

# Inspection of Haydon Bridge Community High School and Sports College

Haydon Bridge, Hexham, Northumberland NE47 6LR

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 July 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

Requires improvement

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The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils and staff members know each other well in this small school. Pupils respect each other and feel welcome, including pupils who join the school after Year 7. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that staff members will deal with it effectively if it occurs. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at Haydon Bridge.

Pupils appreciate the new buildings and equipment that is available to them and that they enjoy the outside space at breaktime.

Pupils behave well enough in lessons so that everyone is able to focus on learning. If pupils misbehave, teachers challenge this, and pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions. Some pupils switch off in lessons and do not focus on their learning as fully as they could. This is not challenged consistently enough by teachers.

The quality of education at Haydon Bridge is improving but it is still not good enough in some subjects. Teachers are focusing more on helping pupils to remember what they learn. However, too often, pupils have gaps in their knowledge or misconceptions about what they are learning. Teachers do not pick up on this quickly enough.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have improved the quality of plans for what pupils need to learn. In most subjects, these plans are ambitious, and they carefully build pupils' knowledge over time. In a few subjects, such as geography, history and religious education, these plans are not well thought through.

Leaders have focused on ensuring that the curriculum plans they have in place are implemented well. Teachers are clear about the importance of checking that pupils remember what they have learned. Most teachers plan and teach effectively to help pupils learn well. However, pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge in a number of subjects. This is particularly the case in mathematics and history. This is because the curriculum has not been good enough in the past and pupils have not caught up on what they have missed or cannot remember. Students in the sixth form are taught by subject specialists. Students learn well and develop good knowledge of the courses they study.

Support for pupils who are not fluent readers is working well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the support they need. Teachers adapt their teaching to make sure that these pupils are able to learn.

Senior leaders have rightly ensured that curriculum leadership is strengthened. Subject leaders have been supported through external coaching. Subject leaders value this support and are increasingly effective in their roles. However, many do not demonstrate how they can best monitor the impact of the changes they make, such

as improving curriculum plans or checking how well they are being rolled out. Some leaders and teachers lack the subject-specific knowledge they need to plan learning carefully and use assessment effectively. Leaders do not assure themselves of the quality of education in all subjects. Consequently, the quality of education overall is not good enough.

Leaders have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour. They have set out clear expectations for behaviour and introduced systems that support teachers to implement the changes. Pupils and staff recognise the impact of these changes. Although some pupils are boisterous at social times, staff manage this well. In lessons, pupils behave and do not disrupt the learning of others. However, some pupils are not as involved in their learning as they could be. Teachers do not always challenge this lack of motivation, and this means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Attendance is improving, but some pupils still do not attend regularly enough. Staff work closely with families whose children do not attend well and this support is improving attendance rates. Attendance of students in the sixth form has also improved. Staff work closely with pupils whose poor behaviour results in leaders excluding them. As a result, the number of pupils who have been excluded has fallen over time. However, the number remains high.

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, do not receive the careers guidance they need. Some students in the sixth form told inspectors that they had too little guidance about how their subject choices affect their career options. The school does not link enough with employers. Teachers make good use of daily tutor time to develop pupils' knowledge of current affairs and the wider world. In the sixth form, this is less well developed and what students learn about the wider world depends on the subjects they study. As a result, not all pupils in the sixth form are as prepared as they could be to be responsible, active citizens. The school prioritises teaching pupils to be tolerant and respectful of others.

Pupils understand how other people might be different from them and are respectful towards others. Staff care about pupils and support them. Pupils are positive about how the school has looked after their mental health. Leaders have planned an effective curriculum for personal, social and health education. Sixth-form students value the strong support they receive from staff. A range of extra-curricular activities are provided by the school. However, over time, this offer has been inconsistent. As a result, not all pupils have enjoyed the same range of activities during their time at the school.

The members of the interim executive board support and challenge leaders to improve effectively. They have carried out focused visits to the school to check the impact of leaders' actions, for example actions to improve the teaching of pupils with SEND. Leaders consider staff workload when implementing changes, and staff were positive about the support they receive.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are knowledgeable about the risks to young people and know what they can do to help keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure that this knowledge is updated regularly. Leaders have developed robust systems to identify pupils who are at risk and act quickly to support these pupils. They work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils get the help they need.

Pupils know who they can speak to if they have concerns. They are confident that staff will deal with concerns.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most subjects, leaders and teachers are clear about what they want pupils to know and be able to do. However, this knowledge is not being learned and remembered well by all pupils. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should make sure that teaching strategies and assessment arrangements are used effectively in all subjects to ensure that pupils retain the knowledge they have been taught.
- Standards of behaviour have improved. However, some pupils do not focus in lessons and do not take part in their learning well. This is because teaching does not always build enough on pupils' prior knowledge and teachers do not consistently challenge this lack of engagement. As a result, some pupils are not learning as well as they could be. Exclusions are still too high. Leaders should ensure that teachers challenge any lack of pupil involvement in lessons and ensure that pupils take a full part in their learning.
- Leaders have not planned systematic opportunities for pupils to learn about careers options. As a result, pupils are not as well informed as they should be about careers and the impact of their subject choices on their career options. Leaders need to make sure that plans to develop careers education, information, advice and guidance are enacted and give pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions.
- Leaders have not developed systematic plans for the wider curriculum in the sixth form. As a result, students in the sixth form are not sufficiently well prepared with the knowledge they need to be responsible, active citizens. Leaders should ensure that sixth-form students benefit from complete study programmes that provide this knowledge.
- Some subject leaders lack the knowledge and expertise they need to improve the quality of education in their subjects. Leaders have not assured themselves of the quality of curriculum plans in all subjects effectively. As a result, the impact of improvements to the quality of education is not consistent across subjects.

Leaders need to ensure that the implementation of curriculum plans is effective in all subjects.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school [here](#).

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122328
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10184590
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	421
<b>Number in the sixth form</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.haydonbridgehigh.co.uk">http://www.haydonbridgehigh.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 March 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and class teachers (including newly qualified teachers).
- The lead inspector met with members of the Interim Executive Board and a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors focused in particular on the quality of the curriculum in English, history, science and mathematics. Inspectors met the leaders for each subject, looked in detail at curriculum planning, visited lessons, scrutinised a sample of pupils' workbooks, and held discussions with subject teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. They spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe. They also asked the pupils about how they keep themselves safe and what they can do if they have concerns.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the views of 73 parents and carers who completed Ofsted's online survey, including free-text responses. They also considered the views of the 32 members of staff who completed Ofsted's online survey.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Jenner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michael Wardle	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bernard Clark	Ofsted Inspector
Erica Hiorns	Ofsted Inspector

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