

Newsome High School

Castle Avenue, Newsome, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD4 6JN

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Although leaders have recently implemented the necessary changes to make improvements, it is too soon to see the impact of their actions.
- Over the last two years, the progress of pupils in most subjects by the end of Year 11 has been inadequate. Current pupils are not making enough progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils are given few chances to write at length. Because of this, they do not have sufficient opportunities to practise and develop their literacy skills.
- Pupils do not consistently demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. At times, low-level disruption affects the progress pupils make.
- In key stages 3 and 4, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable. Teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, should achieve are not high enough.
- While leaders' actions are beginning to make a difference to the quality of teaching, recent improvements have not had the necessary impact on the progress of pupils. The overall quality of teaching and learning has not improved quickly enough.
- Pupils' attendance has increased overall, but not all pupils attend school regularly.

The school has the following strengths

- Over the past year, the headteacher, with the support of governors, has strengthened leadership at all levels.
- Leaders are now clear about what needs to improve and the steps that are needed to achieve their ambitions.
- The governing body is now holding leaders to account more effectively.
- The school's specialist provision for pupils who have physical or hearing impairments is a strength of the school.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of pupils.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and improve outcomes for pupils, by:
 - providing the support and development which teachers need, so that teaching is consistently good or better
 - ensuring that teachers consider pupils' abilities, knowledge and skills and use this information to plan work which meets pupils' needs
 - embedding strategies to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), so that they make better progress and catch up with pupils who have similar starting points
 - developing pupils' literacy skills by ensuring that there are more opportunities for pupils to practise writing at length
 - ensuring that teachers consistently apply the school's assessment policy.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - further improving the attendance of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND
 - further reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school
 - embedding further the principles of respect, integrity, teamwork and aspiration in the school's everyday work, so that it becomes a consistent feature of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning
 - eliminating the low-level disruption in lessons.
- Further improve leadership and management, by:
 - developing systems and procedures which will allow leaders to quickly access the information they need to establish an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance to inform their next actions
 - developing leadership at all levels to take full advantage of the skills, motivation and passion for change which exists within school leaders and governors
 - ensuring that teachers are held to account for their performance.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders have not had an accurate understanding of the quality of education at the school. As a result, they have not acted quickly enough to bring about the improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment which are necessary. More-recent actions are now beginning to have an effect and teaching and learning is now beginning to improve slowly.
- Over time, leaders have not used an accurate process of monitoring to identify weaknesses across all aspects of the school. It is only since the arrival of the new headteacher that systems and structures which effectively check the quality of teaching and learning have been put into place. These systems are now beginning to have a positive effect by enabling leaders to identify the professional development needs of staff. This, in turn, is helping leaders to begin to improve teaching and learning. Leaders are aware that further development of these systems and structures are required.
- Although leaders have developed strategies to improve the progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged, or who require additional support, it is not always clear whether these strategies are working. Those pupils who require extra support to catch up with their literacy or numeracy skills are not able to access additional resources and support programmes.
- Older pupils in the school have studied a significantly large number of GCSE subjects in the past, which, in many cases, due to the pressures of the work required, has compromised their overall achievement. The new leadership of the school has recognised this and has been quick to introduce a new, refined, broad and balanced curriculum, which more suitably meets the needs of the pupils.
- The recently appointed headteacher has been determined in his actions to eradicate weak leadership in the school. As a result of his work, leadership at all levels has been strengthened and re-energised and leaders now share a very clear vision and focus for school improvement. Senior leaders are aware that there is a need to provide professional support to new and less-experienced middle leaders to ensure that they fulfil their roles to best effect.
- Leaders have created a positive climate which provides pupils with appropriate spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. Leaders have established a thoughtful programme of personal development which is delivered in tutor-group sessions and assemblies. In addition to this, leaders have been keen to ensure that there is a wide range of out-of-classroom learning opportunities through visits and activities. Pupils speak highly of these opportunities to enrich their experiences.
- Leaders have been successful in integrating pupils who benefit from the specialist provision which is part of the school. During the inspection, inspectors observed pupils who have physical or hearing impairments taking a full and active role in school life. Their progress is supported by skilled staff who work hard to ensure that these pupils reach their potential. However, leaders also recognise that there is more work to do in this area so that all pupils with SEND achieve as well as they can.

- The very recent external review of the school's use of the pupil premium has provided leaders with a clear picture of the improvements which are required.

Governance of the school

- The membership of the governing body has undergone substantial change in recent months. The recently appointed chair of the governing body has an accurate understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the governors.
- Governors are now holding leaders to account for their actions much more effectively. They have ensured that the information they receive from leaders is appropriate to their needs as a governing body, and that it is accurate and reliable.
- The headteacher has the full support of the governing body. Governors have ensured that additional support to help the school improve is available through the appointment of a national leader of education and the continued engagement with learning partners from the local authority.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are clear about their duty to keep pupils safe and have received relevant and up-to-date training. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils are completed appropriately and meet the statutory requirements.
- Leaders have ensured that staff are trained on the effect of any negative external influences, for example raising awareness of the implications of knife crime. Pupils benefit from personal development programmes which deal with these issues too.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and are confident that they can access the support they need, from the relevant staff, if they have concerns about their safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough. Often, the work set for pupils lacks sufficient challenge and opportunities for pupils to extend and deepen their own learning. As a result, many pupils, including the most able pupils, are not challenged well and do not make good progress.
- Teachers do not routinely plan work which takes into consideration the starting points of pupils. Pupils repeat work which has already been covered. This limits pupils' progress over time.
- The quality and presentation of pupils' work in their books is variable. Inspectors noted incomplete or missing work in pupils' books. It is evident that pupils have not routinely been given the opportunity to catch up on work they have missed, for example, following absence. Consequently, this is resulting in gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Teachers' implementation of the school's assessment policy is inconsistent. As a result, the progress of pupils varies greatly.

- In some examples of pupils' work, misconceptions and mistakes are not identified and addressed. Although peer assessment is seen by the school as an important part of the pupils' learning experience, it is not monitored closely enough by teachers to ensure that misunderstandings are rectified swiftly.
- Inspectors observed effective support in lessons for some pupils with SEND, including those pupils who benefit from the specialist provision. However, other pupils with SEND are not always supported as effectively as those from the specialist provision. This inconsistency is reflected in their slower progress.
- Skilful questioning is used by some, but not all, teachers. In cases where questioning successfully deepens and extends pupils' learning, they are keen to respond verbally, and take part in the learning activities enthusiastically.
- Pupils are rarely given the chance to write at length in lessons other than in English to develop and apply their knowledge and literacy skills. In many pupils' books, regular and repeated mistakes in spelling and grammar were evident.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development requires improvement. Pupils are generally courteous and respectful to staff and visitors. Where this is not the case, these are isolated incidents and, during the inspection, such occurrences were rare.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride during the school day. Staff routinely check the standard of pupils' dress and pupils respond cooperatively to staff requests to ensure that they meet the standards the school expects of them.
- The environment which leaders have created is inclusive, welcoming and supportive. The effect this has on pupils is positive. Pupils report that bullying is rare, is generally dealt with effectively and that pupils interact well with each other. Some pupils, however, raised concerns that, occasionally, verbal bullying is not picked up by staff. Pupils feel that more could be done to discourage this type of behaviour.
- Pupils are given opportunities, through the school's personal, social, health and economic programme, to discuss and learn about a wide range of issues. These include fundamental British values, keeping themselves safe and healthy attitudes and living. The programme is delivered in tutor sessions and through a planned schedule of assemblies, external speakers and educational visits and activities.
- The school has adopted a vision in which all pupils are encouraged to show respect, have integrity, value teamwork and to aspire (RITA). There is more work to do to ensure that this ideal is embedded fully; however, these aims are strongly reinforced in the words and deeds of leaders, staff and governors.
- Pupils who benefit from the specialist provision in the school take a full and active part in school life. Other pupils are mindful of their needs and respect the adjustments and access arrangements the school has made to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all.

- A small number of pupils attend an alternative provision which meets their current needs. The provision offers a supportive curriculum which allows pupils to make the personal development and progress they are capable of.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. The majority of pupils behave well around the school. However, leaders acknowledge that there remains a small number of pupils who continue to exhibit challenging behaviour. Inspectors were provided with evidence which shows that the school is working hard to re-engage these pupils with their learning.
- The school has recently introduced a revised behaviour policy. Most pupils report that it is strict and that it has improved behaviour. Staff report that behaviour has improved 'dramatically' since the arrival of the new headteacher and they now feel they are better supported by senior staff. Many parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's parent survey say that they feel behaviour has improved in the school.
- On rare occasions during the inspection, inspectors observed teachers and other staff dealing with challenging behaviour. When this was the case, staff dealt with incidents effectively by modelling respectful behaviour with clear, firm and supportive language. Pupils responded to this approach positively.
- In lessons, low-level disruption sometimes still occurs. Where this type of behaviour occurs, it limits the learning of pupils. In addition, the current behaviour policy is not effective in addressing those pupils who have weaker attitudes to learning. For those pupils their books evidence insufficient commitment to completing class work and home-learning tasks.
- The school is working hard to improve attendance and reduce the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school. Leaders have put into place rigorous systems and actions to target low attendance. As a result, attendance is improving for most groups of pupils and approaching national average levels. However, there is still more work to do to improve attendance and reduce absence further, particularly for those pupils who are persistently absent, for those who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND.
- The attendance and behaviour of those pupils who attend an alternative education provision is monitored daily. The attitudes to learning and the attendance of these pupils has improved since they began to attend the provision.
- The proportion of pupils excluded from school for a fixed period has been higher than average. School information shows that levels of exclusion are now reducing as the new approaches to behaviour management have become routine and more readily accepted by pupils. Leaders are aware, however, that more work needs to be done to reduce the levels of exclusion further.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils make progress which is significantly below average in several subjects, including English, mathematics and science. The 2017 published performance information, and the provisional 2018 information, show that overall progress for Year 11 pupils who completed their GCSE studies was substantially below the national average. Leaders know that standards are not improving rapidly.
- Disadvantaged pupils and some pupils with SEND underachieve considerably. Where pupils' specific needs are matched to skilled support in the classroom, pupils make better progress. Where this is not the case pupils make slower progress.
- The current progress of pupils in English and mathematics is variable. While improvements are increasingly evident in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, it is too soon to see any substantial improvement in the overall progress that pupils are making.
- Similarly, pupils' work reviewed by inspectors in other subjects and across all year groups indicates that although there have been some recent improvements in progress, pupils are still underachieving considerably.
- Teachers do not routinely plan for the needs of pupils, taking account of their starting points. Consequently, the most able pupils make slow progress as they are not challenged to achieve what they are capable of.
- Pupils' literacy skills have not been developed effectively. The school is beginning to address this aspect of their work through the non-negotiable literacy standards. However, the implementation of these standards is not yet consistent across the school.

School details

Unique reference number	107761
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10047840

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 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	530
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Briggs
Headteacher	Mr Dean Watkin
Telephone number	01484 516712
Website	www.newsomehigh.co.uk
Email address	office@newsomehigh.kirklees.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 April 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average. The proportion who have an education, health and care plan is above average.
- Sixty per cent of pupils are White British.
- A very small number of pupils attend Ethos alternative provision in Kirklees.
- The school works in partnership with a national leader of education and with a Kirklees learning partner.

- In recent times the school has undergone substantial turbulence due to the high turnover of staff, particularly those in leadership posts.
- The school provides specially resourced provision currently for 21 pupils who have either physical or hearing impairment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 40 lessons and six registration sessions, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff and representatives who are providing the school’s external support.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in lessons and in a sample of pupils’ workbooks.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour before school, during lessons, around school, during registration sessions, at breaktime and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in discussion groups and informally around school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation; its improvement plans; minutes of meetings of the governing body; information about the attainment and progress of all pupils; records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding; and information on the school’s website.
- Inspectors considered 43 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, alongside 50 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Barry Found, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Dan Murray	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Sheriff	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Greatrex	Ofsted Inspector

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