

# Huntcliff School

Redbourne Mere, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire DN21 4NN

## Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- In the past, pupils have not made the progress they are capable of and as a result, they have fallen behind others nationally who have similar starting points.
- Although the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving, it remains variable and as a result pupils' progress, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is not good.
- The standard of pupils' work is variable, teachers do not consistently challenge pupils to improve their work or develop their literacy skills. Because of this, pupils are not consistently given the opportunities they need to make good progress.
- Leaders have established a clear vision and strategies for improvement supported by high expectations. However, leaders at all levels do not consistently translate these high expectations into their daily work and actions.
- Behaviour is improving; however, teachers do not consistently apply the school's behaviour policy to challenge low-level disruption in the classroom. As a result, a small minority of pupils display poor attitudes to their learning too often.
- A very small minority of pupils have negative attitudes towards the school. They show a lack of respect for other pupils, staff and visitors.
- The school has a comprehensive personal development programme. However, form tutor time is not consistently used effectively across the school to support this programme.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders at all levels have taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Overall, pupils' progress is improving. Leaders' actions are having a positive effect on the progress of most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, and those who are most able.
- Governors are determined to further improve the school. They rightly have confidence that the recently appointed headteacher has a focus on the appropriate priorities.
- Most pupils are respectful and polite, having a pride in their school and in their achievements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that teachers consider pupils' starting points, including those pupils who are most able, when planning for learning, so that pupils of all abilities are further stretched and challenged
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and their use of literacy
  - ensuring that teachers consistently apply the revised school's policy for managing behaviour in lessons.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
  - eradicating any low-level and off-task behaviour from pupils which disrupts learning and limits the progress of others
  - eradicating the inappropriate behaviour of the small minority of pupils who have a negative attitude towards school
  - ensuring that form tutor periods are used productively and consistently across the school.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the leadership and management skills of all leaders so that a culture of high expectations in every aspect of school life is evident
  - ensuring that all pupils make good progress in line with others nationally who have similar starting points.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The recently appointed headteacher has established a clear vision and climate for improvement. There exists a sustained focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in the belief that this will contribute significantly to improvements in learning behaviours too. Because of this, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved, and pupils are making better progress than they have in the past.
- Leaders have been successful in enthusing staff to make the changes necessary to improve the school. Staff have confidence in the leadership of the headteacher. Morale is high, and both staff and pupils recognise the improvements made over the past few months. The headteacher recognises the need to ensure that the agreed vision and values of the school are demonstrated in consistently high expectations.
- Leaders have challenged weaker teaching successfully, making sure that the appropriate support has been in place to improve it quickly. Leadership at all levels has been strengthened and developed. Staff report that they feel supported and are provided with the focused professional development they require to improve their work.
- Leaders and governors have identified correctly the priorities for improvement. They have taken actions to make improvements which are beginning to have the desired effect. The progress of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those who are most able, is improving as a result of these actions, although pupils' progress overall is not consistently good across all subjects and pupil groups.
- Middle leaders are focused appropriately on the priorities for improvement. Their work has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. However, the progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged, although improving, remains inconsistent across subjects.
- The improving quality of teaching and learning is most evident in English and humanities subjects where a significant number of pupils are making good progress. In mathematics, improvements are emerging, whereas in science, although improvements are being made, progress is weaker when compared to other subject areas.
- The headteacher has a very clear view of how the curriculum will need to be developed in the future. He has led a curriculum review which has canvassed the views of pupils, staff and governors and, because of this, has been able to make decisions with a clear rationale which relates to the intent for a new curriculum model to be introduced in the next academic year.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through a comprehensive programme of themed assemblies, external speakers, events and educational visits, which contribute effectively in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. As part of the programme, form tutor sessions are planned to support pupils' development. However, at the time of the inspection, those form tutor sessions observed were neither well planned nor utilised effectively.

- Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities and events, including sporting, cultural and performing arts activities.

## **Governance of the school**

- The trust's governance arrangements, support and challenge school leaders. The governing body understand clearly the school's strengths and areas which require improvement.
- The governing body discharges its legal duties effectively. Governors analyse school performance information diligently, including information which allows them to assess the impact of the spending of the additional funding the school receives for those pupils who are disadvantaged and those pupils with SEND. Governors use this information to hold leaders to account for their actions.
- Governors are passionate about providing the school's pupils with a high-quality education. They have confidence in the ability of school leaders to make the necessary improvements quickly. Inspectors share this confidence in the capacity of the school's leaders to improve the school further.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe across the school. Where referrals have been made, or where complaints have been received, leaders act quickly and effectively. Inspectors observed comprehensive records of actions taken and partnership working with external agencies, which clearly evidence the seriousness with which leaders take their responsibility to ensure that all pupils are kept safe.
- The single central register, which records all of the necessary checks on staff who work with pupils in the school, is rigorous and compliant. The legal requirements for the recruitment of staff are also in place, so that those who work in the school are safe to work with pupils.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- Teaching, learning and assessment are improving across the school. However, teachers' expectations of pupils are not consistent across and within subjects. In some examples of pupils' work observed during the inspection, tasks were incomplete or not attempted at all and this remained unchallenged. As a result, these pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Pupils' work is not consistently checked for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar in line with the school's policy, which is aimed at improving literacy skills. Because of this, pupils often repeat the same mistakes and errors they have previously made.
- The quality of pupils' work is variable. Where work is of a lower quality, pupils have not made the effort required to gain a deeper understanding of key concepts, this has not been challenged by teachers, and they do not make good progress. However, inspectors observed higher-quality work from those pupils who are most able, which

indicated that this group of pupils are now making better progress than has been the case in the past.

- Teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently to challenge any pupils' attitudes to learning which may limit their progress. For example, some pupils are passive in their attitudes to learning and do not make good progress. A small minority of pupils have negative attitudes to learning and as a result, they are disruptive to their own learning and the learning of others.
- Teachers' knowledge of their subjects is a strong feature. Teachers are beginning to use this strong knowledge along with the information they have about pupils' starting points, to plan for more effective learning. In some subjects, however, this approach is in the early stages and, although improving, teaching and learning is not good.
- Some very effective examples of skilful questioning were observed in mathematics and geography. Where this occurred, pupils were highly motivated, encouraged to think independently and challenge their own understanding through their responses.
- Those pupils who are disadvantaged and those with SEND are supported effectively in the classroom. However, although these pupils are now making improved progress and the differences between their achievements and others with similar starting points are narrowing, there remains further work to do to ensure that these pupils catch up completely.
- Those pupils who are most vulnerable when entering the school are well supported through the gateway provision for Year 7 and 8 pupils. The provision provides pupils with targeted teaching and support, with a specific timeline, in order to give them the skills and confidence to integrate fully into the main school as quickly as possible.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The majority of pupils speak politely to each other, staff and visitors. They wear their uniform with pride and ensure that it meets the standards of dress expected. They are proud of their school and recognise its recent improvements.
- Pupils, particularly those in key stage 4, speak highly of the advice and guidance the school provides to them when choosing subject options and considering their next steps after they leave the school.
- The school's personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) programme is a feature of pupils' personal development entitlement. Assemblies, external speakers, 'step up days', educational visits and enrichment activities are integrated into the programme and pupils speak enthusiastically about the opportunities they can take advantage of. However, form tutor sessions, although resourced appropriately as a result of leaders' actions, are not consistently used productively to further enhance pupils' personal development.

- A small number of pupils attend alternative educational provision which appropriately meets their needs. Leaders diligently monitor the attendance, behaviour and progress of these pupils in order to ensure their well-being.
- Pupils report that bullying is not a regular problem at the school, and when it does occur, it is dealt with effectively by school leaders. School records support this view, evidencing that bullying is rare.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and there are no areas of the school where they are reluctant to visit. Pupils identify key staff who they can turn to for help if they have any worries or concerns.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, however a small number of pupils take advantage of the inconsistent application of the school's behaviour policy, and as a result, they engage in low-level disruption, which has a negative effect of learning.
- A very small minority of pupils have a negative attitude towards the school and lack respect towards other pupils, staff and visitors. As a result, their behaviour at times undermines the values and positive climate for learning which leaders and staff are working very hard to establish.
- Pupils, leaders and staff agree that in their view, behaviour has improved since the appointment of a new headteacher. However, leaders recognise the need to challenge the behaviour of those pupils who have negative attitudes, with greater consistency, whenever there is a need to do so.
- The overall attendance of pupils is improving, including the overall attendance of those pupils who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, and is now close to the national average. The attendance of those pupils who are often absent from school is improving too, as a result of the determined actions of leaders and the attendance team.
- The attendance of those pupils who attend an alternative provision for their education is improving as a result of close monitoring of progress, behaviour and the engagement of the pupils in their learning experience.
- Pupils are punctual to school. Pupils' punctuality to lessons, however, is inconsistent. Leaders are aware that improving the consistency of how the school's behaviour policy is applied, will be a key feature in improving this in the future.
- The level of fixed-term exclusions has reduced significantly for all pupils. Governors and leaders are determined to engage pupils in their learning while, wherever possible, keeping them in the school, to apply appropriate sanctions for less than acceptable behaviour. Consequently, internal isolations have risen in the recent past, alongside the reduction in exclusions.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- In 2018 the progress of Year 11 pupils in their GCSE examinations in English and mathematics was broadly average. However, those pupils who are most able and those

who are disadvantaged, made less progress in these subjects than their peers nationally, who had similar starting points.

- In 2018, those year 11 pupils who are disadvantaged and those who are most able, made significantly less progress in science than their peers nationally, who had similar starting points.
- Overall the progress of pupils is improving, although there remains considerable variability. For example, there are significant strengths in the humanities subjects, whereas pupils' progress in science is weaker. Within science, however, inspectors observed that those pupils in Year 11 who are most able are now beginning to make good progress.
- The progress of current pupils who are most able and those who are disadvantaged, in English and mathematics, is improving, although there is variability within each subject area. In key stage 3, the improvements in progress are more significant than they are in key stage 4.
- Pupils with SEND are now making better progress across many subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The small number of pupils who attend an alternative provision for their education are making better progress than they have done previously. Leaders monitor closely the provision, pupils' engagement and progress, through regular contact and discussion with provision managers.

## School details

Unique reference number	137832
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10059094

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	610
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Dr Pat Frankisch
Headteacher	Patrick Daley
Telephone number	01652 648276
Website	<a href="http://www.huntcliff.n-lincs.sch.uk">www.huntcliff.n-lincs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:PDaley@huntcliffschool.co.uk">PDaley@huntcliffschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	3–4 June 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The proportion who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- Most pupils are White British.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision sites in the local area, including Coritani Academy, 7-Keys, The Acorn Free School and The Pilgrim School.
- Responsibility for the school rests with trustees who delegate powers to the local governing board. The academy trust website and scheme of delegation can be found at [www.huntcliff.n-lincs.sch.uk](http://www.huntcliff.n-lincs.sch.uk).
- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed, along with changes in leadership in several subject areas, including mathematics and science.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a wide range of lessons and tutor sessions, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and a sample of pupils' workbooks.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour before school, during lessons, around school, in registration sessions, at breaktime and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors held a discussion with leaders of a local alternative provision.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in discussion groups and informally around school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school self-evaluation, improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information about the attainment and progress of pupils, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered 61 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 43 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered 39 responses to the pupil survey, alongside 27 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Barry Found, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gillian Fisher	Ofsted Inspector
Stuart Cleary	Ofsted Inspector
Michele Costello	Her Majesty's Inspector

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