

Sherburn High School

Garden Lane, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS25 6AS

Inspection dates

26–27 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
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is uncompromising in her drive to improve pupils' progress and all leaders set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. As a result, most pupils across the school are making good progress from their starting points.
- Governors are very knowledgeable and, since the previous inspection, have taken prompt action to improve their skills. They carry out their duties successfully and have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Pupils make very good progress in mathematics as a result of consistently strong teaching.
- Leaders have taken decisive and successful action to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils.
- The school's systems for assessing pupils' progress are very effective. They show teachers, pupils and parents how well pupils are doing in each subject and what they need to do next.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive. There is a strong culture of support in the school. Pupils enjoy helping each other in class and during tutor period.
- The sixth form is now good because teaching is effective and leaders track learners' progress more robustly. Learners in the sixth form make similar progress to others nationally.
- Staff are overwhelming supportive of the changes brought about by senior leaders and staff morale is high. Staff are proud of the way in which the school has improved. They are ambitious to improve further.
- Pupils behave well. They show positive attitudes to learning and attendance is above average.
- Since the last inspection, teaching has improved strongly in most subjects, but there is still some variability in quality, particularly at key stage 3.
- At times, teachers provide insufficient challenge for the most able pupils. Consequently, they do not make as much progress as they could.
- Leaders' actions to engage boys in their learning are having a positive effect. However, differences remain between the boys' and girls' progress, and boys' writing is generally weaker than girls' writing.
- Not all subject leaders are effective in ensuring that teaching in their areas of responsibility leads to good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment in the school so that all pupils, including those in key stage 3 and learners in the sixth form, make good or better progress in all subjects by:
 - eliminating the remaining variability in the quality of teaching
 - checking that all teachers plan learning activities that are challenging enough for the most able pupils
 - continuing to raise the aspirations of boys and improve boys' writing skills.
- Improve subject leadership by:
 - ensuring that all subject leaders are effective in tackling weaknesses in teaching and pupils' progress
 - sharing the best practice more widely across subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and her senior leaders provide strong leadership. Leaders are highly evaluative and they have addressed systematically the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. They set high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. They have established a positive and ambitious climate in which pupils can thrive.
- Leaders and governors have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They regularly analyse pupils' progress in each subject and can accurately identify pupils who need extra support. For example, the school uses a 'period 6' session, when teachers provide extra teaching on specific topics that have not been fully mastered in class. As the result of leaders' actions, most pupils make good progress.
- The local authority has provided effective support for the school since the last inspection. The headteacher has welcomed the opportunity to engage in a range of external reviews and has used the recommendations to inform the school's next steps to further improvement.
- Staff are very appreciative of the quality of personalised training and coaching available to improve their practice. The professional development programme includes opportunities to work with other schools, in local partnerships. Training and support are closely linked to an effective programme of self-evaluation. Consequently, the quality of teaching is now good.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding, including pupil premium, catch-up and funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is used well. They evaluate the effect of all aspects of the school's intervention programme to make sure that their actions are making a difference. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is now close to the progress of other pupils nationally and is improving in most year groups. The progress of the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also improving.
- The curriculum is carefully planned to maximise pupils' success. In Years 7 and 8, pupils follow a broad range of subjects as well as a 'skills-based programme' to help them to be effective learners. Pupils value this programme because they can transfer the skills they have developed when working in different subjects. With a few exceptions, pupils begin their GCSE courses in Year 9 and follow an appropriate range of subjects according to their needs and abilities.
- Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities for pupils and they seek to make sure that as many pupils as possible participate in these. For example, Year 11 pupils have watched several plays, Year 7 pupils have recently taken part in a geography field trip and over 200 pupils volunteered to showcase their school during open evenings. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they value the way in which their teachers encourage them to take part in school life.

- The school provides a comprehensive programme of careers guidance for pupils in all year groups. Pupils have access to a careers adviser and have explored a range of training and employment routes during their 'drop-down' days. As a result, they have a good understanding of how different careers require different skills and qualifications.
- The school's programme for evaluating the quality of teaching and pupils' progress is well considered. It provides an accurate picture of subject strengths and weaknesses. Curriculum leaders are increasingly involved in leading this programme, but not all leaders are effective in bringing about the necessary changes.
- Leaders have recognised that some boys, particularly the most able boys in some year groups, are not making enough progress. As a result, leaders have set up several activities to engage boys further in their learning. For example, the school's initiative, called 'boys' squadrons' is a school competition between teams of targeted boys that rewards them for improving their behaviour and work rate. This is having a positive effect on the boys' attitudes to learning although, across subjects, some boys' writing is still weaker than girls' writing.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to eradicate weak teaching. Leaders are aware that there is still some variability within subject areas, especially where they have found it difficult to recruit specialist teachers and subject leaders.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved significantly since the last inspection because governors responded positively to an external review of their effectiveness. They are rightly proud of the way in which they have supported and challenged leaders to improve the school.
- Governors make sure that they are well informed about all aspects of the school's performance. Individual governors specialise in areas of school improvement so that they can regularly update the full governing body about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ask challenging questions of school leaders and hold them robustly to account.
- Governors have been proactive in making sure that their own training is up to date. They collaborate well with governors in other schools to share the best practice, and their safeguarding training is also up to date.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding children are effective because leaders have secured a culture in which staff and pupils are encouraged to 'talk to each other' about any concerns they have. Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe.
- Staff training on safeguarding children is comprehensive and up to date. A weekly briefing, led by the headteacher, emphasises the importance of everyone's responsibility to be vigilant. Staff and pupils know how to report concerns and record keeping is meticulous.

- The designated safeguarding lead acts quickly when referrals are made. She works effectively with the house leaders and other agencies to avoid any issues escalating and to make sure that pupils are safe. Parent surveys, conducted by the school, show that parents value the way in which school staff communicate with them regarding any safeguarding concerns.
- Arrangements for monitoring the attendance of sixth-form learners attending another school are robust.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because leaders have been relentless in tackling weak teaching and have provided clear guidance on the standards expected of teachers and pupils.
- Teaching in mathematics is particularly strong because the school has been successful in retaining a team of specialist teachers who are keen to learn from each other. Pupils enjoy mathematics because concepts and methods are well explained. They know that they are making good progress because teachers check pupils' understanding carefully and quickly address any misconceptions. Teachers also provide lots of opportunities for pupils to explain their reasoning and to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving activities.
- The use of questioning is a regular feature of the staff training programme. Therefore, teachers use questioning very effectively to engage pupils in their learning. Teachers do not settle for the first answer, but guide pupils to explore their ideas in more detail. Pupils are expected to justify their opinions and respond constructively to the ideas of other pupils. Teachers also challenge pupils to use a wider range of vocabulary and subject-specific terminology.
- Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very strong. Pupils said that their teachers care about their progress and want them to do well. When pupils work in groups, they support one another well.
- Teaching assistants are highly effective in their support for pupils' learning because teachers and teaching assistants plan lessons together and they regularly check on the progress of individual pupils. Consequently, teaching is adapted to make sure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Homework is set regularly, in line with the school's policy, and is used well in all subjects to strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers ensure that pupils have sufficient practice in tackling exam-style questions.
- Most teachers use their subject knowledge to plan activities that deepen pupils' understanding. Careful planning enables pupils to work at an appropriate rate, moving on to more challenging work when they are ready. However, leaders acknowledge that further work is needed to make sure that all teachers are providing sufficient challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able pupils and for pupils in key stage 3.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school promotes strong values of respect and equality, which are well understood by pupils. Most pupils demonstrate these values consistently in school and show positive attitudes to their learning. They are respectful of others when offering opinions. When given the opportunity to contribute in lessons, they do so with enthusiasm and a high level of independence.
- A significant proportion of parents who responded to the Ofsted survey expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school. They were particularly complimentary about the way in which their children were supported during their transition from primary school. For example, one parent said, 'excellent transition from primary school... children were made to feel comfortable from day one.' Another said, 'This is a positive, ambitious and caring school.'
- Tutorial sessions are well planned. Stimulating resources are used to encourage pupils to be reflective and to take part in debates on current topics. Older pupils show consideration for younger pupils during tutorials, and sixth formers help pupils with their reading and discussions during tutorial time.
- Pupils feel safe and are confident to report any concerns to an adult. They reported that incidents of bullying are rare. Most pupils and parents said that any bullying is dealt with well. The school's records show that incidents of bullying have reduced significantly over the past few years.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted through a coordinated programme of assemblies, tutorials and 'drop-down' days. The programme focuses on topics such as online safety, sex and relationships, health, different faiths and British law. Pupils enjoy these days because they have opportunities to work with different pupils and with members of the local community, and they regard the topics as relevant.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the school site is almost always commendable. They socialise well with each other during breaks and move around the site calmly and purposefully between lessons. Leaders check that pupils arrive to school and lessons on time. Punctuality is good and improving.
- Most pupils show very positive attitudes towards their own learning. They attend well and the school's overall attendance rate is above average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been low in the past, but is now improving due to the concerted efforts of the school to work closely with individual pupils and their families.

- Leaders' records of the number of behaviour-related incidents around the school site and in lessons show that these have declined. The number of pupils receiving rewards has increased. Leaders and teachers continue to work with a small number of boys and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities whose behaviour is more challenging, by checking that their learning needs are being met. Fixed-term exclusions are below average and are reducing over time.
- Typically, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. However, when learning in lessons is not well matched to pupils' starting points and abilities, some pupils, especially boys in key stage 3, become less engaged and off-task behaviour leads to pupils making slower progress.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, outcomes have continued to improve strongly. In 2016, pupils who started Year 7 with average attainment levels had made good progress overall by the time they left Year 11.
- Progress in mathematics in 2016 was particularly positive. Pupils made significantly better progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. Pupils also made good progress in a range of subjects, including English and science where results had been weaker in 2015.
- In 2016, the results in modern languages were disappointing. Leaders took decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and leadership, and current pupils are now making better progress from their starting points. At key stage 4, religious studies is temporarily being taught through targeted 'drop-down' days because the outcomes in GCSE religious studies were poor in 2016.
- In all year groups, current pupils continue to make very good progress in mathematics. Progress in other subjects is good and improving, especially in key stage 4.
- The small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also making good progress due to the carefully tailored support provided.
- The school prepares pupils well for their next steps in education, training or employment. The proportion of Year 11 pupils going on to sustained destinations in 2016 was in line with national averages and all pupils went into employment, education or training.
- The school has been successful in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, this group made similar progress to other pupils nationally. Currently, most disadvantaged pupils in the school are making even better progress across year groups. However, a small number of the most able disadvantaged pupils could be challenged further.
- In 2016, the most able pupils achieved well overall, including in English and mathematics. The school's progress information suggests that some of the current most-able pupils in the school, especially boys, are not making the same rate of progress. Leaders are taking assertive action to address this.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	121695
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10031998

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	747
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Thornton-Eckford
Headteacher	Maria Williams
Telephone number	01977 682442
Website	www.sherburnhigh.co.uk
Email address	admin@sherburnhigh.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 April 2015

Information about this school

- Sherburn High School is smaller than the average-sized school with a sixth form. The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- Some learners in the school's sixth form attend Tadcaster Grammar School for some of their courses.
- The school makes use of the local authority's pupil referral unit.

- The school meets the government's minimum expectations for the performance of secondary schools.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 45 lessons across all key stages and subjects, including tutorials. Some were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. In addition to looking at pupils' books in lesson observations, inspectors undertook a separate scrutiny of work in books. Inspectors also undertook general observations around the school with leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to evaluate the way in which the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also met with a group of teachers and with pupils from all year groups, including in the sixth form.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's self-evaluation, the school 'raising achievement' plan, the school's quality assurance, monitoring and assessment records, minutes of governing body meetings, and case studies of vulnerable pupils who receive additional support. Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding procedures and related policies.
- Inspectors considered 98 responses received from parents to Ofsted's survey, 26 responses from pupils and 75 responses from staff.

Inspection team

Lynn Kenworthy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew West	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen McKenzie	Ofsted Inspector

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