

# Inspection of a good school: Penistone Grammar School

Huddersfield Road, Penistone, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S36 7BX

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Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2023

## **Outcome**

Penistone Grammar School continues to be a good school.

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

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils. Pupils study for ambitious qualifications. They achieve well in external examinations. In lessons, they are respectful and focus on learning. Teachers deliver high-quality lessons. Pupils secure appropriate destinations for their next steps in education or training.

Pupils' behaviour generally meets the high expectations of leaders. Disruption to learning is rare. When it does happen, teachers address it effectively. Teachers praise pupils' positive choices and give regular rewards. Relationships between teachers and pupils are respectful. Bullying is rare in the school. However, pupils do not consistently report bullying when it occurs. A small minority of pupils experience derogatory language from their peers. Leaders and staff do not tolerate this. They address it when they are aware of it.

Leaders have designed a range of high-quality enrichment opportunities for pupils. These include overseas and domestic educational visits, sport and performing arts clubs, cadets and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Most pupils take advantage of these. Some pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, do not benefit from these wider opportunities. Leaders are making these more accessible to all pupils. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders have prioritised pupils' mental health. A team of trained staff, including counsellors, support pupils with this.

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

Curriculum leaders have identified the most important knowledge in their subjects. Teachers present this in a logical order, which builds on what pupils already know. Teachers have a common approach to delivering lessons. Leaders have provided training so that they use this approach effectively. Pupils understand how this approach helps

them to know and remember more. Teachers explain information clearly. They use assessment well to check what pupils understand. They adapt their teaching based on what this tells them. Teachers close gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly.

Teachers are provided with detailed information about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers use this to provide additional support to pupils with SEND. This helps pupils to keep up with their peers. A small number of pupils with SEND receive their lessons in the 'Heart Space' provision. They are well supported by skilled teachers who know them well. Teachers structure learning to meet their needs. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND remain part of the wider school community. Pupils benefit substantially by accessing this provision.

Leaders place high importance on pupils' ability to read fluently. Pupils read regularly during tutor time. Leaders choose texts to expose pupils to wider social issues. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read receive additional help. Staff who deliver these sessions are well trained. This enables pupils to catch up with their peers. Some pupils would benefit from more frequent support to allow them to catch up more rapidly.

During religious and citizenship studies, and tutor time, pupils study a well-designed personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Pupils' education goes beyond the academic. Pupils' charitable work has raised significant amounts of money, including for the local hospital. Some pupils gain leadership experience through prefect and student council roles. They provide meaningful representation for their peers. Many pupils take advantage of these opportunities. Disadvantaged pupils are less likely than their peers to participate.

Students in the sixth form achieve well because of the quality of education they receive. Leaders have adapted the range of courses in response to the needs of students. An increasing number of students join the school in Year 12 to attend the sixth form. Students benefit from the same quality PSHE curriculum as younger pupils.

A variety of external speakers visit the school to talk with pupils about careers and further education. Pupils receive independent careers advice and guidance. Leaders ensure that pupils in Year 11 select suitable post-16 courses, including with other providers. Students in Year 12 complete work experience placements with local businesses. Over half of the students in the sixth form go on to study at prestigious Russell Group universities.

Pupils and students attend school regularly. They are punctual to lessons and value learning time. The proportion of pupils who receive a suspension is very low. A small number of pupils are removed from lessons due to their poor behaviour. This is rare.

Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They consider staff workload when making changes. A minority of parents, carers and staff do not feel that leaders engage with them as fully as they would like. Leaders and governors recognise that communication with stakeholders requires additional work.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a large and well-trained safeguarding team. Staff are knowledgeable about the safeguarding risks in the local area. Leaders adapt the PSHE programme well to respond to these. Staff know how to report a concern about a pupil's welfare. They do this in a timely way. Pupils are confident to raise their concerns with a member of staff.

Regular case review meetings make sure that safeguarding actions are completed promptly. Leaders have strong relationships with external agencies and use these to support pupils and families. Leaders make appropriate pre-employment checks.

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

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

- Some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not participate in the wider opportunities that leaders provide as frequently as their peers. These pupils miss out on important learning to enhance their broader development. Leaders should review the offer and embed their new approach to monitoring participation, ensuring that all pupils access the school's full and rich curriculum.
- Leaders do not engage with stakeholders fully. Some members of the wider school community do not feel listened to. Leaders should continue to embed the recent changes in the way they take stakeholder feedback to enable all parties to contribute their views.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## **Further information**

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

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>	106653
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240459
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,877
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	251
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Yvonne Asquith
<b>Principal</b>	Paul Crook
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.penistone-gs.uk/">http://www.penistone-gs.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 October 2017

## Information about this school

- The principal has changed since the last inspection.
- A small number of pupils who attend the school access education in an onsite, specially resourced provision known as the 'Heart Space'. This facility is managed and run by school staff.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with members of the governing body, including the chair.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the principal. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, the sixth form, personal development, careers and behaviour.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, geography and computer science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Members of the inspection team looked at a range of documentation regarding the support pupils with SEND receive. Inspectors looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors met with the designated lead for safeguarding. They checked records of actions taken by leaders to keep pupils safe. Inspectors scrutinised the single central record of recruitment checks.
- A wide range of pupils and staff talked with inspectors, formally and informally, about the safeguarding culture in school over the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from governing body meetings and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. They spoke to pupils who had been subject to sanctions. Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at social times.
- The views of parents, pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered.

## **Inspection team**

Thomas Wraith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gordon Watts

Ofsted Inspector

Carl Sugden

Ofsted Inspector

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