

Colne Valley High School

Gillroyd Lane, Linthwaite, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD7 5SP

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress pupils are making is not consistently good because the quality of teaching is variable across and within subjects.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are variable. As a result, middle-ability pupils and least-able pupils are not challenged appropriately with the work that is set for them.
- Assessment of pupils' learning is not used well enough to check pupils' understanding and deepen their learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning, especially those of boys, are variable. Their behaviour is not good, particularly when the pace of learning slows.
- An above-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils are often absent from school.
- Over time, subject leaders have not been thorough in checking pupils' work to ensure good progress.
- Leaders' plans for improvement lack clarity in how changes to be made will improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- Communication with some parents is not good enough to ensure they would recommend the school to others.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that consistently good teaching is available to all pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Systems for checking teachers' performance identify appropriate professional development to support improvements in teaching.
- Pupils say they are safe in school. Systems for keeping the most vulnerable pupils safe are effective.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles to support their personal development.
- The quality of teaching is improving and, as a result, more pupils are making good progress.
- Staff are supportive of the actions of leaders in strengthening the school. This is helping the school to improve its provision for pupils.
- Reading is promoted well by the school.
- Leaders and governors are using a wide range of strategies to recruit new teachers.
- The new principal and the governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the weaknesses that need to be overcome.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, to enable all groups of pupils to make at least good progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are consistently high, including for the most able pupils
 - work set is appropriately challenging for all abilities, especially middle-ability pupils and the least-able
 - teachers check pupils' work swiftly in lessons to make sure misconceptions are overcome and pupils are ready for further challenging work
 - skilful questioning is used consistently well to check pupils' learning and deepen their understanding
 - teachers give clear explanations of what is expected of pupils
 - the pace of learning engages pupils well, especially boys.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by making sure:
 - pupils, especially boys, contribute fully to their learning and behave well
 - pupils take pride in their work and present it to the highest standard
 - pupils are punctual to school
 - the proportion of disadvantaged pupils regularly absent from school is reduced to average or below average to strengthen their overall attendance.
- Improve the impact of leaders and managers by ensuring:
 - subject leaders are skilled and thorough in checking pupils' work across their areas to make sure pupils are being taught consistently well
 - the best teaching practices within school are shared effectively to iron out inconsistencies in teaching
 - plans for improvement are crystal clear about how actions will develop and improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
 - good communication with parents especially when the school is resolving matters relating to bullying.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders, managers and governors have not ensured that the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes, and personal development, behaviour and welfare are consistently good. Therefore, the overall effectiveness of the school requires improvement.
- Over time, leaders have not shared the developing good practices within the school to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning well enough for it to be good. Subject leaders have not been thorough enough in checking the quality of pupils' work and ensuring consistently good teaching in their areas.
- School plans for improvement do not show clearly how much the actions being taken are expected to strengthen teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes. This limits governors' ability to hold leaders to account for the work of the school.
- Over time, communication with parents has not been consistently strong enough to ensure that concerns, including the resolution of some bullying, have been fully addressed.
- Leaders and governors have an unwavering commitment to improving the quality of teaching, pupils' personal development and their outcomes. Staff are clear about leaders' expectations and are supporting leaders in their quest to ensure a good education for all pupils. As a result, the school is improving its work but currently its overall effectiveness requires improvement.
- Leaders have accurately assessed the work of the school and are continuing to tackle areas for improvement. Systems for checking the performance of staff are thorough. Professional development for teachers is identified and there is good support from the trust in meeting the school's needs. Subject leaders appreciate the good opportunities to work with other schools in the trust to share and develop their skills.
- Over time, there have been significant changes in staffing at all levels. Leaders have overcome difficulties in filling vacancies by using innovative methods for recruitment. They have appointed overseas teachers and retrained some of their own teachers so they can teach a wider range of subjects. The trust is supporting the school well in recruiting and supporting senior leaders in this current period of change.
- The curriculum is effective in supporting pupils' learning and their personal development, behaviour and welfare. There is a wide range of subjects available to pupils and appropriate focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. A range of sporting and musical activities are available to pupils, including engagement in the school production. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain.
- The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well through assemblies, tutor time and cultural visits abroad. Pupils work on community projects from Year 7 onward and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is followed by pupils.
- The additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Leaders have set clear targets for these pupils and incorporated them into staff's

performance management. The school has recently commissioned a review of its work with disadvantaged pupils. As a result, provision for disadvantaged pupils is better than in previous years. The funds are spent on additional support for these pupils and subsidise trips and visits to ensure that these pupils engage fully in the life of the school.

- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has strengthened over time with the use of external expertise employed when appropriate. The additional funding for these pupils is itemised and spent effectively.
- The trust is now providing strong and effective support for the school. The executive principal from the trust is supporting new leadership well. The trust has established secure systems for tracking pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. It is providing subject expertise to improve the quality of teaching. Over time, the trust has supported the school in recruiting a large number of staff. The work of the trust has also supported improvements in pupils' behaviour, safeguarding and well-being. The local authority collaborates well with the trust and is well aware of the improvements being made and what is being done to strengthen the school's effectiveness.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and have strengthened their skills through additional training. They have a wide range of skills and are aspirational for pupils.
- Governors are confident that the trust is committed to strengthening the effectiveness of the school. They had reservations about the school converting to academy status but recognise the benefits of working in the multi-academy trust. Governors, and the trust, are working in partnership and strengthening the effectiveness of the school.
- Over time, governors have increased their challenge and support for leaders. They are clear about teachers' performance and pay. Over time, governors have secured appointments that are improving teaching and leadership.
- Governors have checked how well the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the Year 7 catch-up funding is used. They are confident it is used effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are appropriately trained and there are effective systems in place to take appropriate action should concerns be identified. Governors and leaders make sure that all adults on the site are appropriately checked to make sure they are suitable to work with children. Pupils are clear that this takes place and told inspectors it contributed to their safety.
- The school works appropriately with external agencies and engages parents in ensuring that their children are kept safe. The school's record-keeping for the most vulnerable pupils is thorough. The school's safeguarding leader takes appropriate action, should it be necessary, to make sure that the response of external agencies is effective. The trust contributes well by checking that systems are appropriate and providing

additional capacity for leadership of safeguarding when necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Teaching is variable across departments and within departments and requires improvement.
- Since September 2014, there have been significant changes in staffing to strengthen the quality of teaching. Inspectors found that the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are improving. However, there are still variations in the quality of teaching.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not consistently high, especially for middle-ability pupils. Work set does not consistently challenge middle-ability pupils well enough to make good progress. For least-able pupils work is sometimes too challenging and this slows their learning as they cannot access it. When work is not appropriately challenging, the pace of learning slows and behaviour can slip, particularly for boys.
- There are times when teachers use skilful questioning, with pupils providing extended answers that are used to deepen the learning of others. Overall, questioning is not used well enough to measure how much pupils have learned and to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Pupils' short responses lack depth of understanding and some pupils do not engage in answering. Consequently, pupils are not making consistently good progress.
- Swift checking of pupils' work in class is inconsistent. This leads to misconceptions not being picked up quickly and pupils being asked to move on to additional tasks before they are ready. Also, work is not adjusted quickly enough to provide additional challenge for middle-ability pupils and the most able pupils.
- When teachers' explanations are clear, pupils set to work quickly and with enthusiasm. However, there are times when a lack of clarity leaves pupils unclear about what they have to do and the pace of learning slows.
- An analysis of pupils' work showed good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. Although presentation is variable, when teachers have high expectations it is good.
- The quality of teaching is improving in the school. Where teaching is engaging, teachers use good subject knowledge and prior assessment information to plan interesting tasks that promote learning well. Where a good level of challenge is provided for pupils and the pace of learning is adjusted appropriately, pupils cooperate very well and respond with enthusiasm and engagement in their learning.

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 do not consistently take enough pride in their work. There are times when they

are not sufficiently focused on their work and do not persist with challenging tasks. Some pupils, particularly boys, are not contributing fully to their learning and this is slowing their progress. When teachers' expectations are high the vast majority of pupils respond well, attitudes to learning are positive and high-quality work is presented.

- Most pupils are punctual to school. However, there is a small proportion of pupils who are unpunctual and this is not preparing them well for the school day.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They said that bullying occurs in school and that overall, they are confident it is dealt with appropriately. The school's recording of incidents varies in quality. There are times when communication with parents about strategies and resolutions is not clear. A small minority of parents responding to the Ofsted questionnaire indicated their concerns.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to take on roles of responsibility. Older pupils support younger pupils with reading and some are anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils hold hustings to be elected as form leaders and members of the school's parliament. This makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of democracy.
- Pupils are positive about the careers education, advice and guidance they are given. There are opportunities for work experience and attendance at careers events with employers and colleges of education. Additional support is given to disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make sure they continue in education or employment with training.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet and receive advice from the police and fire service about keeping safe. There is good support for pupils' well-being, with a small centre established in school with a trained counsellor focusing on emotional well-being.
- There are effective systems in place to ensure the safety of the very small number of pupils who attend off-site provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour varies according to the quality of teaching they receive. There are times when pupils, particularly boys, are off-task and occasionally interrupt the learning of others. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved although it can vary.
- An above-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils are regularly absent from school. Persistent absenteeism for these pupils is reducing but further work has to be done to ensure that their overall attendance is average. Attendance for all pupils at the school is average but persistent absenteeism is below average because other pupils attend well.
- School records show that exclusions from school have decreased significantly over the past year and are now much closer to average. The new behaviour system and a good level of supervision for pupils are having a positive impact on reducing very poor behaviour. Pupils say behaviour is improving because of the new systems introduced by the school.

- Most pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day. They are well supervised at lesson change-over, break and lunchtimes. The school is an orderly environment.
- Pupils point out how the new behaviour system is improving behaviour in lessons as they are made aware of the school's expectations at the start of each lesson. They say that teachers are more consistent in their approach to behaviour matters and this is helping behaviour to improve.
- The small proportion of parents responding to the Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) have mixed views about behaviour in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not making good progress across the school because the work set by teachers is not appropriately challenging for them. Teaching is not consistently good and, as a result, current outcomes for pupils require improvement.
- Since the academy opened, published information for those pupils leaving school at the end of Year 11 shows pupils' outcomes to be weak across a wide range of subjects. Teaching started to improve when the academy was established but was not good enough to overcome weaknesses in learning for these older pupils. School information indicates that the current Year 11 pupils will achieve much better than in the past, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Inspectors analysed a considerable amount of pupils' work and found that currently, pupils' progress is improving but is not yet good. There are clear signs of improvements in progress and attainment, particularly for those in key stage 3. In key stage 4, progress has strengthened and attainment is close to average in most subjects.
- The most-able pupils make effective progress in comparison to similar pupils nationally. Work set is usually matched to their ability although additional challenge is required for them to reach the very highest GCSE grades in sufficient numbers.
- Middle-ability pupils are not challenged well enough by the work set for them and although progress is average, it is not good. The least able pupils make broadly average progress, but not better, and their attainment remains behind that of others.
- Disadvantaged pupils are taught and supported better than in the past. School information and an analysis of pupils' work, show that attainment and progress for disadvantaged pupils are strengthening. However, differences in attainment are not diminishing fast enough for these pupils in comparison to others and they remain behind others nationally. Regular absence impacts adversely on their progress.
- Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have made poor progress over time. However, additional training for teachers to support these pupils and better identification of the needs of these pupils is resulting in improved progress for pupils. However, as for others, inconsistencies still exist and pupils' progress requires improvement.
- Pupils eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding are supported well and are making faster progress in English and mathematics than others because of additional support.
- There are too few pupils attending alternative off-site provision to make meaningful

comparisons between their outcomes and those of others. The school has recently closed its alternative on-site provision because the few pupils attending were making slow progress. All pupils are being taught in mainstream classes.

- Leaders have ensured that progress is improving across subjects, including mathematics and English. They are aware that further work has to be done, especially in science and modern foreign languages.
- Overall, inspectors' analysis of current pupils' work shows broadly average progress for pupils. Girls are making better progress than boys because their attitudes to learning are better.
- The school is promoting reading well. Reading regularly takes place in form time and pupils enjoy using computer systems that check their understanding of what they are reading. The school checks the quality of reading well and provides support for pupils to overcome any difficulties.

School details

Unique reference number	140660
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10031015

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jennifer Ryan
Principal	James Christian
Telephone number	01484 848680
Website	www.thecvhs.co.uk
Email address	office.colnevalley@kirklees-schools.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Nearly all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards for progress by the end of Year 11.
- There are two alternative providers, Ethos College and the Maltings.

- Colne Valley High School joined The Mirfield Free Grammar and Sixth Form Multi-Academy Trust on 1 September 2014 to become an academy school. When its predecessor school, Colne Valley High School, was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2012 it was judged to require special measures.
- There have been significant changes in staffing and leadership since the academy opened. The new principal was appointed from 5 June 2017, having been the vice principal at the school. The new vice principal was appointed from May 2017.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons. Two were jointly observed with a senior leader.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both individually and in groups, about learning and safety.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books. An inspector listened to a small group of pupils reading.
- An inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing body and four other governors. Inspectors met with the executive principal from the trust and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 75 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and 67 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff.

Inspection team

Jim McGrath, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Gabanski	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Rogers	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Garrett	Ofsted Inspector
Garry Stout	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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