

John Whitgift Academy

Crosland Road, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN37 9EH

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- The quality of teaching varies across a range of subjects and year groups. As a result, not all pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Planned learning does not consistently meet the needs of all pupils, especially the most able pupils. Consequently, the level of challenge limits the progress that some pupils make, in some lessons.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve vary across the school. As a result, a minority of pupils do not take enough care with the presentation of their work or their handwriting.
- Pupils make less progress in English compared to the progress they make in mathematics and science. Consequently, progress requires improvement, especially for the most able.
- Not all teachers follow the school's assessment policy consistently. Consequently, not all pupils know how to improve their work.
- Leaders do not ensure that teachers follow literacy and numeracy strategies consistently across the school. Consequently, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to improve their progress by applying their numeracy skills and developing extended writing skills.

The school has the following strengths

- In a very short time, the new principal has massively improved the quality of education that the school offers. His vision, enthusiasm and passion are pivotal in the continuous development of the school. There is good capacity for further improvement.
- The school is beginning to see the 'green shoots' of the impact of the actions of school leaders, effectively supported by governors and the trust. Outcomes in the large majority of subjects are improving quickly.
- Attendance is improving and persistence absence is reducing considerably. Leaders are taking effective action to improve further the attendance of those who are still persistently absent.
- As a result of leaders' robust actions, behaviour has improved significantly. Pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is very positive, and classrooms are calm and orderly. Safeguarding is effective and pupils feel safe.

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?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and leads to good or better outcomes for all groups of pupils by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is used to plan learning that challenges all groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils
 - skilfully questioning pupils to probe their responses, deepen their understanding and swiftly identify and overcome any misconceptions
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, including their handwriting and presentation of their work.
- Embed the literacy and numeracy strategies across the school to extend the opportunities for pupils to use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, appointed soon after the previous inspection, is substantially improving the quality of education that the school offers. The school is now a place where pupils can learn more effectively. He is enthusiastic, focused and passionate about being able to provide pupils with the best possible quality of education. His drive to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential is relentless.
- In a relatively short space of time, the principal has ensured that behaviour and attendance, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are improving. He and his leadership team, with the effective support of the trust, have successfully challenged weak teaching and have made effective appointments into key roles. As a result, improvements are visible, fast and appreciated by staff and pupils. There is strong capacity for further improvements.
- The leadership of teaching is effective. Leaders know exactly where the strongest and weakest teaching occurs. They plan and provide support for those teachers who need it. Arrangements to manage the performance of staff are robust, enabling all members of staff to improve their teaching.
- The principal's enthusiasm and commitment is infectious and rubs off on to members of staff at all levels. Although leaders take robust actions and implement many changes rapidly, including challenging underperformance, staff morale is good and staff are supportive of senior leadership. Leaders and managers, including the newly appointed assistant principals, are ably assisting the principal in improving pupils' attainment and rates of progress.
- A well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum is supporting pupils to make better progress in a wide range of subjects. There is a strong focus on personalisation to ensure that all pupils follow courses that are tailored to individual needs. As a result, progress and outcomes are improving.
- Leaders embed good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development into the curriculum and form-time activities. Consequently, pupils demonstrate a good awareness of different cultures and religions, are inclusive of pupils from different backgrounds and can confidently discuss global issues.
- Leaders spend effectively the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the progress of these pupils from their starting points is improving in line with their peers.
- The sponsor, Delta Academies Trust, is very effective in supporting the school. The support on offer has changed considerably since the appointment of the new chief executive officer and is improving school performance. The principal values the range of specialist support and advice on offer from the trust, which includes regular challenge by the executive principal and director for education as well as specialist subject advice by the various subject directors.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective and is a strength in this school.
- Governors meet regularly with members of the Delta Academies Trust to review actions taken and progress made towards improvement targets.
- Governors, under the leadership of a newly appointed chair, have clear strategic vision and work closely with leaders and the trust. Governors are pleased with the progress that leaders have made in improving the quality of teaching, behaviour and attendance and pupil outcomes. They are fully aware that pupils' progress across the school is not consistently good, especially in English.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have the appropriate skills and expertise to challenge school leaders effectively.
- Governors are closely involved in school life. Appropriate committee structures help them to monitor all aspects of the school's work. Governors have specific areas of focus for their regular visits to school. As a result, middle leaders receive appropriate feedback to help them improve their departments.
- Governors regularly receive accurate and timely information about school performance. They review school policies and procedures with rigour. They ensure that performance management arrangements are effective and that they award any increments in salary appropriately.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in school and pupils say that they feel safe. Pupils know where to go if they have any concerns and they are confident that they will receive support.
- School leaders ensure that all staff have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding training. As a result, staff are knowledgeable about child protection procedures, the signs to look out for and how to report concerns.
- Pupils are appropriately supervised by staff as they enter school in the mornings, at lunchtimes and between lessons. As a result, the conduct of pupils is orderly, the atmosphere is calm and pupils are punctual to lessons.
- Leaders make timely referrals to the local authority social care services where necessary and keep an accurate record of conversations and actions. Senior leaders, including governors, check safeguarding records regularly and maintain comprehensive policies. As a result, the school takes timely, supportive and appropriate actions.
- Pupils report that bullying incidents are rare and that when they occur, staff deal with them swiftly. School documentation confirms this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders are taking robust action to tackle weak teaching reported in the previous inspection. Teaching is now improving. Although some teaching is good, it is still too variable in quality between and within subjects and, therefore, requires improvement.
- A small number of teachers do not make effective use of information about what pupils already know and can do to plan learning that meets pupils' varying needs and abilities. Therefore, not all pupils make the progress of which they are capable
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve vary considerably and while sometimes they are high, too often they are too low. Consequently, too often, work lacks challenge. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils and this continues to hamper their ability to reach the higher levels of attainment of which they are capable.
- The quality of teachers' questioning to probe pupils' responses and deepen their understanding is also variable and overall requires improvement. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to notice, and correct, misconceptions swiftly. Pupils make repeated mistakes as a result.
- Teaching of literacy requires improvement. Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects beyond English are overlooked. Pupils are not always able to successfully tackle GCSE questions in other curriculum subjects and achieve the higher grades. Some teachers do not insist that pupils' handwriting and the presentation and layout of their work is of a high enough standard.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and, as a result, progress is speeding up. Teaching is helping pupils to improve their mastery of mathematics, use their problem-solving skills and apply them to real-life situations. Even so, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply numeracy skills in other subjects, such as science.
- Some teaching is good. High expectations, work that challenges pupils of all abilities, effective questioning and feedback that ensures that pupils are clear about how to improve typify this.
- Consistently, the relationships between staff and pupils are strong and, as a result, most pupils are keen and confident to contribute to the lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils dress well in their uniforms and are generally proud of, and loyal to, their school. Many pupils are keen to engage inspectors in polite conversation. Pupils care about and respect the school environment. They arrive to lessons punctually. They acknowledge the many significant improvements made in their school.
- Pupils learn from the taught programme of personal development, which improves pupils' confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Pupils respect the rights of others and

celebrate differences. This reflects in the positive way in which pupils interact with each other in lessons. As a result, the school is friendly and very inclusive.

- Pupils feel very well supported by the school. Teachers teach them how to stay safe online and pupils can explain how to avoid potential dangers when using social media. Pupils know whom to report concerns to should any arise.
- The promotion of fundamental British values is very strong. A wall mural in the school's outdoor social space is an effective and constant reminder to pupils and a clear indicator of the school's ethos. Pupils can articulate well their understanding of values such as tolerance, discrimination, gender differences and extremism. Inspectors observed a very effective discussion on the plight of refugees fleeing war-torn areas such as Syria. Pupils of all ages demonstrate very mature views of the value of democracy and an acute awareness of inequality around the world.
- Pupils appreciate the strong impartial careers advice and guidance they receive. This is helping pupils in Year 11 to think differently about possible career options and raising their aspirations, especially those of disadvantaged pupils. Recently formed links with Franklin College and local industries are helping to raise pupils' aspirations even further. Recent projects focus on encouraging girls and most-able pupils to consider engineering as a career option. Leaders effectively check the welfare, behaviour, attendance and progress of the small number of pupils who attend alternative provision. Communication between school staff and the providers is good. Pupils follow a personalised curriculum that is well suited to their needs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The conduct of pupils, in lessons and around the school, at break and lunchtimes, is excellent.
- Leaders have introduced a new behaviour system, which is now embedded. As a result, behaviour has improved significantly since last year. The number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced dramatically. Teachers and governors speak very positively about the changes and the impact of much-improved behaviour on teaching and learning. Pupils are also very positive about behaviour and how much it has improved.
- Staff deal with any incidents of poor behaviour quickly and efficiently. Pupils are very clear about the consequences and sanctions associated with specific types of behaviour. There are very few incidents of bullying and, when they do occur, staff deal with them appropriately.
- In recent years, attendance has remained stubbornly below average. Leaders have taken robust actions to tackle this. As a result, attendance has now significantly improved, including for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Persistent absence has also declined.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, pupils' outcomes overall have improved for all groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged.
- The principal, ably supported by governors and the trust, has successfully eradicated

the historic underperformance of pupils reported in examination results in 2014 and 2015. Standards have risen in the last two years.

- Provisional results in examinations in 2017 show that, overall, pupils attained standards that were closer to those of pupils nationally. The proportion achieving a grade 5 or better in English and mathematics, for example, was just below the national average. School information and inspection evidence shows that the progress of current pupils in Years 10 and 11 continues to rise, including the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- While pupils' progress is accelerating and there is great optimism about further improvement, some pupils still do not make consistently good progress from their starting points. Progress remains variable between subjects and between groups of pupils and, therefore, outcomes still require improvement. This reflects the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Pupils are generally making better progress in mathematics than they are in English because of better teaching. In mathematics, teachers typically plan learning well. Pupils often learn collaboratively. In English, more work is needed to speed up pupils' progress. Pupils' handwriting in particular requires improvement. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use, apply and practise their writing skills in a range of curriculum subjects.
- Although the most able are making better progress than previously, they do not achieve well. Their work in some lessons lacks the challenge needed for them to reach their potential.
- Leaders monitor closely the small group of pupils who attend alternative provision off site. Activities are appropriate for their abilities and interests. The qualifications gained offer a clear progression through to the next steps in education, employment or training.
- Pupils prepare increasingly well for the next stage of their education. School information indicates year-on-year improvement. In 2017, all pupils progressed to education, employment or further training.

School details

Unique reference number	137464
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10036581

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	431
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Gail Young
Principal	Robert Spendlow
Telephone number	01472 887117
Website	www.johnwhitgift.org.uk
Email address	info@johnwhitgift.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 May 2016

Information about this school

- 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.
- The school is part of the Delta Academies Trust (previously known as School Partnership Trust).
- A new principal was appointed to the school in September 2016.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- John Whitgift Academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Half of the pupils are known to be eligible for pupil premium. This is much higher than

the national average.

- Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small minority from other ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- A very small number of pupils attend Sevenhills Academy and Park House Academy for alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited parts of 26 lessons across most subject areas. Many of these visits took place with senior leaders. During visits to classrooms, inspectors looked in pupils' workbooks and questioned pupils about their learning. Inspectors also observed an assembly.
- Discussions took place with the principal, vice-principal, other senior leaders, most subject leaders and a number of teachers. Inspectors also held discussions with members of the wider body of staff and with leaders from the school's alternative provision.
- Discussions also took place with representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer, and members of the local governing board, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils from all year groups, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors listened to Year 8 pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors took into account 17 free-text responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They analysed 14 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors examined records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors also scrutinised documents, including school development plans, governing body minutes, performance management records and information about pupils' achievement.

Inspection team

Dimitris Spiliotis, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Judith Gooding	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Rogers	Ofsted Inspector

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