

Inspection of Boroughbridge High School

Wetherby Road, Boroughbridge, York, North Yorkshire YO51 9JX

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff know pupils well at Boroughbridge High School. There are positive relationships between pupils and staff. However, not all teachers have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour and do not routinely challenge low-level disruption in classrooms.

Most pupils enjoy attending the school, and the majority agree that if bullying does happen that it is dealt with well by leaders. Although many pupils feel safe in school, some do not. Some pupils in lower year groups say they are worried or concerned about the behaviour and conduct of some older pupils.

When pupils are interested and engaged, they participate well in lessons. But some teachers allow pupils to shout out answers and do not always insist that all pupils participate fully in tasks.

There are a range of extracurricular activities that pupils can participate in and pupils speak enthusiastically about these. They include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, several sports clubs, music sessions, an eco-club and computer coding and programming. More pupils in key stage 3 attend extracurricular activities than pupils in key stage 4. Pupils can also be part of the student council where they can lead fundraising events.

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

Subject leaders have worked to improve their curriculums. Curriculums are well thought out and sequenced. This helps to build on previous learning, and pupils are showing that they remember much of the content that they are being taught. Subject leaders are further developing the strategies that they have in place to ensure that pupils can retrieve knowledge. A strength in classrooms is the vocabulary that teachers use in lessons. They expose pupils to a rich and varied vocabulary, and many pupils are confident when using more complex words and terminology. For example, in an English lesson, a Year 8 pupil accurately, and independently, used the word 'omnipresent' in a written task.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and apply this well in lessons. However, not all teachers ensure that all pupils are actively engaged in their learning. Sometimes teachers do not use questioning effectively to ensure that as many pupils as possible respond in lessons. Some teachers accept pupils shouting out answers and do not target specific pupils to check what they know. This means that too few pupils have their subject knowledge routinely checked.

Some teachers do use the behaviour policy to ensure that low-level disruption does not affect learning. Some staff do not consistently use and apply the agreed behaviour policy. This means that some lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour is variable and that it is worse in some lessons than others. Behaviour around school is not always calm and orderly but this does vary

by year group. Pupils in Year 7, for example, conduct themselves well and have better attendance than other year groups. Leaders have prioritised improving pupils' attendance. Their actions are having a positive impact on some pupils. However, some pupils are absent too often.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to the full curriculum. Leaders identify and understand the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff receive appropriate information which allows them to make adjustments to ensure that pupils with SEND can complete their work. The number of pupils with an education, health and care plan has increased significantly of late, and leaders are committed to ensuring that these pupils get the help that they need.

Leaders have employed new strategies to promote a love of reading and to ensure that pupils who are weaker readers get the support that they need. Pupils who need support with reading are identified quickly and have interventions to help them. There are several events which promote a love of reading across the school, such as the big book swap, reading loyalty cards, online book clubs and 'drop everything and read' sessions. There is a focus on reading in all subjects.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is well planned and sequenced. The curriculum covers all aspects of PSHE, including, for example, what it means to be British and how to become responsible citizens. Pupils have secure knowledge of age-appropriate healthy relationships. They are very positive about inclusivity, diversity and equality. Pupils receive effective careers advice and guidance. They experience a range of activities to help them to learn about different careers. This helps them to prepare for their future.

The majority of staff are happy and proud to work at the school, and most staff agree that leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. A small proportion of staff do not feel well supported to manage behaviour. The governing body supports leaders, and they are aware that behaviour and attendance are areas in need of further development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders of safeguarding are knowledgeable. They keep detailed records and take appropriate action to support the most vulnerable pupils. They work well with external agencies.

Staff are well trained and vigilant. They know what to do if a pupil discloses a safeguarding issue or if they observe something that concerns them. The fact that the school is small means that staff quickly notice changes in behaviour or demeanour which may alert them to a wider issue. Staff know that reporting a small incident can help build a bigger picture. Pupils know how to report any concerns that they might have and value the support of pastoral leaders.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not consistently manage pupils' behaviour well. Some pupils are disruptive. This leads to learning being interrupted in some lessons. Leaders must ensure that all members of staff follow a consistent approach to managing and improving pupils' behaviour.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they miss lessons and fall behind in their learning. Leaders should continue to develop strategies to engage with these pupils so that their attendance improves.
- Some teachers do not ensure that all pupils are actively involved in lessons. This means that not all pupils fully engage with learning and that there are not consistent strategies used to prevent some pupils from shouting out answers. Leaders must ensure that all teachers use consistent approaches so that all pupils know that they are expected to participate fully in lessons to maximise learning.

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

Unique reference number	121699
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10255593
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Dawson
Headteacher	Kathryn Stephenson
Website	www.boroughbridgehigh.com
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 January 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average-size secondary school.
- The school is part of a hard federation with King James's School in Knaresborough. The two schools have the same governing body.
- The number of pupils with an educational, health and care plan has risen significantly of late.
- The school uses alternative provision for a very small number of pupils.
- The sixth form is currently suspended and a small number of students in Year 13, who are still on roll at Boroughbridge High School, travel to King James's School for their Year 13 lessons.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors visited lessons and form time.
- Inspectors considered the responses of parents and staff through Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation, behaviour and attendance and governance.
- The lead inspector evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by meeting with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewing a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, computer science and religious studies. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

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