

Sherburn High School

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

Inspection dates 2–3 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requiring Improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requiring Improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Although GCSE results are improving, students' progress over time is not as good as it should be. Students enter the school with average attainment and many do not reach high enough standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 4. This indicates that achievement requires improvement.
- The progress made by students in English and mathematics over the past two years has been variable and, at times, much slower than would be expected.
- The progress of boys of average ability is slower than that of other students in some subjects.
- In mathematics, the progress made by students known to be eligible for free school meals is slower than that of other students.
- The progress made by students in Key Stage 3 lessons is generally not as good as it is in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.
- The sixth form requires improvement because there is a need for greater consistency in the outcomes for students on AS- and A-level courses.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders, supported by an effective governing body, have worked determinedly to bring about improvements, including to the quality of teaching, so that it is now good.
- Behaviour is good. Students enjoy coming to school and say they feel safe. They speak highly of the staff that work with them and support their learning. Students like the vertical tutor groups because they enable them to socialise with students of different ages. Students say this leads to better relationships.
- Teaching is good and most students now make good progress in lessons, particularly in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. However, some lost ground needs to be made up for achievement over time to be good.
- Achievement, especially in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, is improving as a result of the focused action taken by leaders to accelerate progress and improve teaching.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they make a strong contribution to their community.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 39 lessons, all taught by different teachers. Three lesson observations were carried out jointly with the school’s senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with school staff, groups of students, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also talked informally with many students and talked to teachers about their lessons.
- Inspectors listened to students read during lessons and in the Reading Recovery lesson.
- A number of the school’s documents were scrutinised. These included: the school’s self-evaluation, school improvement plans, data on students’ current attainment and progress, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Students’ work and their books were scrutinised with a focus on assessment, marking and the quality of feedback, literacy development and students’ progress.
- Inspectors also took into account information published on the school’s website, parent and student surveys, the responses made by 54 parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View), letters sent to inspectors by two parents during the inspection and 51 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Steven Goldsmith	Additional Inspector
Johan MacKinnon	Additional Inspector
Fiona Dixon	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for funding from the pupil premium (which is provided to support the learning of students who are entitled to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or the children of forces families) is lower than the national average.
- A large proportion of students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is much lower than average.
- The proportion of students for whom English is not their first language is very low.
- The proportion of students supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school works in partnership with local schools and colleges, to extend the range of option courses for Key Stage 4 and sixth-form students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding to enable students to make good progress in all lessons and in particular in Key Stage 3, by:
 - implementing the planned changes to the Key Stage 3 curriculum
 - ensuring that students are provided with opportunities to act on the advice given in written feedback in order to consolidate their learning
 - providing students with more opportunities to extend and deepen their understanding in working by themselves
 - making sure that students' work, in their books and files, is well organised and well presented
 - providing opportunities for students to develop their numeracy skills in all subjects.
- Ensure that the good progress now being made by students in most lessons is sustained so that achievement over time is good, by:
 - ensuring that all students make consistently good progress in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that students make consistently good progress in all of their AS- and A-level courses
 - accelerating the progress made by students in Key Stage 3
 - accelerating the progress in mathematics made by students who are known to be eligible for free school meals
 - ensuring that boys of average ability make progress in line with other students in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students enter Year 7 with attainment that is average in English and mathematics. While there have been improvements, the overall progress made by students by the end of Year 11 in 2012 was not as good as it should have been.
- Specific actions have been taken, including the appointment of new and additional staff, to improve teaching. Most students now make good progress in lessons in English and mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. However, some students have not yet made up for lost ground where teaching was less effective in the past.
- Students are set challenging targets but recent improvements to the quality of teaching are yet to have their full impact on students' achievement. However, school leaders are able to demonstrate that achievement in most subjects, in Years 11 and 13, is continuing to improve in 2013. Lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work indicate that rates of progress and attainment are rising for current students.
- Senior leaders have reviewed the use of early entry for GCSE examinations in order to ensure that students reach the highest grades.
- The average GCSE grade attained by students at the end of Year 11 indicates that, in 2011, students eligible for the pupil premium were on average about two GCSE grades behind other students at the school in English and mathematics. This gap decreased to one grade behind in 2012. The pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding are being used to fund a range of additional support, including additional staffing in English and mathematics and a strong focus on literacy across the school. This is having a positive impact on the progress of these students. In English, the progress of students eligible for the pupil premium is rapidly accelerating. Progress is slower in mathematics as there has been less of a focus on the development of numeracy skills than there has been on the development of literacy skills.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive excellent support and care, which enables them to make good progress. The few students from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language are very well supported and make good progress. The school carefully monitors the provision for the small number of students who are educated off-site to ensure their needs are met.
- In the sixth form, attainment has been below average for the past two years. Some students have made better progress in their AS-level courses than in their A-level courses and retention rates have been low. Expectations have been raised and progress is now rigorously checked. Attainment is rising, rates of progress are accelerating and the vast majority of students are now continuing from AS to A2. Students are given good opportunities to develop study skills and for self- and peer assessment. There is high-quality marking. Students are enthusiastic about their learning, engage well with activities and take pride in their work.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection so that much of it is now good and some is outstanding. The majority of lessons where teaching required improvement were in Key Stage 3. Students feel teaching is now good and they enjoy their lessons. Parents agree that their child is taught well at the school. Improvement has been brought about by school leaders holding teachers firmly to account for the quality of their teaching and the progress of students in their classes. However, this improvement has yet to have its full impact on the overall achievement and attainment of students.
- Teachers use information about students' abilities to plan lessons with activities that engage students. Teachers check students' understanding regularly during lessons, changing activities when needed. Questioning is used well to challenge students and deepen their understanding. Students are keen to learn and discuss their work willingly and with confidence.

- Students told inspectors how helpful staff are and good relationships between students and adults contribute to a very positive climate for learning. For example, in a mixed-ability Year 11 music lesson, students confidently described, to their partner, the different aspects that make up a piece of music, using appropriate musical terminology. Literacy across all subjects is being developed well through good use of technical words and an expansion of students' vocabulary.
- In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Students are aware of what they need to do to be successful and work well together in groups. In an outstanding Year 13 English lesson, the teacher ensured that all students knew their expected outcomes and how the lesson related to examination techniques. Students were challenged to think and learn independently and high levels of collaboration increased their individual rate of progress. This practice of promoting independent learning is not seen in lessons requiring improvement.
- Provision in lessons for students with special educational needs enables them to make good progress. Teaching assistants are increasingly effective in supporting learning and in a number of lessons seen, teaching assistants had a clear role in leading aspects of students' learning.
- Work in students' files is regularly assessed and good written feedback, which informs students of how to improve, is provided. However, students are not always given time to respond to this advice. In addition, some teachers do not regularly check the standard of presentation and quality of work in students' books, which are variable.
- A small minority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire raised concerns that homework set did not always support their child's learning appropriately. Inspectors' observations and discussions with students indicated that appropriate homework is regularly set.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students are proud of their school and comment on how well everyone gets on. Students say they feel safe, and staff and parents agree. Students are polite and welcoming to visitors and there is a climate of mutual respect.
- The behaviour policy is clearly communicated and applied consistently by staff. This makes a strong contribution to students' good behaviour, both in and outside lessons. Discussions with students indicate that the good behaviour seen is typical. Students are rewarded for good work and behaviour and this motivates them to do well. School records show that behaviour is improving over time and that exclusion rates are decreasing due to better provision and support for students at risk of exclusion.
- The school demonstrates a strong commitment to the development of the whole individual. The pastoral provision is very effective in ensuring that students are well cared for.
- Students who have very complex needs are extremely well cared for. This high level of support enables them to make good progress and to enjoy school.
- Students told inspectors that incidences of bullying are few and are dealt with well by the school when they do happen. The large majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire agreed with this. Students are well aware of the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and they know how to keep themselves and others safe in and out of school.
- Students enjoy taking on leadership roles in school. The student council represents students' views; it has contributed to making decisions about the new school uniform and where to spend additional funding. Older students have opportunities to work with younger students, for example in helping them to become confident readers. Sixth-form students act as mentors to provide younger students with someone other than a teacher to talk to.
- Effective strategies have improved attendance and reduced the number of persistent absentees. Students are punctual both to school and to their lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, senior leaders have worked determinedly to bring about improvement and all school leaders, including governors, share a passion for all students to achieve their best.
- There has been a strong focus on raising expectations, monitoring students' progress and attainment and improving the quality of teaching. Middle leadership has been strengthened by new appointments and curriculum leaders take greater responsibility for driving improvement. All teachers are rigorously held to account for the progress of students in their classes.
- School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and school improvement plans are focused on further improving the quality of teaching and raising students' achievement. All actions are measured in terms of their impact on outcomes for students.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Effective action has been taken to eradicate weak teaching. Teachers are supported by a range of training opportunities, much of which is targeted to individual need. Performance management is robust and teachers' progression through salary scales is linked to the quality of teaching and achievement of students in their classes.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It meets the needs of learners well with substantial recent changes to the Key Stage 4 and sixth-form curricula. Revisions to the Key Stage 3 curriculum, to be implemented in September 2013, include enhanced partnerships with primary schools to ensure the provision for all students better meets their particular needs. Students receive excellent guidance during the transition stages of their education to ensure that they are on the right courses. There are many well-supported activities beyond the normal curriculum, which enhance students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Partnerships with local schools and colleges broaden the range of opportunities for Key Stage 4 and sixth-form students. Students are being well prepared for their future lives and very few leave the school without a known destination.
- Sixth-form leaders have been successful in raising aspirations and securing good retention.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted and all forms of discrimination tackled. A wide range of intervention and support serve to address areas of relative underperformance (for example, boys of average ability). However, some actions have not been in place long enough to have an impact on outcomes.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet current requirements. The school makes all the necessary checks to ensure that students' attendance, behaviour and safety are assured when they attend other schools and colleges.
- The local authority has categorised Sherburn High School as a 'Basic Support' school. This is because it is confident that school leaders have the capacity to make further improvements to teaching and students' achievement.
- The school actively seeks external review and validation and is well placed to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the quality of teaching. The governors support and challenge the headteacher and other leaders to improve the school further and scrutinise information about students' achievement carefully, comparing it with national figures. They monitor the use of the pupil premium funding. The governing body ensures that performance management is used fairly and that teachers are rewarded only for meeting classroom targets. Governors have a firm grip on the school's budget and plan carefully to ensure financial sustainability.

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	121695
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	406046

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
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	750
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Lewis
Headteacher	Martyn Sibley
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2011
Telephone number	01977 682442
Fax number	01977 682752
Email address	admin@sherburnhigh.co.uk

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