

Ridgewood School

Barnsley Road, Scawsby, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN5 7UB

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Currently, pupils' progress in key stages 3 and 4 is not good in mathematics. Over time, pupils' progress by the end of Year 11 has declined considerably in this key subject. Consequently, outcomes for pupils are not good overall.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is not consistently good. Work set for students is not suitably challenging or pitched appropriately to meet students' needs and abilities.
- Currently, students are not making consistently good progress across courses in the sixth form. This has been the case for the past two years.
- In the main school, teachers' questioning is not always used to good effect to check and deepen pupils' learning, particularly for most-able pupils.
- Leaders' guidance on the teaching of mathematics is not fully effective.

The school has the following strengths

- Decisive and effective actions of the headteacher and governors are bringing about improvement quickly. New leaders are supporting them well, including in developing the quality of teaching. Leaders demonstrate good capacity for further improvement.
- Clearly identified professional development for staff has resulted in good teaching overall and good leadership.
- Government funding for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used well to support learning, behaviour and attendance.
- High-quality careers advice and education ensure that pupils and students continue in education or employment.
- Pupils and students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities that prepare them very well for life in modern Britain. Sixth-form students are good role models for others and support younger students well.
- Teaching is consistently strong in science and English, where rapid improvements in progress are being made in pupils' learning. Mathematics teaching is showing signs of improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and their attitudes to learning are positive. They are making a good contribution to improving their academic progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics so that it is consistently good across key stages 3 and 4.
- Improve the effectiveness of the sixth-form provision so that students' progress is consistently good across courses by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan work that is suitably challenging and pitched appropriately to students' needs and abilities
 - use assessment skilfully to intervene and support students to make good progress.
- Further improve the quality of teaching in the main school, by ensuring that:
 - work set is consistently challenging for pupils to meet their needs and abilities, especially in mathematics
 - skilful questioning is used consistently well to check and deepen pupils' learning, especially for the most able.
- Further increase the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that the teaching of mathematics and guidance given to staff accelerate pupils' progress so that outcomes are at least good.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and governors have taken decisive and successful action to strengthen the quality of teaching to make sure that it is good overall. They have used astute support and professional development to strengthen teaching and this has had the desired effect to ensure that teaching is good. Where further improvements are required, additional support is provided and is having a positive effect in improving learning.
- The headteacher and governors used a range of recruitment strategies to appoint some very effective staff, including middle leaders, who are making a positive contribution to good leadership. Middle leaders are playing their part in improvements across the school and in their subjects.
- Subject leaders know their departments well and regularly check the quality of teaching, using a wide range of information. Along with senior leaders, they provide coaching support to staff and opportunities for staff to work with skilled practitioners. The impact of their work is improving pupils' outcomes and contributing well to good teaching overall. In mathematics, guidance for staff has helped to bring about improvement but has not led to consistently strong progress. Senior leaders are working closely with the subject leaders of mathematics to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress in this subject. Staff and middle leaders appreciate the professional development provided for them.
- Teachers who have recently entered the profession receive structured programmes of training which are helping them to make a positive impact on improving the school. They said that training in behaviour management has been exceptionally helpful in preparing pupils for learning. Leadership of behaviour is good. Leaders have established secure routines that are engaging both boys and girls well in their learning and ensuring good behaviours around school.
- The headteacher is passionate about enriching the experiences and self-esteem of all pupils. The additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is used very well to provide enrichment activities and motivate these pupils well. Consequently, the attendance of these pupils is good and there is clear evidence that they are learning and progressing well. There is clear evidence that the Year 7 catch-up funding is well spent.
- Extra funding for pupils with SEND is well spent. The new SEND coordinator has brought about very positive changes. She has worked alongside practitioners from a local special school to provide very effective professional development to meet pupils' complex needs. She has improved communication with parents and carers and made sure that pupils receive the external support they need to succeed.
- There is a wide range of subjects studied by pupils and high-quality leadership for careers advice and guidance. Leaders review the curriculum to meet the needs of a range of abilities of pupils. Leaders have revised schemes of work to meet the more challenging examinations at the end of Year 11 and established on-site alternative provision for a very small number of pupils who find it hard to engage in mainstream

classes. This is working well. There is a wide range of extra provision such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, trips and visits and musical enrichment that all contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum engages pupils well in lessons and ensures that they know what it means to be a good citizen.

- Leaders are aware of the government's ambition for the proportion of pupils taking the English Baccalaureate. The proportion of pupils taking four out of the five subject areas is well above average. Currently, the proportion taking all five subject areas is well below average because only a small proportion takes a language. The school has plans to increase this in the coming year.
- Effective leadership in the sixth form has a very clear understanding of the quality of the provision. In a short period of time, improvements are clearly evident in the sixth form. Changes made have yet to reflect in consistently good teaching and outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the pupils and make a good contribution to leadership of the school. This year, new governors have increased their challenge to leaders, holding them to account for the performance of the school. Governors have a detailed understanding of the school's performance and have supported leaders well, recruiting staff and reorganising leadership to give it greater capacity for further improvement. They have audited their skills and improved their effectiveness by engaging in training. They hold other leaders to account and have external validation of the school to ensure that they have independent views of work in the school.
- Governors have a good working knowledge of the school. They have a wide range of expertise, some in education, that gives them a clear picture of how the school is improving. Governors know that the funding for disadvantaged pupils and the Year 7 catch-up funding are spent effectively. They know how funding for pupils with SEND is spent and receive reports on how the needs of these pupils are being met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that pupils, including those at off-site provision, are safe and protected from harm. There is a clear ethos across the school that sets the safeguarding of pupils as a high priority. This year, new leaders introduced computer systems for recording and storing information. Safeguarding records are of high quality and clearly indicate the school's commitment to keep all pupils safe.
- Child protection training for staff and governors means that they are knowledgeable and up to date in terms of the most recent guidance and legislation. Staff are vigilant and know what to do should they have any concerns about pupils' welfare. The school works appropriately with external agencies, engages with parents well and makes sure that safeguarding matters are followed up.
- Governors make sure that all adults on the school site are checked to confirm that they are fit to work with pupils. The school's central register of these checks is well kept.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have focused strongly on developing the quality of teaching, providing very effective training for staff. A relentless focus on recruiting skilled teachers and leaders has strengthened the quality of teaching so that it is now good overall in the main school and improving in the sixth form.
- Teachers make sure that pupils use the time in lessons effectively. Both girls and boys focus well on their work and are keen to complete tasks to a good standard. Lessons flow smoothly because pupils are interested in the work set for them and relationships between pupils and staff are good.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to question pupils skilfully. Pupils are keen to answer and are given sufficient time to answer at length. When necessary, teachers ask supplementary questions to probe pupils' depth of understanding and correct any misconceptions pupils might have. Occasionally, questioning is not challenging the most able pupils to think deeply about what is being learned and opportunities are missed to further consolidate pupils' understanding.
- Overall, in key stages 3 and 4, work is well planned and sustains pupils' interests. Teachers' expectations are usually high, and appropriately challenging work is set for pupils. This is leading to some quick progress for pupils in comparison to previous years and is increasing standards. Teachers are focusing well on providing challenging work. However, there are times when the pitch of work is not adjusted well, for example in some aspects of mathematics and some other subjects, and pupils' progress is not quick.
- Inspectors analysed current pupils' work in key stages 3 and 4 and noted that, across a wide range of subjects, the quality of teaching is strengthening pupils' progress. Work analysis showed that in mathematics, there are examples of some strong gains for pupils and some challenging work, but, although improving, this is not consistent. Some rapid gains in progress were noted particularly in English and science, where progress in the past had not been good. Also, good assessment and challenging work were noted in history and geography and were also seen by inspectors in other subjects.
- Teachers assess pupils' work in class and provide good advice, as their subject knowledge is strong. Pupils are keen to share their learning, cooperate well together and are committed to improving the quality of their work. Presentation of work is good.
- In the main school, variations in the quality of teaching are being smoothed out more quickly across subjects than in the sixth form. Consequently, teaching in the main school is good, while requiring improvement in the sixth form.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They take opportunities to respond and improve their work and usually listen well in class. Work is usually presented well.

- Pupils show respect to each other and to the adults they work with. They are proud of their school and are smart in their appearance. Generally, pupils take pride in their work and presentation is of a high standard.
- Pupils' health and emotional well-being are focused on well by the school. Pupils are clear that should they have worries or concerns, the school counsellor and other staff will support them appropriately.
- Careers education, advice and guidance are given to all pupils in school. The world of work is promoted through 'drop-down days', assemblies and in timetabled sessions. Leaders provide additional support for identified groups of pupils and students to make sure that their career aspirations are raised. There are good links with local universities and businesses as well as independent careers advice. As a result of high-quality careers work, all pupils and students leaving the school in 2018 went into education or employment with training.
- Character education lessons and personal, social and health education provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping safe. Also, they give pupils a very clear understanding of what it means to be a good citizen in modern Britain.
- Pupils say that they are safe and bullying occurs infrequently. Pupils said, 'it does happen sometimes and is dealt with effectively.' Pupils are clear that they should report any bullying to staff and can, if they wish, report it to the safeguarding team. Pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet and have regular reminders in lessons, as well as visitors such as the local police officer.
- Leaders have established good links with off-site providers to make sure that pupils are safe, behave well and benefit from the provision.
- Most parents and the vast majority of staff are confident that pupils are safe in school. For more vulnerable pupils, the school has effective systems in place to ensure that they are kept safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's behaviour and rewards code is well established across the school and usually applied consistently by staff. Most pupils have achieved rewards because they exhibited positive behaviours in class and around school.
- Pupils move quickly to their lessons, and the few who might be lingering are quickly spotted by staff and move on quickly.
- Staff working in the behaviour team are well respected by pupils. Staff are vigilant in checking on those pupils who are not attending school and communicate well with parents. Consequently, attendance is above average and the proportion of pupils often absent from school is below average.
- There is a small proportion of pupils who infringe the school rules regularly and are excluded from school. The proportion of pupils excluded from school has been reducing over time because of the effective work of the behaviour team.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over the past three years, pupils' progress in mathematics has slipped from average to substantially below average. While pupils' progress is currently improving across a range of subjects, it is not quick enough in mathematics for pupils to attain well from their above-average starting points. Currently, progress in mathematics is not good. Consequently, outcomes for pupils require improvement.
- Published information shows that for pupils leaving Year 11 in the past two years, overall progress has been below average. From standards that were well above average at the beginning of key stage 3, pupils left the school with broadly average standards. Staffing issues in English, mathematics and science impacted on pupils' progress in these subjects, with boys making slower progress than girls. However, during the past year, progress improved well in subjects chosen by pupils in the open element of the curriculum.
- The recent appointment of new leaders and more consistent staffing, including new staff, are bringing about improvements for both boys and girls currently in the school. In the past, boys made much less progress than girls across subjects, but work analysis shows no significant differences and standards increasing for both boys and girls.
- Inspection evidence from pupils' work shows quick improvements occurring in English and science but less marked improvements in mathematics. Some good progress was noted in history, religious education, design technology and other subjects. However, the rate of improvement in mathematics is not quick enough, as pupils are not challenged consistently well enough by the work set for them.
- The overall progress of disadvantaged pupils improved considerably from 2017 to 2018 and differences in attainment for these pupils diminished in comparison to others nationally. They attained especially well in subjects in the open element. Improved attitudes to learning and improved attendance are making a good contribution to the improving progress of these pupils. School information indicates that progress for these pupils continues to improve.
- Currently, the progress of pupils with SEND is improving and is closer to average than in the past. The complex needs of some of this group of pupils are much better identified by leaders and there is good support to help them engage in learning. When checking the work of these pupils, inspectors noted good gains in history, geography and art, along with good progress in English and vocational subjects.
- Pupils eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding are given additional literacy and numeracy sessions and a curriculum that is focused on literacy and numeracy. Pupils made positive gains in 2018 especially in reading and mathematics. Inspectors listened to some of these pupils reading and confirmed that good gains were being made in reading.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Over the past two years, students' progress in academic courses has been below average. Progress in applied courses has varied from above average in 2017 to average in 2018. Current students are beginning to make better progress than in the previous years, but it is inconsistent across subjects.

- The quality of teaching is improving in the sixth form but still requires further improvement to be good. Teaching does not promote consistently good progress across courses and subjects, particularly for the most able students.
- New leadership has recognised that students' progress has been too variable over the past two years and consistently good progress is not being made from their starting points.
- Leaders have organised professional development to support teachers in planning work to challenge students effectively and increase rates of progress. There are signs of improving challenge for students, although this remains inconsistent across subjects. Teachers' assessment of students' learning is variable. Some students are not being given the precise support and interventions they need to help them make good progress.
- New leadership is ambitious for students and has a clear view of the priorities for improvement in the sixth form. Good leadership has set the sixth form on the right track for improvement. Improvements in progress are occurring, particularly in Year 12, but the quality of teaching is inconsistent across subjects.
- Strong, impartial careers advice helps students to choose appropriate courses for their sixth-form study. As a result, retention in the sixth form has started to improve. There are very strong links with universities, employers and apprenticeship providers. Work with high-quality companies supports students, increasing their aspirations. Almost three quarters of students go to university and others go to successful apprenticeships after leaving the sixth form.
- There are few students who enter the sixth form without a GCSE grade 4 in English and/or mathematics. These students make better than average progress in these subjects and attain well.
- Students benefit from an excellent internship programme and a wide range of enrichment activities, some that develop good employability skills. Students are very involved in the life of the main school. They contribute well by mentoring younger pupils and being good role models.
- Students receive excellent preparation for life in modern Britain and know how to keep themselves safe. The 'Living in the Wider World' programme, visits and presentations from the police and members of the National Health Service support students' good understanding of how to stay safe.
- Students are very positive about their experiences in the sixth form and are very complimentary about how they are supported and cared for. Behaviour is excellent and students are proud to be members of the sixth form.

School details

Unique reference number	137603
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	10059095

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 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,376
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Cousins; David Grace (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Maggie Dunn
Telephone number	01302 783939
Website	www.ridgewoodschool.co.uk
Email address	admin1@ridgewoodschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 October 2015

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. One in six pupils are disadvantaged.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. Exceptionally few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with support for SEND is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is average.

- The school uses five off-site providers for an exceptionally small number of pupils, mainly Year 10 and 11 pupils. They are Central Learning Centre, Maple Medical Centre, Dearne-Valley PDC, Levett Upper School PRU and St Wilfrid's Academy PRU.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- During 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. They listened to some pupils reading.
- An inspector held a meeting with three members of the governing body, including both co-chairs.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and middle leaders. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with one of the school's off-site providers.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan and a number of school policies. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed the 238 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and a range of parent responses to school questionnaires completed at school meetings. They also considered the 198 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire and 111 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector

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