

North Huddersfield Trust School

Woodhouse Hall Road, Fartown, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD2 1DJ

Inspection dates

25–26 April 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and his senior leadership team have an uncompromising ambition for the school. Their strong leadership has led to better teaching, much improved behaviour and higher achievement for pupils.
- The school's system to promote excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning is highly effective. Behaviour both in lessons and about the school is good. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect.
- This is a very inclusive school. School staff, especially the pastoral team, support not only the pupils but also their families and carers. People value this support and both pupils and their families have great trust in the staff of the school to help them resolve any issues which arise.
- Leaders have taken effective action to eradicate weaker teaching and increase the proportion of good or better teaching. As a result, teaching is good overall and the progress made by pupils has accelerated over time. However, pupils do not always know how to improve their work and move on to the next stage in their learning.
- Governors have the right expertise and skills to provide robust challenge to senior leaders. Governors know the school well and are clear about what more needs to be done. Work with partners in the North Huddersfield Trust has developed the school's role in the community and brought real benefits to pupils.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are well trained and pupils feel safe. They know who to go to if problems arise, and have real confidence that staff will help them resolve any issues which arise.
- The school's work to promote personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Support for disadvantaged pupils, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. As a result, they make good progress.
- Middle leaders play a key role in checking the quality of teaching and they are an emerging strength of the school. However, some are less experienced than others and senior leaders will need to continue to support them.
- Leaders have put great emphasis on catering for the needs of the increasing number of higher-ability students in the school and this was seen clearly in many inspection activities. However, leaders and governors are aware that they will need to continue this focus to ensure that teachers provide the appropriate challenge for the most able pupils in every teaching group.
- Leaders see homework as central to ensuring that all pupils make good progress, and inspectors saw evidence of this work. However, there is still some work to do to ensure that pupils develop the skills to work independently.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - embedding the work on homework so that pupils develop the skills to work independently outside of lessons
 - making sure that all pupils know precisely how to improve their work and have the confidence, skills and positive attitudes to move to the next stage of their learning
 - ensuring that work set for the increasing number of high-attaining pupils and the most able students in each teaching group challenges them to achieve as well as they can.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has provided very strong leadership for the school. He is passionate and ambitious for his pupils and is a highly visible figure about the school during the school day.
- The headteacher and governors have taken decisive action to strengthen the quality of teaching and improve pupils' outcomes since the previous inspection. Leaders have the strong support of staff in improving the school, and morale is high.
- Increasingly, middle leaders are playing their part in improvements across the school and in their subject areas. Senior leaders have given middle leaders greater responsibility and they are rising to the challenge. There is a blend of new appointments and well-established staff in the team. New leadership in science, for example, has improved the consistency of teaching and accelerated the rate of pupils' progress. However, middle leaders are at different stages in their development. Senior leaders recognise this and work closely with them to help them develop their skills.
- Leaders use a range of evidence to determine the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making. These systems are very rigorous and have proved to be effective in improving the quality of teaching across the school. Professional development is designed around the varying needs of individual teachers. Middle and senior leaders check the impact of this work regularly through lesson observations, work scrutiny, talking to pupils and analysing progress information. Governors are involved in the process too.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the curriculum they offer to their pupils in that they try to address the specific needs of their pupils. In addition to the core subjects, for example, pupils have two hours of physical education to ensure their fitness and health. Leaders attach great importance to personal, social and health education, and a compulsory course in Year 9 focuses on life skills ranging from first aid to enterprise. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Leaders' effective use of pupil premium funding has improved the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils since the previous inspection. In 2016, at the end of Year 11, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school was in line with the progress of all pupils nationally. A detailed scrutiny of pupils' workbooks across all year groups showed that disadvantaged pupils presently in school were making good progress in line with their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Both spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and personal, social and health education are strengths of the school. Leaders in these areas pride themselves on being flexible and responding to issues which directly affect the pupils in their community. The harmonious atmosphere in this school, where pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, is proof of the impact of their work. Pupils leave the school well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority is represented both on the governing body and on the trust. As a consequence, it has a good understanding of how the school has strengthened since the previous inspection and what has still to be done to provide outstanding education.

Governance of the school

- Governors are very ambitious for the pupils and staff. They have effective systems in place, including frequent visits to school, to check on progress and to ensure that the school is improving. As a consequence, they know their school well and have a very clear handle on the overall effectiveness of the school and where further improvements are necessary.
- Governors are highly skilled and have the necessary expertise to support their work. They have a particularly strong grasp of how to analyse pupils' assessment information. They talked with confidence about the performance of different groups in the 2016 examination results and with equal assurance about the progress of present pupils across the school.
- An analysis of governors' minutes and conversations with governors showed that they provide real challenge and support for the leaders of the school. They are not afraid to challenge leaders about their judgements on the overall effectiveness of the school, and their questioning of school leaders about examination results and pupils' progress is extremely rigorous.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors are very clear about their responsibility to keep children safe and fulfil their safeguarding duties. The governor with oversight for safeguarding is well qualified for the role and governors review the school's processes regularly to check that systems are fit for purpose.
- There is a clear ethos about the school that sets the safety of pupils as a high priority. Staff are vigilant and leaders work closely with external agencies in the community to ensure that appropriate action is being taken to keep the most vulnerable pupils safe.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep safe and assess the risks which might face them. The school has engaged well with external agencies to provide comprehensive advice on a range of issues which might be a risk to their well-being.
- Leaders have robustly tackled pupils' absence and are tenacious in chasing up non-attendance. As a result, the much-improved attendance is contributing well to pupils' safety and well-being.
- The school's approach is best summed up by saying that no stone is left unturned to ensure that children are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have taken determined action to improve the quality of teaching. Carefully targeted professional development and coaching has helped teachers to develop their skills. As a result of this better teaching, the progress made by pupils has accelerated rapidly since the previous inspection.
- Teachers have established purposeful classroom routines, and the improved attitudes to learning have contributed significantly to the more rapid progress of pupils.

- Positive relationships and mutual respect feature strongly, and these help lessons flow smoothly.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. They support pupils with a range of abilities and have the subject knowledge they need to answer questions and intervene promptly when pupils are struggling with their work.
- Leaders have focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching in science, and new leadership of the subject has led to further improvements. Since the previous inspection, leaders have also strengthened the quality of teaching in mathematics and in English.
- School leaders have focused intensively on improving pupils' reading and writing skills, and these strategies are starting to have success. The recent appointment of additional higher-level teaching assistants, for example, has had real impact. The most able readers read with fluency and expression. Lower-ability readers have the right techniques to tackle words they find more difficult.
- At its best, teaching challenges pupils of all abilities. Inspectors saw examples across different subjects of teachers setting tasks which are flexible enough to challenge the most able pupils in the group. However, leaders accept that there is still some work to do to ensure that all teachers set work for every class which enables all pupils, including the most able, to achieve even more.
- Pupils do not always have the skills and confidence to reflect on their work and extend their learning.
- Leaders have put a real emphasis on homework, and inspectors saw a number of high-quality homework tasks across different subject areas. However, the policy is in its infancy and leaders accept that the idea of independent study outside lessons is not yet embedded.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils wear their uniform immaculately. They are proud of their school and the opportunities it provides for them. Pupils and their families value the support of their teachers and staff. They recognise and appreciate the improvements brought about over recent years in school.
- Pupils receive comprehensive guidance on how to stay safe in school and within their community. Pupils discuss the risks relating to carrying knives, online safety and the importance of healthy relationships with maturity. The programme is flexible and leaders respond quickly to any risks which emerge in the community. Pupils have great confidence in the staff to deal with any issues that they take to them.
- Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about the different types of bullying and speak highly of the effective way the school deals with the very few incidents of bullying. The work on restorative justice is a real strength of the school. The strong curriculum for personal development has ensured that they do not tolerate racism or homophobia. Pupils are adamant that discrimination has no place in the school.

- Pupils enjoy excellent opportunities to develop their personal views, especially during form time and personal, social and health education lessons. To cite just one example, the Year 7 'circle time' in form period gives pupils the opportunity to share their views on a variety of topics and has proved to be effective.
- Pupils receive effective careers education and guidance throughout the school and this is helping to raise the aspirations of pupils. The strong links with local business via the trust enhance this provision and pupils value the careers guidance and work-related experience. As a result of strong guidance and improved attainment, pupils from the school move on to appropriate further education, employment or training.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff and pupils agree that behaviour has improved significantly since the introduction of the new behaviour system. Teachers use both rewards and sanctions effectively, and pupils have responded well to the approach.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. During lunch and breaktimes, pupils respond well to the visible presence of staff. Despite crowded conditions in the dining area and long queues, they behave very sensibly.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good and this has undoubtedly made a significant contribution to the improvements in the pace of learning since the last inspection. They also show an increasing pride in the way they present their work.
- Leaders clearly recognise the negative impact poor attendance can have on pupils' learning. They now have in place highly effective, rigorous systems to monitor and improve attendance. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils has improved significantly and is now in line with the national average.
- This is an inclusive school and it does not take the decision to exclude students lightly. There have been no permanent exclusions since the previous inspection and fixed-term exclusions are lower than the national average.
- Staff and parents believe that behaviour is good.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, rates of progress have accelerated significantly.
- Present pupils are making good progress across the curriculum in both key stage 3 and key stage 4. Historically, progress has been more rapid in key stage 4. However, leaders have made a concerted effort to raise the pace of progress in key stage 3, and a detailed scrutiny of pupils' workbooks across a range of subjects showed this focus to be having real impact. Pupils in key stage 3 are now making more rapid progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making good progress across the curriculum in both key stages. In lessons and in their workbooks, inspectors could see clearly that disadvantaged pupils were making the same progress as any pupil with the same starting point.

- Leaders have brought about considerable improvements in the rate of progress of pupils in science. This was clear in the examination results for the Year 11 pupils in 2016 and in the detailed scrutiny of present pupils' workbooks. Pupils now make good progress in science in both key stage 3 and key stage 4.
- In 2016, at the end of Year 11, pupils' progress across the curriculum was in line with that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Middle-ability pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made less progress than their peers. However, inspection activities showed that present pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities are making good progress across the full range of abilities.
- Outcomes achieved by the small number of high-ability pupils at the end of Year 11 in 2016, all of whom were disadvantaged, indicate that the progress of the most able pupils was below that of pupils nationally with the same starting points. Leaders have put into place strategies to address this, which have had some success.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved a good GCSE pass in both English and mathematics by the end of Year 11 has risen since the previous inspection, but is still below the national level.

School details

Unique reference number	136502
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10031032

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	LA maintained foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	626
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phil Weston
Headteacher	Loz Wilson
Telephone number	01484 452100
Website	www.nhtschool.co.uk/
Email address	office@nhtschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is much higher than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

- The school is part of the North Huddersfield Trust.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Pupil numbers have increased since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons, with six sessions observed with senior leaders.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both informally and formally, about their learning and safety.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. They reviewed pupils' work in lessons and scrutinised samples of work in pupils' books.
- The lead inspector held meetings with seven governors, with ten members of the North Huddersfield Trust and with two representatives of the local authority. Inspectors also held meetings with senior and middle leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school, the school improvement plan and minutes of governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and 70 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Pridding, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rebekah Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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