

Haydon Bridge High School

Haydon Bridge, Hexham, Northumberland, NE47 6LR

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Sixth form provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- The school's safeguarding procedures, including those in the sixth form, are inadequate. Governors and leaders have not ensured that records of incidents and concerns and logs of actions are stored and monitored effectively and are easily retrievable. Staff are unclear as to who leads child protection in the school.
- Leaders and governors have not acted swiftly enough to stop the significant decline in students' progress and achievement over the last three years, particularly in English and science.
- Governors have not ensured that the pupil premium money for disadvantaged students has been spent effectively. The attainment of the disadvantaged students is lower than for other students within the school and nationally. The gap between their attainment and that of other groups is not closing.
- Girls significantly outperform boys in terms of progress and attainment. Overall, the progress and attainment of both groups is not high enough.
- Teaching is inadequate. Students' literacy, and particularly writing, is not supported well enough across the curriculum. The most-able students are not reaching the higher levels they should.
- The sixth form requires improvement. The school has not yet recruited a permanent leader for the sixth form; necessary improvements have been delayed.
- Students' attitudes to learning require improvement. Presentation and the care students take with their work are too variable across subjects and are often not good. This limits their ability to revise from their notes.
- For a small minority of students, absence restricts their progress in some key subjects. Students do not catch up on work that they miss, and so have gaps in their knowledge.
- The new senior leadership team, while having an accurate view of where the school needs to improve, has not had sufficient time to impact on students' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching assistants have a good range of subject knowledge which enhances the provision for students and supports them well in their learning.
- The development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- Staff work together well, and are increasing their skills and knowledge in order to try to make the necessary improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching over time. This included some observations of teaching; three observations were undertaken jointly with the school’s senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of students’ work and looked at the school’s own records of work scrutiny since September. Planners for homework, and books and folders across a large number of subjects and from Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 were seen.
- Students’ conduct in and outside of lessons was observed, including the start and end of the school day, at breaks and lunchtimes and around the extensive school site.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders and staff responsible for the students’ well-being. A large number of teaching and support staff also met with inspectors throughout the inspection. Those responsible for students with special educational needs, students’ behaviour and safety and the interim manager of the sixth form met with inspectors and provided documentation in connection with their roles.
- Meetings were held with senior representatives from the local authority which has been working with the school, representatives of the governing body and the acting headteacher and associate headteacher.
- The school’s records of behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and the school’s improvement plans, action plans and tracking and monitoring documents were all reviewed. Policies, data on students’ performance and monitoring of teaching and learning were all scrutinised.
- Inspectors also contacted the local authority’s children’s services, the local authority’s designated officer and the linked boarding school and held discussions with them or their representatives and were sent related documentation.
- Inspectors reviewed the 44 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents, the 55 responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff, and a significant number of telephone calls, and letters and emails sent to the inspection team during the inspection.

Inspection team

Rebecca Lawton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Frank Cain	Additional Inspector
Anne Smedley	Additional Inspector
Barbara Waugh	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Haydon Bridge High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school. It has recently added Year 7 and Year 8 cohorts to its roll. It has an average-sized sixth form. The school does not use alternative providers for its students' education.
- The school has an associated boarding school provision, Ridley Hall. This provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements. Inspection reports for the setting may be viewed at www.ofsted.gov.uk.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by the pupil premium funding, the additional government funding for children looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those students with special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language, or who are from a minority ethnic background, is very small and well below the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standard, the minimum attainment and progress expected of students at age 16, in 2013.
- The school is currently being managed by an acting headteacher and associate headteacher during the substantive headteacher's absence. Plans for an interim executive board to replace the governing body have been submitted to the Department for Education, as have plans for an application to join a multi-academy trust.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has become much more involved in the running of the school and has completed several reviews of provision. A warning notice was issued by the local authority to the school in July 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Safeguarding procedures across the whole school, including the sixth form, require immediate attention by urgently:
 - improving systems to record, maintain and retrieve information relating to all behaviour and safety incidents, complaints and concerns
 - securing staff knowledge about child protection and ways of reporting any concerns which may arise.
- Urgently improve the progress made by all students and close the gaps in the progress between all groups within the school and nationally, particularly the most able, the disabled, those with special educational needs and the disadvantaged, by:
 - embedding a whole-school approach to the teaching of literacy, and specifically writing, so that it is taught effectively across the curriculum
 - improving students' attitudes to learning by ensuring consistently high expectations of the quality of their notes in books in all subjects and key stages
 - ensuring that those in need of additional support improve rapidly to keep up with their classmates, and those who are most able are challenged to achieve higher levels in all subjects
 - ensuring that all teachers and leaders use the data they have on students' performance effectively to improve the planning for the support and challenge of students in lessons.
- Continue to improve students' attendance and, for those students who are absent, instigate a procedure whereby, on their return, they are able and are prompted to catch up on work they have missed so that there are no gaps in their learning and notes.

- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - urgently reviewing and improving the school’s procedures for maintaining records relating to behaviour and safety so that they are compliant and fit for purpose
 - securing rapidly the permanent leadership of the sixth form so that the necessary improvements can be made
 - monitoring the spending of the pupil premium funding so that the students this fund is designed to support benefit from improved provision so that the gaps in their attainment, in comparison to that of their peers, close rapidly
 - ensuring that staff roles and responsibilities are clear and shared, especially for those responsible for child protection and for teaching assistants.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school’s use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The leadership and governance of the school have not ensured students' safety; current procedures and the recording of safeguarding incidents are inadequate. The current structure does not allow staff to retrieve complaints, concerns and recorded incidents easily and, in some cases not at all. This means that those who need access to this information cannot take action or monitor outcomes effectively.
- Leaders and governors have not acted swiftly enough to stop the significant decline in students' progress and achievement over the last three years. While they have recently appointed new staff and instigated policies which have begun to improve provision and outcomes for students, this has not happened quickly enough and students' current achievement and the quality of teaching remain inadequate overall.
- The new senior leadership team have been in their current posts for only nine weeks. This has not been long enough for leaders to respond to areas of weakness they have correctly identified, although they have created detailed action plans to address these areas.
- The school's tackling of discrimination and equality is inadequate. There are significant differences between the performance of the different groups of students both in school and when compared to national data.
- There is no strategy for improving students' literacy; consequently, students' literacy skills are underdeveloped in Key Stages 3 and 4. No cross-curricular approach is in place, and in some subjects students' weak literacy skills, and particularly their weak writing skills significantly impede their achievement and attainment.
- New procedures for managing the performance of staff are now linked well to students' performance and staff pay and include specific and measurable targets. However, this new system has not yet had impact on teaching and learning outcomes. Teaching assistants are not currently managed using a similar structure and their roles are unclear.
- Middle leaders have recently improved their use of data to evaluate departmental performance and now have access to improved continual professional development, including more targeted training and support. This is helping to develop their effectiveness in improving performance in their areas of responsibility.
- The school curriculum is broad and balanced, although the lack of a literacy strategy holds back students' achievements in some subjects. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment and a significant proportion of students benefits from these. The provision for sixth-form students gives them an appropriate foundation for life and work. Students in the sixth form have access to good quality additional curriculum elements that enable them to pursue work-related learning and prepare for higher education and work. The advice and careers guidance for students is of good quality and the number of students not in education, training or employment when they leave school is low.
- The school's curriculum provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, particularly the additional activities and international links that are exploited well within the arts. The students are well prepared for, and have good knowledge of, life in modern Britain.
- During the autumn term 2014, a new assessment strategy has been put into place across the school. This system is a significant improvement on previous structures and is giving teachers and leaders more information on students' progress. This is now leading to a refinement of curriculum and lesson planning in some departments, such as mathematics. The new system is a response to school leaders identifying that assessment had, until this term, been inaccurate in a number of departments and consequently unhelpful in judging the success of teaching and the quality of learning. The school is working with a large number of external consultants and leaders of education to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment.
- Since January, the local authority has put a significant amount of resource into supporting the school. They have provided consultants, full-time staff, access to specialists and have carried out reviews and jointly planned for improvements. Their reviews correctly evaluated the school's overall effectiveness to be inadequate at the beginning of the autumn 2014 term. The improved systems which have been put in place have not yet impacted sufficiently on the school's performance to demonstrate that it has the ability to improve. The senior leaders are reliant on a significant amount of this external support to drive the necessary improvements to teaching and learning.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not ensured the safety and well-being of students as they are not monitoring the systems for safeguarding rigorously. Consequently, records for tracking complaints, concerns and behavioural issues are inadequate.

- Governors have not challenged the school sufficiently to prevent its decline since the previous inspection. Following an external review of governance, a restructuring and review has improved the governors' awareness of roles and responsibilities and they now have better information from which to evaluate the school's performance. They are now using a wide breadth of data to evaluate progress.
- Although teachers' and leaders' performance is now linked to pay and to students' outcomes, the information the governors have used historically to judge performance has not been accurate. Governors are knowledgeable, have completed a skills' audit and are fully involved in every aspect of the school's leadership. They attend weekly progress meetings and challenge underperformance regularly.
- Governors have not monitored the spending of the money provided for disadvantaged students sufficiently well. These students continue to underachieve, and the gap between their attainment and that of other students and those nationally continues to widen.
- Concerns governors have raised over aspects of the school's performance have been well founded. However, they have not focused on major aspects such as safeguarding and these aspects are inadequate.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Attitudes to learning are correctly identified by the school as an area that requires attention. Books and folders show that some students do not respect their work and many produce messy, incomplete work that is below the level of which they are capable. Consequently, these books are not helpful for students to revise from.
- The number of historical incidents of poor behaviour or serious issues could not be discerned as the school's recording of behavioural and safety incidents is not sufficiently effective. A small number of students and parents wrote letters to and telephoned inspectors citing behavioural incidents in the past for which the school could not access records.
- The majority of students behave well in lessons. They have good manners and respect staff. They work together well and support each other in lessons to explore topics and investigate problems.
- Attendance has improved, although when a small number of students are regularly absent this has a significant impact on their progress. From students' books in some departments, it was clear that when these students miss work they do not always catch up and these gaps are not identified by the current monitoring approaches. Most subject departments do, however, offer 'catch-up' sessions for GCSE work at times to suit students and parents, as the school is in an isolated area. This provision for students in Key Stage 4 is significantly better than for Key Stage 3.
- Students are aware of the different types of bullying and are confident that should it occur, it is dealt with appropriately by staff.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate. This applies equally to the main school and to the sixth form. Current processes for recording, tracking and monitoring actions in response to incidents are not effective. The school struggled to provide information on recent and historical cases, and in some cases could not access any records.
- Not all staff are confident about who is the designated child protection officer, or about processes for reporting any incidents they may have reported to them.
- Parents, students and the local authority officers reported a small number of serious safety incidents to the inspection team during the inspection. The school could not provide details of actions they had taken to record, respond to and ensure students' future safety in respect of these incidents. Some of these reports were that students did not feel safe on site.
- Current systems for information-sharing on students' welfare from the boarding provision to the school are not robust enough. Information is being lost and actions are not tracked sufficiently well.
- The safety of the school site has recently been improved and the measures for securing the buildings are now more robust. The addition of identification for sixth-form students has helped improve site security.

The quality of teaching**is inadequate**

- The inadequate impact of teaching on students' learning over time has resulted in a decline in their progress and final attainment since the previous inspection in the main school. Teaching in the sixth form is of better quality and expectations of students' achievement are higher than for students in the rest of the school. However, the final attainment of students is variable across subjects.
- Teachers have recently improved the accuracy of their assessment and are now using this more robust information on students' progress to track underachievement. Some departments, such as mathematics, are now using this information to inform their plans and curriculum, and have secured improvements in students' achievements, but this good practice is not consolidated in other departments. Consequently, students' progress is too variable across departments. Historically, predictions on students' final attainment have been far from the validated final grades.
- In lessons, the most-able students are not always challenged to make progress at the speed of which they are capable. The school's new, more robust data support the school leaders' evaluations that these students could achieve more. Targets for increasing the attainment of the most able are a key part of the school's current improvement plan.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs have historically not achieved well. A newly appointed coordinator is making significant changes, and has recently begun improving the progress of these students in reading and mathematics, although writing remains an area in need of significant improvement. New programmes of additional support are being implemented and closely monitored to ensure that they rapidly improve progress for these students. However, this new, more robust system has not impacted on students' progress for long enough to close the gaps between their attainment and that of their peers in school or nationally.
- Students' writing and literacy overall are not supported adequately. Expectations of students' writing are not high enough across the curriculum, and their frequent poor spelling, punctuation and grammar are not routinely corrected by teachers. No whole-school strategy for improving literacy is currently in place. However, students' reading skills have improved due to a recent whole-school approach to reading implemented in September.
- Teachers are not supporting students with weaker skills, particularly in developing their writing skills, and are not ensuring that students catch up with any notes that are missed due to absence. This means that a significant number of students have gaps in their work which will be a barrier to their revision for tests and examinations.
- Until very recently, the proportion of lessons taught by cover staff was significant, and this has had a negative impact in some subjects, such as science. Students' progress in these subjects has slowed, and there is considerable variation in the quality of teaching across the school. Work in books shows that many students have been taught by up to four different teachers in a year in one subject. Strategies for ensuring continuity and high expectations are not sufficient. Leaders have now addressed this and are monitoring the frequency of use of cover staff.
- Teachers in mathematics now use data on students' performance to ensure that the students are challenged well at all levels. Consequently students' progress in mathematics is starting to improve. However, other subjects' data show significant variation in students' progress across the year groups and over time, and for many this has declined.
- In lessons, teachers use their good working relationships with students to try to help them make progress. They skilfully question students who in turn respond enthusiastically to teachers' efforts to make learning interesting and engaging.
- Teaching assistants support students well in lessons and have good subject knowledge. They react flexibly to ensure that those with special educational needs get additional support, as well as supporting the whole class and working in partnership with teachers. Students value the support staff's input to their learning.

The achievement of pupils**is inadequate**

- Progress and outcomes have declined over the last three years, particularly in English and science, as a result of the weak quality of teaching over time. From a profile of approximately typical starting points on entry to the school, the proportion of students making expected progress has remained below national averages in English. The proportion of students making more than expected progress in English is significantly lower than the national figure.
- Students who are supported by the pupil premium are making less progress and achieving less well than their peers. The gap between their attainment within school and in comparison to the national average

has not closed, and in several subjects and groups is widening. Within school these disadvantaged students are roughly a year behind their classmates, and 20% fewer gain good grades at GCSE in English and mathematics. They are more than a GCSE grade behind similar students nationally. The school has recognised this underachievement and has changed its approach to managing the spending of pupil premium funding, which until September has not been tracked effectively. This refinement has not yet improved progress for these students.

- Girls significantly outperform boys across the school, in some subjects by as much as 40 percentage points. The school is aware of this and has put in place strategies which are starting to improve outcomes and raise boys' achievement. However, the gap has not yet closed sufficiently across the curriculum.
- Leaders in the school have judged teachers' assessments of students' progress as being insecure. Predictions of students' final attainment in 2014 were significantly different from those achieved in a number of subjects. A new assessment procedure has been put into place this term, using a wide range of external experts which has given leaders better information on where weaker progress is occurring. However, not all teachers are using this information to adapt their planning and delivery of lessons to challenge the most able and support the least able effectively.
- A very small number of students are entered for early examination at GCSE and this procedure is currently under evaluation to ensure that no students are disadvantaged by using this approach.
- The proportion of most-able students who reach the highest levels of which they are capable is too low. Although the proportion of students achieving at least five grades C or above including English and mathematics at GCSE level has increased for girls to 71% and remained static for boys at 43%, the proportion achieving either a grade A or A* has declined.
- Students' literacy skills are not well developed. The school does not have a coherent whole-school plan for the teaching of literacy and specifically writing across the curriculum, and in some departments students' weaker writing skills are barriers to their progress and attainment.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are not making progress or attaining to the levels of their peers. For example, in 2014 only 17% of students with special educational needs achieved five or more GCSEs at grade C or above including English and mathematics, whereas 64% of those not classed as being disabled or as having special educational needs reached this level.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- Achievement in the sixth form is stronger than the achievement in the main school. The school has maintained the quality of teaching more effectively in the sixth form during a period of staffing turbulence. There are, however, significant variations between the performance of students in academic and vocational subjects but, overall, students make expected progress. Very small class sizes makes comparison difficult in some cases, although the majority of students reach levels of attainment that enable them to progress to the course or area of work that they desire.
- Students in the sixth form attend well and work hard. Their work folders show good quality notes and they are keen and motivated to learn. Behaviour in the sixth form is good. Students take advantage of the good quality additional curriculum elements that enrich their development and prepare them well for working life.
- When students in the sixth form submit complaints or issues to the behavioural staff, these are not recorded sufficiently well. Due to this, there are no records to ensure that a small number of ongoing issues have been sufficiently resolved.
- An interim leader is in charge of the sixth form and longer-term arrangements have not been secured.

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	122328
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	447764

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	560
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Middlemass
Headteacher	John Whittle
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2010
Telephone number	01434 684422
Fax number	01434 684226
Email address	admin@haydonbridge.northumberland.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

