

Haydon Bridge High School and Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122328
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	359226
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	13–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	734
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ed Brown
Headteacher	Barbara Mansfield
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 37 teachers and 37 lessons, and held meetings with the governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and analysed 124 questionnaires from parents and carers, 160 from students and 62 from staff. The team also looked at documents and policies including those relating to the safeguarding of students, all the information the school had collected about the students' progress and the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

- The current attainment and progress of students, particularly in English and mathematics in Key Stage 4 and that of higher attaining students, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How teachers use assessment to help students to improve their work, particularly to what extent are students involved in checking the effectiveness of their own learning.
- The effectiveness of leaders at all levels in monitoring and evaluating areas that are less strong.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average secondary school which serves a very large, rural catchment area. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. Most students are White British. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than average, although those who have a statement of special educational needs is higher than average. The school is a specialist sports college, with a second specialism in science. It is also a trust school, working in collaboration with three middle schools and a first school. The school has many awards, including the Healthy School status and Artsmark Gold.

The school has an acting headteacher, previously the deputy headteacher, who took up post in September 2010. The school has boarding provision for about 50 of its students. This provision is subject to a separate inspection and is not being inspected as part of this school inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Haydon Bridge is a good school which is held in high esteem by its students and their parents and carers. The comment, 'The school is a lovely community that has allowed my daughter to explore and realise her potential' is typical of many and exemplifies the importance that the school places on pastoral care and inclusion.

There is a strong emphasis on all aspects of education. The school's specialist status in sport plays a strong part in the students' development. Many students take part in extra-curricular sport and this plays an important part in their good adoption of healthy lifestyles. The vast majority of students say that they feel that the school keeps them safe. The school's good safeguarding and good care, guidance and support help to ensure that this is the case.

Since the previous inspection there have been many improvements. These include the effectiveness of the sixth form which is now good, with attainment at the end of Year 13 being above average, and attendance across the whole school, which is above the national average, close to being high. The quality of teaching has also improved and is good. However, there is a small percentage of teaching which is only satisfactory and this is a barrier to raising attainment and accelerating the rate of the students' progress in some areas. The school has much good practice but it is not shared well enough at present. The rate of students' progress in English and mathematics in Key Stage 4 has accelerated through better teaching and better management. The progress of more able students and also those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has also improved, so that they now make good progress in line with their peers.

The school has a restructured leadership and management team, although many of the leaders have been in the school for some time. The school's self-evaluation is accurate as senior leaders understand the strengths and areas for development well. They are working well together to secure improvements and tackle weaker areas. The management of teaching and learning has improved and is now much more accurate, although there is not always enough emphasis on learning when carrying out lesson observations. Tracking systems have improved, but they are not yet refined enough to effectively detect and act upon any underachievement early enough to secure a rapid enough rise in progress. Nevertheless, the many aspects that have improved since the previous inspection mean that the capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress through ensuring that all teaching is at least good or better, by:

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- sharing more effectively the best practice that exists already within the school
- always sharing with the students clear success criteria so that learning and progress can be checked more easily
- having a common approach to observing lessons that has a clear focus on learning
- refining the school's tracking systems so that any underachievement is identified as early as possible and strategies are put in place to address it.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Inspection evidence from lesson observations confirmed the school's view that learning, progress and achievement are good. Most students are involved in learning well with their teachers and with each other. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 11 chemistry lesson where students were skilfully guided to check for themselves how well they had met the learning criteria. A focus on looking at the learning of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities during the inspection confirmed that their learning is good. They were generally seen engaged fully in their work, guided well by their teachers and support staff. Students make good progress during their time in school. They enter with attainment that is close to the national average and leave at the end of Year 11 with attainment overall securely in line with that found nationally. Some aspects of attainment, as measured against key national indicators, are above average and well above average. Attainment is above average and often higher in subjects such as science and art.

Students are strongly encouraged to contribute to their own and wider community. Many do so willingly through projects such as the 'zero carbon' project which involves them in looking into ways of cleaner energy production. Students feel that the school listens to them well through 'student voice', although they say that this could have a higher profile amongst the whole school, involving more students. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their understanding of international cultures is particularly good, because the school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Students spoke excitedly about the opportunity to visit Trinidad and Tobago with the 'steel pans'. However, their understanding of various religions and cultures, reflecting those found in the United Kingdom as a whole, are less well developed. Students are well prepared for their future economic well-being. Their attendance has improved and is now securely above that found nationally. They cooperate well together and have good information and communication technology skills (ICT).

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Generally, good quality teaching caters well for the students' differing needs, including those who are more-able or particularly gifted or talented and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the quality of teaching is variable and the best practice is not shared well enough at present. Relationships are good and most lessons move forward at a good pace, with a range of interesting activities that motivate students to do well. This ensures that their behaviour plays a key part in their learning. Teaching assistants work well with teachers and provide good support so that all students have full access to their learning. Teachers usually discuss with students what it is they should be learning, but sometimes this is not specific enough. As a result, it is sometimes difficult for teachers and for the students to tell how well learning is taking place. In the better lessons, assessment is used well to promote learning. For example, in a Year 11 art lesson, the teacher frequently gave feedback individually on what was being done well and what could be improved. This resulted in attainment that was far higher than that usually seen.

The curriculum has breadth and balance and the specialist school provision enhances learning well. The school's sporting profile locally is very high. It hosts many sporting events, with students taking a leading role in organising and running these. Partnerships with neighbouring schools allow the delivery of its wide range of courses, including many vocational qualifications, very well matched to the students' interests. The use of ICT in lessons, including that of interactive whiteboards, heightens enjoyment and aids progress. Students say that they particularly like using the 'net books' to aid research. A wide range of visits, out-of-school clubs and specialist days, such as Poverty Week,

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contribute well to the students' good personal development and understanding of other communities. Students, including the most vulnerable, benefit from a very pro-active approach to care and support and this has a good impact. The responses to the students' questionnaire revealed that the vast majority of students feel that they are prepared well for the future and that staff care about them. One student told the inspectors, 'the teachers really know you; you are not just a student'.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The recent appointment of the former deputy headteacher to the role of acting headteacher has ensured a seamless transition. She draws well on the strengths of her very able senior leaders to lead a very cohesive and effective team that has been instrumental in bringing about improvements. The staff questionnaire responses show that most staff feel highly valued and are involved fully in what the school is trying to achieve. Generally, middle leaders evaluate the work of their departments well. However, some departments do not always monitor the progress of their students early enough or carry out sharp enough evaluation leading to effective, timely interventions. This means that progress in all subjects has not been as fast as it might have been.

The school engages well with parents and carers through a variety of methods and most feel that the school helps them to support their children's learning well. Gaps between different groups of students are narrowing, reflecting the good promotion of equality of opportunity. There is a nil return on any racist incidents. There are many effective partnerships that help to bring about many of the improvements. For example, arts partnerships have allowed students to exhibit in the community and to take part in workshops with local artists. This is just one example of the school's good community cohesion. The school has links with schools internationally, for example, with a school in Uganda and is developing links with schools in the United Kingdom, especially with some that have a different socio-economic and/or ethnic make up to its own. The school promotes good safeguarding procedures with secure risk assessments, as part of its good quality care. The governing body is good and involved fully in the running of the school. Members of the governing body know the school well and offer an appropriate degree of challenge. They are involved in training other governing bodies on safeguarding through the local authority.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The vast majority of students in the sixth form reach the challenging targets set for them. They make good progress and reach above average standards at the end of Year 13. Almost all go on to higher education and the number who do not enter employment, education or training is extremely low. Students say that they enjoy their sixth-form education and retention rates on all courses are high. They have mature attitudes to learning, attend regularly, work hard and make a considerable contribution to the main school and wider community, for example, by seeking the views of younger students through the 'student voice'. Guidance and support is well-organised and makes a good contribution to the students' academic progress and personal development. Teachers have good subject knowledge and progress in lessons is good, being supported by the good relationships and attention to students' individual needs. The curriculum provides a wide range of courses and there is a high take-up of the specialist subjects at GCE A level. The partnership working with a consortium of schools ensures the school can provide a wide range of vocational and other courses alongside GCE A and AS level. Leadership of the sixth form demonstrates a clear agenda for further improvement and an accurate view of the priorities. Rising numbers of students and improving examination results indicate the success of the provision.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Around one fifth of families returned their questionnaire. Parents and carers are positive about all aspects of the school's work. For example, most feel that their children are safe and are well prepared for the future. A small minority of parents and carers do not agree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns or that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors find that on the evidence provided, the school positively seeks and acts on the views of parents and carers and also deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haydon Bridge High School and Sports College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 734 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	33	70	56	8	6	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	34	77	62	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	40	60	48	8	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	35	58	47	10	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	40	32	62	50	7	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	26	63	51	15	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	23	77	62	8	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	45	36	65	52	4	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	34	63	51	8	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	22	69	56	16	13	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	25	58	47	15	12	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	36	29	58	47	13	10	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	34	65	52	7	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Dear Students

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you very much. We judged your school to be good and we would like to share with you why we think this is so and what the school can do to make things even better. Your parents and carers told us how pleased they are with the standard of education in the school.

You have good senior leaders who are working well with the governing body and staff in securing improvements in the school. Your academic achievement throughout school is good. By the time you leave at the end of Year 13, the standards you attain are above those found nationally. You behave well and most of you engage well in your lessons. You receive particularly good care and support and as a result you told us that you feel very safe in school. The school's sporting specialism allows many of you the opportunity to engage in additional sports and organise sporting events that are hosted at your school. It also contributes well to your health and well-being.

Throughout the school, we believe that you could progress even faster if the teaching in all your lessons was always good or better. We feel that this could be done by sharing the aspects that are present in the best teaching. In particular, each of your lessons should have clear ways of enabling you to be able to tell how well you are learning. All of you can help here by asking if this is not clear to you. In order to address underachievement as early as possible we have asked that your progress be monitored more closely to redress any underachievement as quickly as possible. We would also like those senior leaders who observe your lessons to concentrate more on how well you are learning.

We would like to wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely,

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