

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Achievement in the sixth form is good overall. In 2016, learners made similar progress to others nationally on both academic and applied general courses. The school's progress information, and the work seen in Year 12 and Year 13 learners' books, show that outcomes are improving further this year. An increasing number of disadvantaged Year 11 pupils progressed to sixth-form courses in 2016, and they are achieving in line with their peers. Over time, a rising number of Year 11 pupils are staying on in the sixth form. Pupils said that this is because they can see that outcomes are now good and that sixth formers provide them with positive role models.
- The leadership of the sixth form is strong. The deputy headteacher, who is currently leading the sixth form, has established an effective partnership with Tadcaster Grammar School so that learners have access to a wider range of courses. He has introduced a rigorous 'spotlighting' programme, which assesses learners' progress regularly. This approach is successful in motivating learners to revise well for assessments and to ensure that they keep up with their homework and research. Learners said that the regular feedback from their teachers helps them to know the next steps they need to take to improve their work. Leaders and teachers respond to the information quickly so that learners receive prompt support or guidance when needed.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is good. Often the level of challenge is high, with learners acknowledging that the work is 'hard' but enjoyable. Learners said that they understand that 'failure can be a learning experience,' and they are developing the confidence to attempt work that makes them think deeply. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learners' progress in all subjects and, where necessary, make changes to the courses or the teaching. For example, outcomes in health and social care, and psychology have been weaker in the past and are now improving.
- Learners in the sixth form demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning and they attend well. A dedicated member of staff monitors individual learners' attendance and intervenes when attendance rates begin to drop. Owing to the range of support strategies available, more learners are now staying on from Year 12 into Year 13 because they are experiencing success.
- Learners said how much they value the careers guidance given to them in Year 11 and in the sixth form. Learners who have chosen to apply for a university place said that they appreciate the support received from their teachers and tutors when making their applications. Consequently, the number of learners receiving offers of a place at their chosen university has risen.
- All aspects of the 16 to 19 study programme are well planned. All learners take part in work experience during Year 12. Sixth-form learners enjoy supporting younger pupils during tutorial sessions. They also have dedicated tutor sessions to track their own progress and to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Learners said that mental health is discussed openly and they have explored ways to reduce and manage stress. They are aware of the 'Prevent' duty and the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

- The proportion of learners who improve their GCSE grades in English and mathematics in the sixth form is well above average because they are well taught.
- Leaders are aware that some of the most able boys in the sixth form are not making as much progress from their starting points as girls, and they have begun to address this difference.