

# Fleetwood High School

Broadway, Fleetwood, Lancashire FY7 8HE

## Inspection dates

30–31 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite the far-reaching improvements that leaders have made to the school, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils, particularly boys and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not make good progress across the curriculum.
- The improvements made to middle leadership have had uneven impact. As a result, current pupils make weaker progress in some areas, such as mathematics and the humanities.
- Some teachers' expectations of pupils, especially boys, remain too low.
- Teachers of subjects other than English do not do enough to support pupils to develop the technical accuracy and fluency of their writing.
- Pupils with SEND have not historically had their needs assessed or met well. Although improving, this legacy continues to have a negative impact on the attendance, behaviour and progress of this group.
- Leaders have made steady improvements to pupils' attendance. Nevertheless, although reducing, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school remains too high.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' determination and tenacity have underpinned the many improvements made since the last inspection.
- Parents and carers are effusive in their praise for the work of the school. Pupils and staff are equally positive.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved markedly. Low-level disruption to lessons is increasingly rare.
- Pupils benefit from a systematic approach to raising their aspirations and understanding of different careers.
- Teaching has improved significantly, particularly in science and English, and is now good.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders ensure that pupils experience a range of opportunities that enrich their understanding of different cultures.
- Leaders are flexible in their approach to designing the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.
- Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. Pupils are kept safe and are supported to develop a clear understanding of different risks.
- Governors have overseen the improvements made to the school capably.

## Full report

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

- Improve outcomes for all groups of pupils, particularly boys, by ensuring that:
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - teachers provide pupils with the careful support that they need to develop the technical accuracy and fluency of their writing
  - the improvements to middle leadership are built on so that pupils achieve well across the curriculum, including in the humanities and mathematics.
- Develop the way in which pupils with SEND have their needs identified, assessed and met so that they:
  - make greater progress in their learning
  - attend school more regularly
  - are excluded from school less frequently.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have made considerable improvements to the school since the previous inspection. They ensure that pupils attend school more regularly, behave well and benefit from good teaching. However, the extent to which teachers have high expectations of pupils, particularly boys, remains variable. Although pupils' outcomes are improving, the continued underperformance of pupils, particularly boys and those with SEND, means that further improvement to teaching is still required before outcomes are good.
- Leaders are tenacious in their approach to improving the school. They demonstrate an uncompromising commitment to improving pupils' life chances through the power of education. They galvanise staff and pupils, which creates a collective pride in the school.
- Parents recognise the many ways in which the school has improved. They describe the school as a 'happy' and 'friendly' place and are fulsome in their praise of the school's leadership and its staff. Many commented favourably on the positive impact that the school has on their children's development and well-being.
- The views expressed by parents reflect a sea-change in the school's reputation. The local community now has far greater confidence in the school. This is reflected in the significant rise in pupil numbers and the increased number of parents who are choosing to apply for a place at the school as their first choice.
- Pupils are equally positive about the school. They describe the school as being 'like a family' and they enthusiastically embrace leaders' promotion of 'the Fleetwood way'. Pupils typically enjoy lessons and value their respectful relationships with staff. They also appreciate the lengths that the school goes to in order to 'open our eyes' to the range of opportunities beyond the local area.
- Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel proud to be a part of the school's improvement journey and are keen to develop the school further.
- Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths, where it is improving, and which areas need further attention. Their plans to improve the school are ambitious and precise. They target improvement in areas that are likely to make a significant difference to pupils' lives.
- Leaders at all levels have a clear and shared vision for the development of teaching. They have improved teaching through the consistent adoption of strategies to improve pupils' recall of previous learning. They have also prioritised the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of teaching are thorough and methodical. This enables leaders to develop a precise understanding of those aspects of teaching that are strong and those that require greater attention.
- Leaders ensure that staff take part in training that addresses their individual needs. Where appropriate, leaders use support from the Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT) and the local authority to improve the delivery of certain subjects.

- Middle leadership has improved considerably. Faculty leaders say that they feel empowered to make a difference. Increasingly, they are having a positive impact on developing the curriculum and the quality of teaching in their areas. Despite this, the development of middle leadership has been uneven. This has contributed to continued variability in the extent to which teaching and outcomes have improved in different areas. For example, improvements in science and English have been more significant than those seen in mathematics and the humanities.
- Enhanced pastoral leadership plays a pivotal role in improving pupils' behaviour, attendance and attitudes to learning.
- Leaders have established a curriculum that is broad, balanced and tailored to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Pupils study a curriculum with a strong academic core. Leaders also prioritise pupils' learning in the arts and technology. Pupils can opt to study vocational courses, many of which link directly to opportunities in the local labour market.
- Some pupils follow a less academic curriculum. Where this is the case, leaders ensure that any decisions made about pupils' individual programmes of study are firmly rooted in what is best for these pupils.
- Leaders carefully monitor and evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum. This helps them to identify and address weaknesses in the curriculum in different subjects.
- A very small number of pupils have been entered for the English baccalaureate (EBacc) in recent years. This is because very few pupils have opted to study a modern foreign language at GCSE. However, this is changing. Leaders have made substantial changes to the way that French is taught, which has increased the number of pupils who have opted to study a modern foreign language in key stage 4. As a result, the proportion of pupils being entered for the EBacc is increasing significantly.
- Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from an extensive range of opportunities to enrich their learning and personal development. Leaders focus on addressing gaps in pupils' cultural awareness and understanding through a variety of trips and visits to places such as Paris, Barcelona and Stratford-upon-Avon. Teachers provide pupils with a rich and diverse range of extra-curricular opportunities, from trampolining to performing arts and various academic clubs. Leaders closely monitor pupils' participation in enrichment activities to ensure that all benefit from what is offered.
- Leaders are discerning in their use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. This contributes to the improvements that have been made to disadvantaged pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Pupils with SEND have not had their needs identified, assessed or met well in the past. This is because historically, this aspect of the school's work has not been well led. Moreover, weaknesses in the leadership of SEND across the local area have exacerbated the historic lack of clarity in the school's work in this area.
- Despite this, the new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has quickly developed a clear understanding of what needs to improve. The SENCo has introduced systematic plans to address weaknesses in the way that the school identifies, assesses and meets the needs of pupils with SEND. However, it is too early to assess the impact of this work, and the legacy of weaknesses continues to impact negatively on the progress, attendance and behaviour of this group of pupils.

## Governance of the school

- Governors work in tandem with leaders to ensure that the school's vision and values underpin the improvements that have been made across the school.
- Governors support leaders capably, and they hold leaders stringently to account for the school's development.
- They share leaders' intimate knowledge of the school and their 'no excuses' approach to improving pupils' life chances.
- Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They use a range of external professionals and consultants to verify the improvements that leaders report.
- Governors have sought creative solutions to some of the challenges that the school has faced. For example, the school's associate membership of FCAT has enabled leaders and governors to carefully select the support that they feel they need to speed up improvement in particular areas.
- Governors oversee the school's finances exceptionally well. They have worked closely with leaders to eradicate a significant deficit in the school's budget.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture throughout the school. They ensure that referrals are made, as appropriate, to a range of external agencies.
- Staff are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect and make good use of the school's systems for referring concerns to leaders. Staff benefit from a range of training that enhances their understanding of safeguarding issues.
- Safeguarding and pastoral leaders understand how high rates of absence significantly increase risk. As a result, the school's procedures for checking on absence are exceptionally thorough and leave nothing to chance.
- Pupils benefit from a thorough and methodical approach to learning about risk. They explained to inspectors what they have learned about areas of risk such as drugs, alcohol, domestic violence and e-safety.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Historic strengths in the teaching of technology, arts and vocational subjects have been maintained. Science and English, in particular, are now taught more effectively than in the past. However, there remains some variability in the quality of teaching, particularly in relation to teachers' expectations of what boys are capable of. This partly explains why pupils' outcomes overall have not improved to the same extent as the general quality of teaching.
- The teaching of technology, arts and vocational subjects is an established strength. In these subjects, teachers have high expectations of all pupils. They ensure that pupils of different abilities and aptitudes complete work that they find both challenging and

accessible. In these subjects, pupils become engrossed in their learning and are helped by teachers' clear explanations and demonstrations. As a result, pupils produce work which is of a consistently high quality.

- The teaching of English has improved markedly. Pupils benefit from a coherent approach to developing their knowledge and skills in this subject throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' extended writing. For example, pupils are challenged to write for a variety of different audiences and purposes. Teachers ask pupils probing questions that encourage them to reflect and develop their reasoning. As a result, pupils of different abilities are now producing work which indicates that they are making more progress in English than pupils who left the school in recent years.
- Improvements to the teaching of science have been even more recent and dramatic. The teaching of science has improved throughout the school. As in English, improvements to the curriculum and teaching in key stage 3 are laying the foundation for greater success. Science teachers have high expectations and routinely challenge pupils of different abilities. They use experiments to bring science to life and enhance the development of pupils' scientific skills. These improvements have already brought about a transformation in pupils' achievement by the end of Year 11.
- The teaching of mathematics is also showing some improvement. However, here developments are less embedded so have had less impact, particularly on the progress of pupils currently in key stage 4. Leaders have made significant modifications to the key stage 3 mathematics curriculum, and these modifications have improved the pitch and sequencing of pupils' learning. However, teachers are less adept at ensuring that teaching meets the needs of pupils with different abilities. Moreover, their focus on developing pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills is unrefined and is not having the impact that leaders intend.
- Teachers of history and geography do not make the most of the time that they have with pupils, particularly in key stage 3. Teachers often try to do too much within a short period of time. This results in a superficial development of pupils' knowledge and skills in these subjects.
- Teachers consistently apply helpful strategies to improve pupils' recall of previous work. Pupils also complete regular homework tasks to reinforce their learning. There is some evidence that this is helping pupils to develop a more secure knowledge of the different subjects that they study.
- Pupils are supported to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers are developing higher expectations of pupils' spoken English. They question pupils thoughtfully and expect pupils to provide developed and eloquent responses. This is helping pupils to articulate their views more clearly. It is also enhancing their wider personal development.
- In contrast, teachers are less focused on developing the fluency and technical accuracy of pupils' writing. As a result, there is huge variation in the quality of pupils' writing. Boys' writing, in particular, is often sloppy and littered with errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The quality of pupils' writing in English is typically of a much higher standard than it is in other subjects.
- Teachers cater for the needs of the most able pupils increasingly well. This is because

leaders have prioritised developments in this area and teachers have increased their expectations of these pupils.

- There is still too much variation in the extent to which teachers cater for the needs of pupils with SEND. In some cases, and particularly in relation to high-ability pupils with SEND, teachers ensure that pupils' needs are met well. In other cases, some teachers pay little attention to the useful guidance that is produced to support the teaching of each pupil. Where this is the case, it has a negative impact on pupils' learning.

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

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel valued as individuals. They appreciate the work of staff and feel that the school is having a positive impact on their personal development.
- Pupils are adamant that bullying is very rare. Leaders regularly seek pupils' opinions on bullying, and they promote the school's anti-bullying strategy methodically. Pupils say that they understand different types of bullying, such as that which takes place online. They say that, on the rare occasions that bullying does occur, staff deal with it quickly and well.
- Pupils benefit from a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils develop a good understanding of issues relating to equality. They are encouraged to be proud of who they are and where they come from, but also to be welcoming, respectful and interested in others.
- British values are promoted well. Pupils develop a clear understanding of democratic principles through their participation in events such as mock elections. The school's orderly environment and focus on consideration for others ensures that pupils appreciate the rule of law. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are helped to raise their aspirations. They benefit from a thorough and methodical careers education, which is supported by excellent information, advice and guidance about the opportunities that are available to them in the future. Staff go to great lengths to educate pupils from Year 7 onwards about different jobs and professions. The school provides pupils and their families with information about how they can be supported financially while attending higher education.
- Pupils are developing increasingly positive learning habits. They typically work hard in lessons and complete homework diligently. Despite this, boys are generally less committed to doing their best. Many do not take pride in the presentation of their work, and they are less assertive in their approach to learning.
- The school carefully oversees the personal development, behaviour and safety of pupils in alternative provision. Leaders communicate regularly with alternative providers and the pupils who attend this provision to ensure that the education on offer meets their needs.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. As a result, low-level misbehaviour is increasingly rare in lessons.
- The number of incidents of serious misbehaviour has also reduced. During the previous academic year, there was a significant reduction in the very high historic rates of fixed-term exclusion. This has been accompanied by a reduction in the number of pupils who have been excluded permanently.
- Leaders have developed effective alternative sanctions to the use of fixed-term exclusion. They also ensure that pupils with a history of challenging behaviour are supported well. Consequently, many of these pupils improve their behaviour significantly during their time at the school.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct. They are firm but fair. They provide strong and visible help for teachers to ensure that behaviour in lessons is positive.
- Pupils behave well around the school site, including during breaktime and lunchtime. They enjoy one another's company and that of the many staff on duty.
- The school has achieved a sustained improvement in pupils' attendance. Over the last two years, pupils' attendance has improved significantly and is getting closer to historic national averages. This improvement is due to the school's relentless promotion of the importance of regular attendance, allied to a very systematic approach to challenging and supporting those who are regularly absent.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has also reduced. However, it remains well above historic national averages.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, published performance data has shown that, by the end of Year 11, pupils have consistently made significantly less progress than all pupils nationally. Pupils' progress has been consistently low in English, mathematics and the humanities.
- The performance of boys in GCSE examinations has shown a deterioration in their progress across the curriculum. In 2018, the attainment of boys was almost one full GCSE grade in each subject below that of all pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Since the previous inspection, the progress of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 11 has been similar to that of non-disadvantaged pupils within the school. However, both of these groups have made significantly less progress than other pupils nationally. The progress of middle- and high-ability pupils has also been low, as has the progress of pupils with SEND.
- The published performance information about pupils' progress is concerning. However, published data only tells part of the story. For a relatively small group of pupils, a full range of examinations were not suitable. Although this had a negative effect on the overall achievement headlines for the school, leaders could demonstrate that they had done their very best by these pupils.



- The proportion of pupils attaining standard GCSE passes in both English and mathematics has improved since the last inspection, as has the proportion of pupils attaining high passes in the same subjects. This has contributed to further improvements in pupils' destinations. The proportion of pupils who leave the school without a place in education, employment or further training is low. The proportion of pupils moving on to study level three qualifications has increased to over 40%. This is important, as it provides pupils with a direct route to higher education once they complete their courses.
- Pupils achieve well in technology, the arts and vocational subjects. Improvements made to the teaching of science over the last two years have transformed pupils' attainment and progress in this subject.
- Information provided by leaders indicates that pupils lower down the school are making better progress than those in the past. In particular, leaders' information signals that there has been a sea-change in the progress made by pupils in key stage 3.
- The work of current pupils indicates that they are making better progress than their predecessors, particularly in Years 7 and 8. However, significant variation remains in the progress of different groups of pupils. In particular, boys and pupils with SEND are not consistently making the progress of which they are capable. Moreover, there remains considerable variation in pupils' progress across the curriculum. This is noticeably weaker in the humanities and, to a lesser extent, mathematics.
- Leaders' work to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills is beginning to have a positive impact. In contrast, the school's work to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum is underdeveloped and slows this aspect of pupils' literacy development.

## School details

Unique reference number	119771
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10057931

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	877
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Finch
Headteacher	Richard Barnes
Telephone number	01253 876757
Website	<a href="http://www.fleetwoodhs.org.uk">www.fleetwoodhs.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@fleetwoodhs.org.uk">enquiries@fleetwoodhs.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	7–8 July 2016

## Information about this school

- The school has grown in size since the previous inspection. The number of pupils on roll is now broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is significantly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have been identified as having SEND is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The school is an associate member of Fylde Coast Academy Trust but is still maintained by the local authority.

- Where appropriate, the school uses alternative provision for some pupils. A number of pupils attend 4-Tec Moto and the McKee Centre.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a range of subjects. Some observations were conducted jointly with school leaders. Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons. They also carried out a work scrutiny with a senior leader.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils. They also talked with others informally. Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also met with a group of teachers and a group of non-teaching staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including its chair. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the chief executive officer of FCAT.
- Inspectors took account of the 34 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and the 33 free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors considered the 60 responses to the online staff questionnaire and the 14 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information about the school's performance and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Will Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Annette Patterson	Ofsted Inspector
Dean Logan	Ofsted Inspector
Erica Sharman	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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