

Howden School

Derwent Road, Howden, Goole, DN14 7AL

Inspection dates 24–25 February 2016

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

- Outcomes are good because, from their starting points, pupils make good progress in their subjects.
- Teachers' clear explanations help pupils to settle quickly to the work that is to be done. Work set matches pupils' needs and abilities and helps them make good progress.
- Pupils want to come to school and their attendance is above average. Behaviour around the school is good. Pupils respect each other, members of staff and the environment.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of subjects and activities that make a good contribution to pupils' personal development and welfare.
- Senior leaders and middle leaders check the quality of teaching thoroughly and take action should it fall short of what is required. As a result, teaching is now good and leads to good outcomes for pupils.
- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors are knowledgeable about education and offer strong challenge and support to school leaders. As a result, the overall effectiveness of the school has improved since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement gaps between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils are not closing rapidly at Key Stage 4.
- Occasionally, pupils' learning is not checked quickly enough to provide additional challenge and support.
- Leaders and managers are not always meticulous when checking the progress being made towards the improvement targets they have set for the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further to strengthen pupils' outcomes by:
 - swiftly checking learning to strengthen the support and challenge for pupils, particularly the most-able pupils
 - making sure incisive feedback is given to help pupils deepen their learning
 - using skilful questioning to develop pupils' confidence and ability to explain their learning more fully.

- Increase the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 4 close quickly
 - strengthening the analysis of information used to measure how well the school is progressing towards its own improvement targets.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- There is a clear and widely shared commitment to improving the experiences and outcomes for pupils. This is captured in the approach known as 'Team Howden', which clearly indicates to all within the school community that they have their part to play in bringing about school improvement.
- Senior leaders have put in place appropriate structures and processes to promote improvement, with middle leaders now playing a full part.
- Checking of the school's work is widespread and based on the collection of a good range of information. It focuses on specific areas of concern and other school priorities. Findings are acted upon. Good practice is shared. Where weaknesses are identified, such as pupils not making good progress or where aspects of teaching are not strong enough, steps are taken to tackle the issues.
- Occasionally, when checking the progress towards the improvement targets they have set, leaders' evaluation about aspects of effectiveness are more generous than the evidence indicates. This leads to some lack of precision in improvement planning. Nevertheless, actions being taken are resulting in improvements in a wide range of areas.
- Teachers' performance is checked carefully. Strategies such as professional development and coaching are used to improve teaching. For example, the judicious use of external support for English is supporting improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- The curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' outcomes and their personal development, behaviour and welfare. Pupils are prepared well for their future education and training as there is a good range of subjects taught and an emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The school enjoys good links with business and industry to develop scientific, technological, mathematical and engineering skills. Pupils participate in work experience and receive good information and advice about course choices and future careers. All pupils leaving school at the end of Year 11 continue in education, employment or training.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sporting and cultural activities and to learn about other faiths and cultures. Themed days, such as 'Japan Day', residential activities and work within the local community all contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work with the local police service, the police commissioner and the school's well-planned personal, social and health education course provide pupils with a good understanding of what makes a good citizen.
- The impact of the school's use of additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is effective and improving. It is used to support additional teachers to reduce class size and to focus more strongly on the needs of these pupils as well as providing small-group teaching. The impact of this work is improving over time, particularly in Key Stage 3. Additional emphasis is needed at Key Stage 4 to make sure attainment gaps close quickly.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided support for the school which is highly valued. It checks the effectiveness of the school and supports the headteacher in refining practices to improve the school. It facilitates the use of astute external support from good or outstanding schools. Consequently, the overall effectiveness of the school has improved.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has a wide range of relevant expertise. Governors have a highly detailed understanding of pupils' outcomes in relation to national information. They link teachers' performance to pay and hold leaders and teachers to account for the progress pupils are making. They are well aware of the strengths of the school and aspects for improvement.
 - Governors make sure they are well informed about the school by requesting the detail they need to carry out their responsibilities. They supplement this with information provided by external professionals, and visit the school to gain first-hand experience of the work being done in school.
 - Governors check the school budget and know how effectively the pupil premium funding is used. They provide strong challenge as well as support and, in doing so, they make a strong contribution to the development and improvement of the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are appropriately trained. Leaders work with several partners, external agencies and parents to ensure pupils are safe. Governors check the quality of the school's work in safeguarding children and know that it is secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Since the previous inspection, teaching has been improving and is now good and having a good impact on the progress pupils are making. The quality of teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils make good progress and are achieving well.
- Pupils are given clear and concise explanations about what is required of them. They start work quickly with a clear understanding of what has to be completed to achieve well in their work and in examinations. Consequently, pupils are making good progress.
- Literacy is supported well across the curriculum with good opportunities for pupils to read and write extensively. This is clearly supporting the quick improvements being made in English. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply their good mathematical skills across a range of subjects.
- Work set matches pupils' needs and abilities well. It is well planned with a range of resources to support good progress for pupils. Usually, work is checked well. Pupils are given appropriate support to 'clear up' misconceptions and are normally given greater challenge if the work is too easy for them. Occasionally, assessment is not quick enough to pick up misconceptions in learning or to challenge the most able well enough to help them make good progress.
- Questioning is used well to involve pupils and to search out what they understand and, in most cases, pupils are given time to respond in detail. Pupils' responses are used well to strengthen the knowledge and understanding of others. From time to time, superficial responses are accepted and pupils are not challenged well enough to develop a full understanding of what is being learned.
- An analysis of pupils' work showed that the school's policy for marking and feedback is adhered to and is supporting good learning. However, there are times when feedback is not challenging pupils to think deeply about how they might improve their work and, as a result, learning slows.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. They are well managed and work skilfully with pupils both inside and outside the classroom.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to participate in activities that will keep them fit and healthy. Form time, a wide range of subjects, assemblies and the personal, social and health education programme all contribute well to pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school, particularly physical education lessons, and they are safe in school.
- Pupils vote for the 'senators' who represent their views to school leaders. Pupils are clear that their views are listened to and action is taken to make the school a better place for them. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and contributing to improvements in school.
- Pupils are clear about how to adopt safe practices when working with technology and using the internet. Staff and e-senators (pupils trained in internet safety) provide good support for pupils should there be any matters that relate to internet safety.
- Pupils are very clear about what constitutes bullying. They are confident that the school does not tolerate it and takes effective action should it occur. Peer mentors work with staff to promote anti-bullying. Pupils told inspectors, and school records show, that bullying is uncommon.
- School leaders have good systems in place to support pupils' welfare and safety. There are good links to outside agencies which support the school's work in teaching pupils about emotional and mental health issues.
- A programme of careers education is taught from Years 7 to 11. There is work experience for all pupils in Year 10. Independent advice and guidance is available to all pupils in Year 9 to make appropriate choices for GCSE options. Pupils in Year 11 have support and guidance to decide on their next stage of education or training. As a result, all pupils continue in education or employment and training.
- Pupils take pride in their work and many are developing their self-confidence well. However, inspectors found that some pupils do not share their views confidently with adults. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to question pupils, draw out their ideas and increase their contribution to learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Around the school, pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They say they enjoy school and that it is a 'friendly place'. Pupils get on well together and treat the environment with respect. The school is litter-free.
- Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and behave well as they know they have their part to play in assisting their good learning.
- Behaviour in most lessons is good as pupils are interested in the work they are doing. There is a good level of mutual respect between pupils and staff. However, occasionally, a small number of pupils do not behave well in lessons as they lose interest in their work and learning slows.
- Staff are vigilant in checking pupils' attendance and, as a result, attendance is above average. Pupils say that they appreciate the recognition they get for high attendance. Fixed-term exclusions from school have reduced and are now below average. There have been no permanent exclusions.
- Most staff and parents believe that behaviour is good. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved, over time, and they too believe it is good.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection and is now good. This is because subject leadership has strengthened since the last inspection and resulted in improved teaching and improved outcomes for pupils.
- Outcomes for pupils have been especially strong in science, information technology and physical education over time. Progress in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection and, in 2015, the proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them by the end of Year 11 was above average, with a good proportion making more than expected progress.
- In English, pupils' progress at the end of Year 11, in 2014, was exceptionally strong. Progress and attainment in English dipped in 2015, as teaching did not enable pupils to meet the requirements of the examination effectively. Inspectors analysed current pupils' work and found that progress is improving strongly in English at Key Stage 4.
- Pupils' overall attainment in their 'best 8' subjects improved in 2015 despite the dip in attainment in English. From average starting points, the proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C, including English and mathematics, in 2014 was well above average. In 2015, the proportion was below average because of the impact of English outcomes. The school's thorough system for tracking pupils' outcomes indicates strong improvements in attainment for current pupils.
- The most-able pupils made the same progress as similar pupils in other schools at GCSE. Inspectors noted there are occasions when current pupils are not challenged consistently well enough across the school.
- The school does not use early entry to GCSE.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving in English, mathematics and across other subjects. School information and work analysis by inspectors show attainment and progress gaps are closing effectively in Key Stage 3. However, their progress in Key Stage 4 is not rapid enough to ensure that gaps in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in school, and nationally, are closing quickly.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make similar progress to other pupils across the school. This has improved because of better identification of their needs and improvements to the quality of teaching for these pupils.
- Year 7 catch-up funding (government funding for those pupils entering secondary school with below-average standards in English and mathematics) is helping to improve pupils' literacy and mathematical skills well.
- The school is promoting reading well. There are regular library lessons for younger pupils and a good choice of books to encourage pupils to read widely. Pupils say they enjoy reading. Computer systems are used to promote reading and check pupils' understanding. Pupils were highly commended by the Speaker of the House of Commons for their work in helping to design the school library.

School details

Unique reference number	118084
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	10002141

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	608
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Acting Chair	Angela Martinson
Headteacher	Gary Cannon
Telephone number	01430 430448
Website	www.hs.eriding.net
Email address	office@howdenschool.net
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2013

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs support or disability is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with a special educational needs statement or an education, health and care plan is 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 does not use alternative provision to support groups of pupils.
- The school was highly commended in the House of Commons Speaker's Schools Council Awards.
- The headteacher took up his post from 1 September 2014, after the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons. Two observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of pupils about their learning in lessons and their safety in the school. Also, throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils about learning and safety.
- Inspectors listened to pupils from Year 7 reading.
- An inspector held meetings with the Acting Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor. Inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff. An inspector held a meeting with a representative of the local authority and the headteacher of a good school in the local authority who has supported leadership.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, school policies and the minutes of the governing body meetings. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of pupils' books.
- Inspectors analysed 30 questionnaires completed by staff and 14 responses to the online pupil questionnaire. Inspectors analysed 59 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).

Inspection team

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