

Allerton Grange School

Talbot Avenue, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS17 6SF

Inspection dates

1–2 November 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Historically, and in some instances currently, too many pupils have not made the progress they should. This includes disadvantaged pupils, those with middle prior attainment and the vast majority of pupils who study science and religious education.
- Leaders and governors have not used or sufficiently evaluated the effectiveness of additional funding for pupils entitled to pupil premium funding swiftly enough to accelerate pupils' progress.
- The quality of teaching, in some subjects, is too variable. As a result, it is not enabling current pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not consistently use readily available pupil information well enough to plan learning that will challenge them. As a result, pupils do not make consistently good or better progress. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and in science and religious education.
- Middle leadership is variable. Some middle leaders have not brought about sufficient improvements in the quality of teaching in their subject areas.
- Pupils' experiences of personal, social, health and economic education is variable and inconsistent. This is because some form tutors do not deliver it consistently well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, ably supported by his deputy headteacher, and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, leaders know what needs to happen to improve weaker areas in the school.
- The sixth form is good. Academic outcomes are a real strength of the provision and the teaching students receive is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school and their access to impartial careers advice and guidance ensures that they are prepared well for their next steps and for life in modern Britain.
- The vast majority of pupils are courteous to other pupils, staff and visitors. Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and want to do well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and middle prior attaining, make good or better progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use pupil information to plan learning that suitably challenges pupils to make at least good progress from their starting points
 - improving the quality of questioning so that staff develop and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding further
 - ensuring that all teachers have suitably high expectations for pupils and what pupils can achieve
 - effectively sharing the good practice that exists in the school, for example in modern foreign languages.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders and governors analyse and evaluate plans for the spending of pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding and routinely check the effectiveness of the spending
 - carefully tracking the progress of disadvantaged pupils, across all year groups, so that leaders are in a position to swiftly evaluate the impact of strategies implemented
 - strengthening middle leadership so that middle leaders are consistent in their approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching in their areas and are empowered to effect change and improve pupils' outcomes at a more rapid pace
 - ensuring that all the required information is published on the school's website.
- Improve pupils' personal development and welfare by ensuring that the personal, social, health and economic programme is delivered consistently by all staff involved so that all pupils' experience is consistent.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Despite the ambition leaders have, and demonstrate, to improve pupils' outcomes, leaders' actions have not brought about sufficiently rapid improvement in outcomes. This is especially so for some subjects, particularly science, for disadvantaged pupils and middle prior attaining pupils.
- Leaders' actions to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils have not been wholly successful and not implemented consistently enough. This is because the approach to using the pupil premium funding has not made enough difference to pupils' achievement over time. Leaders have not clearly identified the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face. Leaders and governors do not know the impact of strategies from the last academic year as they do not evaluate them swiftly enough.
- The impact of the use of the Year 7 catch-up funding is not clear because plans to improve the progress of these pupils lack sufficient detail to show how well pupils have progressed. Leaders are aware of this and are scheduled to review their plans.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders' actions have not been consistent in bringing about improvement in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Although improving, the quality of teaching overall requires improvement. Leaders have not reduced sufficiently the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. For example, senior leaders do not ensure well enough that teachers consistently use assessment information to sufficiently challenge pupils in their learning. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and middle prior attaining pupils.
- Leaders do not ensure that all teachers consistently use the school's marking policy. Pupils in a number of subjects do not receive the guidance they need to make fast enough progress or become secure in their knowledge and understanding.
- Leaders have acknowledged that weak leadership and poor teaching in science over time have had a negative impact on pupils' outcomes in this key subject area. Recent support and teaching appointments have enabled leaders to begin to strengthen the teaching of science. However, the quality of teaching remains variable.
- Too many middle leaders have not made enough difference to improving the quality of teaching and consequently pupils' outcomes in the subjects for which they are responsible. This is because some middle leaders are more adept at holding teachers to account than others. Middle leaders are, however, positive about the support of senior leaders and welcome recent changes.
- Leaders recognise that curriculum design in the past has hindered pupils' outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The curriculum now offers a broader range of subjects more suited to pupils' needs. However, insufficient curriculum time for pupils to complete a full GCSE qualification in religious education continues to have a negative impact on a large proportion of pupils' outcomes in this subject.
- The headteacher, ably supported by his deputy headteacher, understands the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has realistic plans in place for future

improvement. The journey they have embarked upon since their appointments in 2015 has been an arduous one; however, they acknowledge that more pupils need access to better teaching, more of the time, to further improve outcomes.

- Despite some considerable leadership turbulence in the special educational needs department, the newly appointed special educational needs coordinator is ensuring that funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively in a wide range of interventions. The early impact is encouraging and reflects the determination of the special educational needs coordinator to improve outcomes for this group of pupils.
- Pupils take part in a range of effective opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Through assemblies, visiting speakers and much of the form-time provision, pupils are able to develop an understanding of British values, especially respect and tolerance. Pupils recognise the need to respect everyone, including those who are different from them.

Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable about some of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. However, they do not have a firm grip on how effectively additional funding for pupil premium pupils is being used and the impact (or lack of impact) that it has. As a result, governors do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for disadvantaged pupils' outcomes.
- Governors do not ensure that the school website contains all of the necessary statutory information.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties relating to safeguarding and they ensure that checks and training are in place so that pupils are kept safe. This includes ensuring that relevant staff are trained in safer recruitment and that all staff and governors have received up-to-date safeguarding training.
- Governors are determined to make a difference and to improve the outcomes for all pupils. They are clear about what they need to do to support the headteacher in his ambition to improve the school, but acknowledge that there are aspects that need addressing still, for example science and the quality and effectiveness of middle leadership.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding leaders know pupils well. Pastoral staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and when they have a concern about a pupil's welfare they provide effective support. Pastoral staff work closely with parents and where appropriate external agencies. This ensures that pupils get the support and help they need.
- All staff take part in safeguarding training that is appropriate to the needs of pupils and takes into account the local context. Staff have a clear understanding of their duty to keep pupils safe. They know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare.
- The pupils whom inspectors spoke with during the inspection said that they feel safe

and that there is someone they can speak to if they have a concern.

- Almost all of the pupils and parents who completed the online survey, and expressed a view, agreed that the school is effective when it comes to keeping pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because of variability in quality in some subjects, particularly science, geography and religious education. This means that teaching fails to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and middle prior attaining pupils.
- Where teaching is inconsistent and weaker, it is because teachers do not routinely use pupils' progress information to take into account the needs of pupils' different starting points. There is an inconsistent level of challenge for pupils of different abilities, and teachers' questioning does not always develop or extend pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively.
- Teachers' actions to support the learning and progress of pupils who are disadvantaged are not consistent. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' progress is patchy across subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of what different groups of pupils can achieve are variable and in some instances too low. Even in subject areas where teaching is stronger, there are inconsistencies. Expectations about presentation in pupils' books are variable across different subject areas.
- Leaders do not ensure that the good practice in teaching that is evident in some subject areas, for example modern foreign languages, is shared widely enough. As a result, opportunities are occasionally missed for staff to learn from each other.
- The vast majority of teachers have sound subject knowledge. However, they do not apply this consistently to plan learning or question pupils effectively so that activities meet their varying needs and abilities.
- Teaching in English and mathematics, despite some inconsistencies observed during the inspection, has improved dramatically since the previous inspection. Most teachers question pupils effectively and plan activities that sufficiently challenge them; this is particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- Teaching in science is improving, with appropriate support. However, it is too soon to see the impact on pupils' outcomes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are confident and assured young people. Most show respect for others and have, in the main, positive attitudes to learning and want to learn.
- The large majority of pupils are courteous and friendly to each other, staff and visitors.

- Pupils say that they feel safe and are safe. They are aware of the different forms of bullying that can take place. Pupils report that bullying incidents are rare and that if it does occur, teachers deal with it promptly and effectively.
- The school keeps meticulous records of behaviour incidents. Leaders follow up incidents of poor or inappropriate behaviour diligently. Such records indicate that the number of bullying and racist incidents has reduced dramatically compared with the previous academic year.
- Pupils are prepared well for their next steps in education, employment or training through a programme of external speakers and in-school focused careers advice. Leaders keep parents informed about their child's progress through regular meetings and parents' events.
- Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills. For example, the school has appointed sports, reading and diversity ambassadors. Two pupils are currently members of the school's governing body. Such opportunities are developing pupils' confidence and skills for life in modern Britain.
- There is a wide variety of clubs and activities for pupils to access, for example in music and drama. Such clubs develop pupils' confidence and skills.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic education programme is valued by the vast majority of pupils. However, the delivery of it by form tutors is inconsistent. This leads to different pupils receiving different messages and having different experiences in this important aspect of their development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because leaders' work in this area is effective. Over the past two years, leaders' actions to improve the behaviour of pupils have had a positive impact.
- Teachers challenge those pupils who, occasionally, demonstrate poor behaviour. The number of pupils referred to the school's own 'isolation' facility is reducing because of improved expectations of behaviour. Pupils report that behaviour has improved considerably over the past two years.
- The number of pupils attending alternative provision is reducing substantially. This is because leaders are providing appropriate provision on site. The progress and attendance of those pupils who do attend alternative provision are carefully monitored. Staff at the school are in daily contact with providers and regularly visit pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is steadily improving and the attendance of some groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, is also rising. This is because leaders have introduced effective systems to monitor pupils' attendance. Staff effectively follow up attendance issues and absence.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and at social times is generally good. Most move around sensibly and are polite to each other, staff and visitors. During the inspection, however, inspectors did observe some poor behaviour and low-level disruption in some lessons and in some areas of the school during social times.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because, although the progress of current pupils in some areas of the school is improving, teaching and therefore progress across the school and for different groups of pupils are inconsistent. Outcomes continue to be weaker in science and religious education.
- Standards in science have been low for some years, reflecting weak leadership and instability in staffing. There is, however, some evidence of improvement, although this has been slow. A large proportion of pupils do not make the progress they should based on their starting points. There remains inconsistency in the teaching of this subject.
- The vast majority of pupils who study religious education continue to underachieve in this subject area. This is because leaders do not allocate sufficient teaching time to meet the demands of the curriculum. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for their GCSE examinations in this subject.
- The school's provisional information for pupils' outcomes in 2017 shows that pupils' overall progress in their best eight subjects is below the national average for the second year in a row. This is because those pupils with middle prior attainment performed significantly less well than others with similar starting points nationally, and performance in science, humanities subjects and religious education was weak.
- Disadvantaged pupils have not made enough progress by the end of key stage 4, consistently, since the previous inspection. In the past two years, the progress of these pupils places their performance in the bottom 10% nationally when compared with other pupils' performance nationally. This is because the curriculum provision has not been well thought out in terms of meeting the needs of this group of pupils.
- Leaders indicate that current disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving. However, inspection evidence does not bear this out. Inspectors saw considerable inconsistency in teaching in different subject areas and in the quality of work in pupils' books.
- Leaders do not clearly identify the barriers to learning that face disadvantaged pupils, and because of this, some teachers' expectations, in some subject areas, are not high enough. Therefore, some teachers lack awareness of disadvantaged pupils' needs and therefore do not plan to support them well enough.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve the progress of high prior attaining pupils. The 2017 provisional outcomes, and inspection evidence, would indicate that these pupils are making better progress than that seen in previous years. This is because most teachers' expectations for this group of pupils are high and, in the main, activities are sufficiently challenging.
- In English and mathematics, overall progress has improved to be broadly in line with the national average. The 2017 provisional information indicates that the percentage of pupils achieving a GCSE at grade 4 in English and mathematics has remained similar to the percentage of pupils who achieved a grade C in both subjects in 2016. While some inconsistencies remain, the teaching of English and mathematics is stronger.
- The proportion of pupils who gain places in training or progress to further education at the end of Year 11 is well above national levels. At the end of the last academic year,

all pupils progressed to some form of education, employment or training.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders offer a broad range of academic courses and some vocational courses in the sixth form. Outcomes in the sixth form are good. This is because teaching increasingly meets the needs of students.
- The quality of teaching observed in the sixth form was more effective than that observed in the main school. This is because, in the main, teachers plan appropriate activities to meet the needs of students. Activities are challenging and teachers use questioning well to ensure that students develop and justify their responses. Students say that relationships between staff and students are productive and they believe that their teachers really care about them and help them with their studies.
- Improved and effective careers advice and guidance for entry into the sixth form for potential students ensure that students take subjects that match their ability and aspirations.
- Leaders have secured an ethos of high expectations. All requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes are met, including work-experience opportunities for students. All Year 12 students engage in work-experience activities and this allows them to develop both personally and socially.
- Students engage in a wide range of personal development opportunities that leaders provide to develop students' leadership skills, such as working with younger pupils in the school. Students feel safe and are safe in this diverse sixth-form community.
- The tutorial programme and enrichment days are comprehensive and cover all aspects of personal development and welfare effectively. This includes being safe online, applying for university and also mental health awareness and stress management.
- Leaders check students' progress and attainment and provide timely and appropriate support, interventions and action plans for students where needed. These ensure that students have every opportunity to catch up and not fall behind with their studies.
- All students who join the sixth form without A* to C grades in GCSE English and mathematics complete further study towards improving their grades. The timetabled classes provide students with the support they need to improve and, as a result, lead to good outcomes in both subjects.
- Leaders in the sixth form check the quality of teaching alongside other whole-school activities. They identify strengths and areas for development and recognise that, in a minority of instances, teachers do not plan well to meet the needs of some students.
- Destinations of students compare well with national averages. Retention rates for students during Year 12 and between Years 12 and 13 are less strong, however. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to enhance guidance for students so that this improves.

School details

Unique reference number	108058
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10031109

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 comprehensive
School category	Maintained
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	1,435
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Janice Rush
Headteacher	Mr Mike Roper
Telephone number	0113 930304
Website	www.allertongrange.com
Email address	agadmin@allertongrange.com
Date of previous inspection	18–19 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about: the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium; a statement as to the school's strategy in respect of the pupil premium allocation for the current academic year; the school's updated special educational needs policy; and the school's behaviour policy. No evidence was provided during the inspection to indicate that these documents were updated and uploaded.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher (who took up post in April 2015) and a new chair of governors (who took up post in September 2015) have been appointed.

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The majority of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is high.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children who are looked after and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school uses the following alternative provision providers: Aspire and Achieve; RECON; Involve; Hunslet; and PEP.
- The school has a specialist provision for pupils who have hearing impairment.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards.
- The school is deemed to be a coasting school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across a range of subjects and year groups. Some of those observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils, both formally and informally, about their learning and their views about the school, including teaching, safety and behaviour. Inspectors observed pupils arriving at and leaving school, and also at breaktime, lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, a group of middle leaders, a group of staff (including newly qualified teachers) and a group of support staff. Meetings were also held with a group of governors, the head of sixth form and the special educational needs coordinator.
- An inspector spoke by telephone to one of the alternative provision providers that the school uses.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governing body and senior team meetings, school records that relate to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, external reports, and reports linked to the quality of teaching, learning and achievement.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of current pupils' books, both in lessons and as a separate inspection activity.
- The lead inspector also checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.
- Inspectors took into account the 666 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 91 responses to the free-text service.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 41 staff members and 74 pupils who responded to their respective surveys.

Inspection team

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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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