

Withernsea High School

Specialising in Humanities

Hull Road, Withernsea, HU19 2EQ,

Inspection dates 14-15 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement requires improvement. Despite improvements in the 2012 examinations, too many students still do not make good enough progress from their starting points in Year 7.
- Teaching requires improvement. In some lessons, students become restless because tasks are boring and repetitive. Teachers do not always have high expectations of students which sometimes lead to them not showing a pride in their work.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Achievement is rising steadily because the curriculum in the sixth form is improving quickly.
- Behaviour and safety require improvement. In some lessons, students do not behave well because the pedestrian teaching does not involve them as well as it could.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Despite some recent improvements, much work still remains to be done to make sure teaching becomes good. The governing body has not yet challenged school leaders well enough on improving teaching across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has made many recent improvements that have led to better behaviour by students. As a result, students say they feel safer and happier in school than previously.
- Students who are in the 'Lighthouse View' behaviour support unit behave well and make good progress.
- Achievement is improving. In the 2012 examinations, students did far better than in previous years, particularly in English.
- Students who arrive with weak reading skills or who have very challenging behaviour have their needs well met by caring, supportive staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 lessons of which three were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons and heard students reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of staff, students and a member of the governing body. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including school improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patrick Feerick	Additional Inspector
Peter Eeva	Additional Inspector
Steven Goldsmith	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized secondary school.
- An average proportion of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those students in local authority care and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs and supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage.
- In 2011, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for 10 months.
- The school works in collaboration with Bainton Construction to support the curriculum in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form.
- Seven students who require specialist support for their behaviour needs are educated full time at 'Lighthouse View', a resource base located off the school site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and therefore raise achievement so that they become at least good by consistently:
 - ensuring students develop their skills, knowledge and understanding well in lessons rather than simply completing tasks
 - making teaching interesting and relevant to students so that they take a pride in their work and behave well in all lessons
 - ensuring students of all abilities are set work that suits their learning needs
 - improving the quality of feedback that is given to students so that they are left in no doubt what they should do to improve their work
 - ensuring teachers and teaching assistants work more closely together so that teaching assistants are not doing the work for the students but helping them to find their own answers and become independent.
- Improve leadership and management so they become at least good by:
 - sharing the good and outstanding teaching practice that currently exists in the school more widely
 - tackling the remaining inadequate teaching decisively
 - ensuring the governing body hold school leaders more closely to account for improving the quality of teaching and how the pupil premium funding is spent.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The proportion of students gaining five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, rose sharply in the 2012 examinations. This was the result of better teaching in English and improvements in how students' progress is tracked across the school.
- However, too few students reached their challenging targets in 2012 which meant that some did not progress as much as they should between Year 7 and Year 11.
- Students who come to the school with weak reading skills receive high quality support. As a result, some make good progress. Overall, however, the progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement.
- There is a gap in achievement between those who are and are not eligible for the pupil premium and in 2012, this gap had widened. However, inspection evidence shows that this gap is closing with students who are currently in the school. This is because the progress of different groups of students is now tracked more rigorously and any help students need with English or mathematics happens much earlier than it did previously.
- In the sixth form, a system of review meetings has begun so that students can discuss their targets and any difficulties with their subject teachers. While this is resulting in improvements in achievement in the sixth form, students' progress between subjects varies.
- Students are sometimes entered early for GCSE mathematics examinations, although this is not directly leading to students underperforming.
- A very small minority of Key Stage 4 students who find it difficult to engage in school, study construction on a full-time basis with an outside provider, Bainton Construction. These students make good progress with their construction skills and the training ensures they remain in education.
- Lighthouse View offers good quality support for students who require specialist support for their behaviour. Staff are committed and consistent in their approach to behaviour management. Students who are in this resource base receive very close, individual attention to their literacy and behaviour needs. As a result, students in the unit behave well and achieve well.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are examples of good and very occasionally, outstanding teaching in the school. However, this is not shared well enough in the school so that other teachers can learn from it and improve their own skills.
- In the best lessons, students are given work that matches their ability; they are kept busy working in groups and have plenty of time to discuss problems with each other and the teacher.
- In one outstanding geography lesson, students worked in teams investigating the pros and cons of urban regeneration. The teacher skilfully developed their vocabulary and insisted on the highest quality work. As a result, they made rapid progress and thoroughly enjoyed themselves at the same time.
- Too often, teachers are more concerned about students simply completing tasks rather than developing skills, knowledge and their understanding of the subject. Sometimes, when this happens, students cannot see the relevance of the tasks or understand why they are doing them. In turn, they sometimes lose concentration, begin chatting among themselves and their work lacks care and is badly presented.
- In lessons where students learn best, teachers use the information they have gathered through assessments to make sure they are given work that matches their learning needs. Too often, however, teachers adopt a 'one size fits all' approach, which leads to the work being too difficult for some and too easy for others.

- The feedback that students receive on their work is not good enough across the school. Where it is good, students are given clear advice and time is given for them to reflect on the comments they receive. However, in too many lessons, marking consists of simple comments such as 'well done' or work is not marked at all.
- Teaching assistants generally give appropriate support for students and good support for students who struggle with reading. However, in classrooms, teachers and teaching assistants do not work together closely enough. This means that sometimes teaching assistants do too much of the work for students rather than help them to solve their own problems and become independent.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students say behaviour has improved rapidly since the headteacher's arrival. They now feel more confident in confiding in senior staff about any issues to do with bullying or harassment.
- Students have a good understanding of the different kinds of bullying, including the potential dangers of the internet and mobile devices.
- During the inspection, students from the school council were seen to be drafting their own articles, some on the subject of cyber-bullying, to be published in the local newspaper.
- Over the last 10 months, the systems for monitoring students' behaviour have been strengthened. This is having a positive effect on improving behaviour. Fewer students are now being removed from classrooms due to disruption. However, work still needs to be done to ensure all staff follow the systems consistently well.
- In lessons, students' attitudes to learning match the quality of teaching. Where teachers give students repetitive, mundane tasks, they lose concentration quickly, but where they are fully involved in their own learning through, for example, debates or group work, they behave well.
- In the corridors and around the school, students are occasionally a little boisterous and staff who are on duty are sometimes slow to act. However, on the whole, the site is orderly and students say they feel safe and secure.
- Attendance remains below average, although strengthened procedures to tackle persistent absence are beginning to have a positive impact.
- Rigorous quality checks assure the safety of those students who are educated off the school site.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Systems to track students' progress and identify those who do not make enough progress are more effective, and this has led to improvements in students' achievement. The progress of different groups of students, including those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, is now being tracked carefully which is leading to them now making better progress than previously as evidenced in lessons.
- The local authority has given good support to the school. As a result of this support, middle leaders are now better able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their departments, although much still needs to be done to make sure the quality of teaching is consistently good or better.
- While senior leaders have introduced a more rigorous system of monitoring the quality of teaching, rigorous performance management systems are too new to eradicate some of the inadequate teaching that remains in the school.
- The curriculum has recently been improved to make sure it meets the needs of students with more precision. Students in Year 7 now make better links between subjects so they are better able to practise their literacy skills.
- In Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, the school has developed vocational courses such as hair

and beauty and construction to avoid students having to travel long distances to colleges for such courses.

- Funding provided by the pupil premium has been used to improve students' experiences. A breakfast club ensures students have a nutritious start to the day. Visits to museums, including the Imperial War Museum, broaden students' horizons. Additional staffing to deal with persistent absence is beginning to have a positive impact on attendance. The school has improved systems to target the funding more precisely at those students who need it the most.
- Leadership in the sixth form has been strengthened. More students are now on courses that match their abilities and more students now continue their studies from Year 12 into Year 13 as a result.
- Improvements in performance management introduced by the current headteacher mean that staff do not now progress to higher salaries unless their teaching is at least good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, as a result of more detailed information members receive from school leaders, is now in a better position to offer support and challenge to the school. Regular governing body meetings take place, but too much time is spent discussing local authority procedures rather than getting to the heart of issues such as students' achievement and the quality of teaching. The governing body is aware of how funding from the pupil premium has been spent, but does not yet challenge the school well enough on the priorities for future spending of the pupil premium. Governors are aware that the quality of teaching is not yet good, but have not yet challenged school leaders well enough over time to ensure teachers are paid salaries that match how well they teach.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	118075
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	405747

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	867
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	131
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Heaton
Headteacher	Richard Williman
Date of previous school inspection	16 February 2011
Telephone number	01964 613133
Fax number	01964 614560
Email address	willimanr@wscampus.net

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