

# Highworth Warneford School

Shrivenham Road, Highworth, Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 7BZ

## Inspection dates

22–23 March 2018

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress of pupils, particularly the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils, has declined over the last two years. In 2017, pupils' progress was below the national average. The progress of current pupils, although improving, is not yet good.
- Leaders have not established an effective strategy for supporting disadvantaged pupils. They have not evaluated the impact of additional funding for these pupils well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not consistently match learning to the needs of pupils. Teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are not high enough and so work for these pupils often lacks sufficient challenge.
- Governors have not effectively monitored the progress of all groups of pupils and challenged school leaders in a timely manner where underachievement has occurred.
- Leaders have not ensured consistency in how teachers help pupils to improve their work. This hampers pupils' progress.
- The teaching of literacy is too variable across the school and so pupils do not develop their literacy skills quickly enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher has set out clearly what the school needs to do to improve. He is well supported by senior leaders.
- Outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are strong.
- Pupils make good progress in English as a result of effective teaching in this subject.
- Leaders have taken effective action to maintain high standards of behaviour.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - leaders have a cohesive and consistent strategy to support disadvantaged pupils in achieving improved outcomes, and that all teachers follow it
  - governors closely monitor the progress of all groups of pupils and challenge school leaders quickly when there is underachievement
  - effective monitoring and evaluation enable all leaders to have a full understanding of the impact of their work.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers plan learning that is appropriate to the needs of pupils and is based on accurate assessment of pupils' prior learning
  - teachers have high expectations of the capabilities of the most able pupils
  - teachers follow the school policy consistently on providing pupils with feedback on how to improve their learning
  - pupils' literacy skills are developed effectively in all subjects across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders were slow to respond to a decline in standards in 2016 and their actions did little to stem a further decline in 2017. As a result, pupils' progress was below the national average, particularly for the most able pupils and for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching has been over-generous in recent years. Leaders were reluctant to link declining outcomes to the quality of teaching. As a result, improvement strategies have not focused on a set of common teaching and learning expectations that will help all pupils to make good progress. Leaders' latest plans are starting to address this, and the provision for staff development is now extensive, but this work is too new to see impact across all teaching.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is a coherent approach to supporting the progress of disadvantaged pupils. There is good practice in the school, but it is not widespread enough to help disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress.
- Leaders have not systematically evaluated the impact of their use of the pupil premium funding. As a result, they have not revised their plans when they have not worked and some disadvantaged pupils continue to underachieve.
- Senior leaders have given considerable autonomy to middle leaders to develop good practice in their areas of responsibility. However, middle leaders do not evaluate the work of their teams well enough and so there is too much inconsistency in some subjects. Senior leaders have not held middle leaders to account well enough to challenge this.
- Leaders responsible for promoting literacy across the curriculum have a strategy for its development but little impact of this can be seen in pupils' work. There is no consistency to how, when or if literacy errors are addressed. Teaching, in subjects other than English, does not develop pupils' ability to compose extended pieces of writing. Pupils' work contains few examples of the development of this key skill.
- The recently appointed headteacher has a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. He is well supported by his senior team and governors in starting to tackle the issues he has identified. Much of this work is new and its impact is not yet evident across the school.
- Leaders have remodelled the curriculum for 2018 to ensure that it is better matched to pupils' needs. Leaders are aware that these changes will not benefit current Year 10 and 11 pupils so they have put in place extra support for pupils in these two year groups.

## Governance of the school

- Governors were aware of declining standards in 2016. Their challenges to senior leaders about this decline did not have enough impact to stop or reverse it. Their interventions in 2016/17, when they became aware of the likelihood of very poor outcomes, did not have enough impact to prevent pupils' progress being significantly below national expectations.
- Governors have not evaluated the impact of the school's use of pupil premium funding well enough.
- Governors are providing good support for the new headteacher. They now know the school well and talk knowledgeably about the progress of different groups of current pupils.
- Governors are promoting a more outward-looking approach and greater collaboration with local school partners so that best practice is starting to be developed and shared.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, have a strong understanding of their responsibilities to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Statutory training for all staff and governors is up to date and regular updates for staff and governors ensure that practice reflects local and national priorities.
- The headteacher is also the designated senior leader for safeguarding. He and his safeguarding team are diligent and persistent in acting upon and following up referrals. They work well in partnership with the local authority and other services.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teachers do not consistently apply the school's policy for providing feedback to pupils about their work. Consequently, expectations vary from subject to subject and within subjects. This means that pupils are not always sure what is required of them and do not know how to improve their work in certain subjects.
- Too often, teachers provide learning activities that do not stretch the most able pupils. Teachers' expectations of what the most able can achieve vary too much. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress they could. In teaching where there are lower expectations of the most able, work does not challenge them to think deeply or enable them to extend their learning. Where teaching is strongest, skilful questioning, underpinned with strong subject knowledge, elicits high-level responses from pupils and their work shows strong progress.
- Teachers do not help pupils develop their literacy skills sufficiently or help them to develop the skills of extended writing appropriate to their subject. Other than in English, where literacy development is strong, teachers are not consistently planning work that allows pupils to develop and practise extended writing.
- Teaching does not support disadvantaged pupils effectively. Most teachers identify the disadvantaged pupils in their classes but the support they provide for them varies

considerably. This results in very good and innovative support for some pupils, but little or no support for others.

- Teaching is improving. Where teaching is stronger, pupils take part in discussions intelligently, demonstrating a good understanding of the topic and responding well to the views of others. The best teaching engages pupils well and so they develop good skills and knowledge.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's policy. Pupils report that they find homework helps them to consolidate their learning and practise skills.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident in their relationships with each other and adults in the school. They show respect for each other's views and opinions and value the things that make them different. Pupils are proud of their school and, where teachers have high expectations, they take pride in their work.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Pupils who spoke to inspectors all reported that there are adults in the school that they would go to if they were worried, and the pupil survey results confirm this.
- Bullying is rare. If it does occur, adults in school deal with it effectively. This view is echoed by the vast majority of parents who responded to the parent survey.
- Staff know how to keep pupils safe and they contribute well to a culture where pupils' well-being is given a high priority. Pupils feel well looked after by teachers, including on the many trips that the school runs. Pupils value the support that they get from their teachers, whom they say are always willing to give up time to help them. Tutors liaise well with parents and ensure that there is a careful handover when pupils change to a new tutor, as happens at the end of Year 7.
- A small number of pupils attend a local referral unit that supports young people with mental health issues. School leaders work closely with the leaders of this provision and monitor the progress of pupils carefully.
- Pupils develop leadership skills well because senior leaders provide many opportunities for them to take on extra responsibilities, for example by becoming a prefect.
- Pupils value the careers advice and guidance they receive. In key stage 3, the school gives pupils good support to help them choose their options. In key stage 4, pupils value the individual interviews and college fair that help them to plan and apply for their next step.
- The school works well with a local provider that supports pupils' mental well-being. The provider speaks very highly of the way the school has engaged with it to support pupils.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school at social times and between lessons.
- In lessons, pupils are attentive. They enjoy positive relationships with their teachers, who rarely need to challenge poor behaviour. Where they are less attentive, it is because there is insufficient challenge in the learning planned and so pupils become passive.
- Leaders have reversed the rise in fixed-term exclusions that had occurred in recent years. The rate of exclusions is once again below the national average. Leaders have achieved a significant reduction in fixed-term exclusions for disadvantaged pupils. Governors have supported this process well. The school has encouraged parents to bring advocates and experts to disciplinary meetings. This has helped the school to better understand pupils' needs and has empowered pupils themselves to address their own behaviour.
- The rate of pupils' attendance is above the national average. Form tutors play an important role in promoting good attendance. They maintain good contact with parents where attendance becomes an issue.
- Leaders analyse behaviour information well. As a result, they provide effective support to individual pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- The progress of pupils currently in the school, including some of the most able and disadvantaged pupils, is not good enough. This is because they are not consistently stretched and challenged to achieve their best.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they make less progress than they are capable of. Where teaching supports disadvantaged pupils, and challenges them to achieve more, they make better progress.
- Progress has declined over two years, particularly for the most able pupils, and was below average in 2017. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils was below that made by other pupils nationally in 2017. Progress in mathematics has been below the national average for two years.
- Pupils' progress in English is good because teaching is strong in this subject. However, many pupils do not develop their literacy skills well in other subjects because they are not consistently given guidance and support and are not expected to correct errors. Pupils' work, outside of English, contains few examples of extended writing where they can demonstrate the skill of well-structured written communication.
- The school's work with Year 7 pupils supported by the literacy and numeracy catch-up funding has resulted in these pupils making good progress from their starting points. Many can now read with fluency and so are more able to learn effectively.
- Outcomes for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are strong. Leaders' rigorous tracking shows that many are making good progress from their starting points as a

result of well-tailored support.

- Many pupils are able to articulate clearly what they are learning. Where teaching matches their needs, they contribute well to lessons, and demonstrate a good understanding of what they have learned, both orally and in their written work.

## School details

Unique reference number	136860
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10045972

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

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	921
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Liza Dibble
Headteacher	Andy Steele
Telephone number	01793 762426
Website	<a href="http://www.warnefordschool.org">www.warnefordschool.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@warnefordschool.org">admin@warnefordschool.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	15–16 May 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized school.
- The proportion of girls is slightly lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is significantly lower than the average for all secondary schools.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school are of White British heritage.
- The school's deprivation indicator is significantly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average and the proportion who have a statement or education, health and care plan is above average.
- A very small number of pupils attend a local provider to support their emotional and mental well-being.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum



expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across a wide range of subjects and age groups. Some of the observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders, and inspectors also scrutinised a wide range of pupils' written work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including minutes of governors' meetings, development plans, analysis of pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour information, safeguarding documents and the school's review of its own performance.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders, groups of teachers and groups of pupils in key stages 3 and 4.
- Inspectors took account of 128 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 189 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 33 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Jeremy Law, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mark Thompson	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Godfrey-Phaure	Ofsted Inspector

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