all subjects. Outcomes in 2016 confirm that standards have risen and are good for both academic and vocational subjects. Analysis of outcomes for the lower sixth form students in 2016 indicates that this improvement will be sustained in 2017.
- Leaders ensure that students have a study programme that is tailored to their needs and aptitudes. They are offered three curriculum pathways based on their prior attainment. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant for the students. As a result, they follow appropriate study programmes that prepare them well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Teaching is good across the sixth form curriculum and is particularly strong in English. Students spoken to are enjoying lessons in the sixth form. They appreciate the smaller groups, strong teaching and the way that teachers are able to provide them with individualised support.
- Students' attitudes to learning are very positive and they are well motivated to achieve. The majority feel well supported in making choices on entry to the sixth form.
- Students said that they feel safe and speak highly of the quality of relationships with their teachers and other students. There is a strong programme of personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. They are well supported to explore key topics related to current affairs, British justice and democracy and to take part in community projects and charitable fund-raising. Some of them are supporting Year 7 paired reading or mathematics development.
- Students are encouraged to be aspirational and are supported by strong careers information, education and guidance. Of those students who left in 2016, nearly two thirds went on to university and one fifth went into apprenticeships.
- Leadership of these areas is strong. However, the development of more rigorous tracking systems for students' progress would further strengthen the sixth form.



## School details

Unique reference number	137252
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10017414

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,515
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Irving
Headteacher	Chris McAree
Telephone number	01697 745700
Website	<a href="http://www.williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk">www.williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:mail@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk">mail@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with the Department for Education's guidance on what academies should publish.
- William Howard School is a larger-than-average secondary school with a sixth form provision.
- The school converted to become an academy in February 2012 and is now part of the

William Howard School Trust.

- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is just above the national average.
- The school has a special educational needs unit for up to nine pupils with severe learning difficulties. There are currently seven on roll and they are taught in mainstream classes.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the normal times is similar to the national average.
- The school uses the local pupil referral unit to provide for a very small number of pupils. Currently one Year 9 boy is placed there. There are two Year 11 and five Year 10 pupils who go to a nursery provision for work experience and are completing a childcare course leading to units or a full NCFE award.
- A number of key stage 4 pupils attend a local provider, the local farm, with a member of staff, to learn agricultural studies.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across a range of subject areas and in all key stages. Some lessons were also observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors also carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work, as well as scrutinising work in lessons.
- The lead inspector listened to three Year 8 pupils reading aloud.
- Inspectors met two groups of pupils and talked to others informally in lessons, and at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, including senior and middle leaders and new teachers. A meeting was held with the chair of the local advisory board and the executive headteacher, who are both also members of the trust board.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 60 questionnaires completed by staff. There was also a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner and an email from an external provider regarding the attendance and progress of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. Documents included information on the school's own view of its performance, achievement, behaviour and attendance information and a range of policies.

## Inspection team

Gena Merrett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Annette Patterson	Ofsted Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Smart	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sue Lomas	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Powell	Ofsted Inspector

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