

Easingwold School

York Road, Easingwold, York, North Yorkshire YO61 3EF

Inspection dates

15–16 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not improved the school since the last inspection. The weaknesses noted at that time remain.
- Teachers do not plan activities for pupils that help them make good progress. In mathematics, teaching is particularly weak.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, make weak progress.
- Too many pupils leave the school with weak skills and gaps in their understanding of mathematics. Moreover, too much poor teaching in key stage 3 means that pupils are not well prepared for the demands of key stage 4.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not have good attitudes to learning as a result of the poor teaching.
- Too many disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are persistently absent and receive fixed-term exclusions.
- The effectiveness of the 16 to 19 programmes requires improvement because teaching is inconsistent in quality and not all learners have the opportunity to take part in high quality work experience.

The school has the following strengths

- The school promotes pupils' welfare well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They feel safe and secure in school as a result.
- Teaching has strengths in some subjects in the sixth form and in humanities.
- Pupils are well mannered, polite and conduct themselves well at lunchtimes and breaktimes.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics throughout the school by ensuring that:
 - pupils in key stage 3 are fluent in handling numbers and calculations
 - pupils are able to apply their mathematics skills to solving problems
 - the curriculum in key stage 3 builds on what pupils have learned at their primary schools.
- Raise achievement and improve teaching, particularly for disadvantaged pupils by:
 - giving staff practical advice and support on what strategies work best in the classroom to enable disadvantaged pupils to thrive
 - designing a curriculum which enables disadvantaged pupils to achieve well and gives them various options when they leave in Year 11, including joining the school's sixth form
 - raising expectations of what pupils can do and achieve, including for the most able
 - ensuring that assessment information is used sharply to help teachers plan work which builds pupils' skills and increases their knowledge and understanding across all subjects.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - simplifying development plans so that they focus on improving teaching and raising achievement and can be monitored easily by leaders and governors
 - improving the skills of middle leaders so that they fully evaluate the impact of their actions and are held closely to account for teaching and achievement
 - improving self-evaluation so that it is incisive in identifying weaknesses and eradicating them.

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

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

Inadequate

- The headteacher and senior leaders have not used achievement information sharply to address key weaknesses in teaching and arrest the underachievement of key groups of pupils. The weaknesses that were evident at the last inspection have not been addressed. Consequently, pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching have been in steep decline.
- Senior leaders have been over-generous in their self-evaluation. The headteacher has been too quick to celebrate the positive comments made in external review reports rather than address the very obvious weaknesses head on.
- Development plans are too complicated and do not help subject leaders to eradicate weaknesses within their subjects. For example, a set of seven priorities for the year ('the magnificent seven') has been issued. However, peripheral matters obscure the key aim of raising standards and improving the quality of teaching.
- Subject leaders are ineffective in their work to improve teaching and raise achievement. This is because they do not possess the skills to use data to find out what is not working well, devise strategies to improve them and evaluate the effectiveness of what they do. Senior leaders have set expectations low and have not supported middle leaders in their work or held them closely to account.
- The curriculum is weak for disadvantaged pupils because it does not allow them to study enough subjects at key stage 4. Coupled with the weak teaching they receive, this means they underachieve significantly by the end of Year 11. This limits pupils' choices when they progress to the next stage of their education. There is, however, a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer, which are well attended.
- Leaders have been aware that too many disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive fixed-term exclusions and are persistently absent. Little or no strategic planning by leaders has taken place to address this issue, which is linked to the underachievement of some of those pupils.
- The pupil premium is having no impact on raising achievement for disadvantaged pupils. Some training had been given to teachers three days prior to the inspection on how they might best support disadvantaged pupils. This has had no positive effect yet.
- Following the last inspection, the school commissioned an external review of the pupil premium. This had no impact on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This was largely because there was a lack of urgency in setting wheels in motion to raise achievement following the last inspection.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding has had no positive effect in mathematics but some benefits are apparent for those who entered the school with weak reading skills.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is particularly effective for those who have education, health and care plans, since these pupils have clear targets to achieve and support which meets their needs. However, for those pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, it is less effective due to their poor attendance, which is not adequately addressed.
- The underperformance of disadvantaged pupils and their limited access to a full curriculum means that the school does not promote equal opportunities successfully.

- A quarter of parents who responded to the questionnaire said they would not recommend the school to others and say the school is not well led and managed.
- Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed to the school.

Governance of the school

- Members of the governing body are committed and enthusiastic. However, they have failed to improve the school since Ofsted first judged it to require improvement and so governance is limited in its effectiveness.
- Governors receive most of their information about the school's performance through a colour-coded set of statistics. They realised that standards were slipping, but senior leaders had not alerted them to the seriousness of the situation.
- The complexity of the development plans does not help the governing body to know what needs to be done, by whom and by when, to raise achievement. Governors receive information from middle leaders about what they have done, but since middle leaders' work lacks rigour, governors have found it difficult to gauge whether things are improving.
- Governors have not discussed the school's strategy for promoting fundamental British values but are aware that work in assemblies and tutorials promotes them. Their own and the headteacher's understanding of what constitutes British values is limited which has not helped the school develop a strategic vision of how they will be promoted in school.
- The governing body has formulated a sound plan to address the serious budget deficit projected by the end of the year.
- Governors have a good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding of pupils. They receive training and are provided with regular reports from the governor with responsibility for safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular updates through training. This has enabled them to be vigilant for any signs that pupils may be at risk.
- School policies for child protection and safeguarding are robust. Leaders work well with parents and a range of outside agencies to ensure that all pupils are supported and safe.
- A full range of checks is made on any staff prior to them being recruited.
- The site is secure. Entrance to the building is strictly controlled and sixth-form students wear lanyards clearly identifying them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching across the school varies, but much is weak. This is because it does not fully stretch the most able and fails to help disadvantaged pupils make adequate progress.
- Teaching in mathematics is weak, particularly so in key stage 3. Much of the work seen during the inspection was too easy. Often it was at primary school level. Consequently, pupils' skills when they reach key stage 4 are woefully low, which leads to them to seriously underachieve at the end of Year 11.
- Across many subjects, the most able are not motivated nor challenged sufficiently. In

numerous lessons seen by inspectors, these bright pupils finished their work quickly then spent time waiting for others to catch up. Teachers do not use their assessment records to make sure that the work fully stretches them.

- When teachers ask questions, pupils' answers are often brief and in simple language. Few teachers insist on high-quality answers that use a greater range of vocabulary. This means that the most able in particular do not develop their vocabulary sufficiently. Teachers are too quick to praise answers that lack depth and use simple language.
- There are occasions when the most able do expand their answers when asked questions. They use a greater range of vocabulary and present well-considered, articulate answers to questions. There are also examples of most-able pupils completing high-quality work in their books. However, there are missed opportunities for other pupils to see what this high-quality work looks like so that they can improve their own.
- Teachers lack the skills to know what they should do to get the best out of disadvantaged pupils. In response to very recent training, some have started using seating plans but are yet unsure of how to use them effectively to raise achievement for disadvantaged pupils. In many lessons visited by inspectors, disadvantaged pupils were not challenged and were often passive in lessons.
- The feedback that pupils receive on their work, either oral or written, does not fully enable them to know what they should do to improve. This leads to them making slow progress.
- There are some strengths in teaching. In humanities, pupils tend to be well motivated. Teachers use their good knowledge of pupils to ensure that work is neither too difficult nor too easy. Challenge is high and therefore pupils' attitudes to learning are good.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet and mobile phones. Older pupils had a good understanding of such issues as identity theft to prepare them well for any issues they may encounter in adulthood. The school has a good system to ensure that internet use in the school is safe and secure for them to use.
- Pupils take on responsibilities willingly, for example in the very active on-site youth club at lunchtime, helping to set up for band practice and organising games for younger pupils at lunchtime.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness are good. Pupils say that they fully embrace cultures, beliefs and lifestyles other than their own.
- Pupils say they feel confident that staff will deal effectively with any reports they make of bullying or harassment.
- Assemblies and tutorials, sometimes with police and health services visitors, have helped pupils to understand the threats posed by child sexual exploitation.
- Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire reported that their children feel safe in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Between lessons, pupils are sometimes slow to get to their next lesson. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, the site is reasonably litter-free. Pupils' conduct is good around the school. They wear their uniform proudly and are polite to each other and to adults.
- In lessons, pupils are usually quiet and compliant with teachers' requests for good behaviour. Their attitudes to learning are not good because the work that teachers set them is often not sufficiently challenging.
- Overall, attendance is comparable with national figures, as is the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. However, too many disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are persistently absent, and their numbers have grown over the past three years.
- Moreover, while fixed-term exclusion rates are average overall, too many disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive them.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Since the last inspection, outcomes for pupils have not improved. For some groups of pupils they have deteriorated significantly. Disadvantaged pupils, including those that are most able, underachieve across a range of subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils make weak progress because the work they do is too simple, the curriculum does not build on what pupils can already do, assessment information does not inform teachers' planning and pupils have little or no opportunity to apply their mathematics skills to solve problems. Consequently, too many pupils of all abilities underachieve in mathematics.
- There are wide differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others nationally, and these are not diminishing. Disadvantaged pupils underachieve mainly because of poor teaching across all subjects but also because, for many, the curriculum does not allow them to opt for enough subjects. In turn, this means that disadvantaged pupils have limited choices after Year 11.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make expected progress from their different starting points, although this varies depending on their particular type of special educational need.
- Those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan make better progress than others. Those who have social, emotional or mental health difficulties make less progress because they are more likely to be persistent absentees.
- Those pupils who need to catch up make weak progress, particularly in mathematics. The interventions they follow are not rigorously checked to see if they working, so many continue on these interventions without making progress.
- The most able Year 11 pupils made good progress in 2015 and 2016 in both English and mathematics. Their progress was close to or above that of the most able nationally. However, disadvantaged most-able pupils do not make sufficient progress when compared to others nationally with the same starting points. Moreover, inspection evidence indicates that for pupils currently in the school, the low levels of challenge mean that the most able disadvantaged could achieve more.

- The pupils that were heard reading did so reasonably fluently and with expression. Pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 felt that the school did help them to improve their reading if they had difficulties. However, pupils from Year 9 onwards felt that they had fewer interventions to help them catch up with their peers.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- From their different starting points at the end of Year 11, learners make expected progress at both AS level and A level.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form varies. In too many lessons, the pace of learning is too slow, which limits the challenge and lowers expectations of what learners can achieve. Overall, however, the quality of teaching is better than that found the main school.
- Learners' attitudes to learning are excellent. They are thoughtful, considerate and mature in their attitudes.
- The majority of learners participate in work shadowing and other useful activities such as volunteering to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with their mathematics. However, a significant number of learners do not take part in high-quality work experience.
- Careers guidance in the sixth form is strong. Learners appreciate the support they receive with writing university applications and choosing appropriate courses.
- The programmes in place to develop personal, social and employability skills are not fully thought through by leaders. All learners take a personal finance course in Year 12, but aside from this the programmes lack breadth and coherence.
- Learners who have not obtained a good grade in English or mathematics at GCSE achieve well. All students who resat the examinations in 2016 were successful.
- The majority of learners are retained on courses during the sixth form and the drop-out rate is low. Most are successful in their applications to universities or to employment.
- Leadership of the sixth form lacks sharpness in identifying where provision could be better and taking action to improve it, for example the tutorial programme and ensuring that all pupils take part in high-quality work experience.

School details

Unique reference number	121664
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10019740

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	972
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	159
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Neil Hawkins
Headteacher	Phil Benaiges
Telephone number	01347821451
Website	http://www.easingwold.n-yorks.sch.uk/
Email address	p.benaiges@easingwold.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the school's values and ethos, the curriculum and pupil premium strategy on its website.
- The school is receiving support from the Yorkshire Teaching Schools Alliance.
- The school collaborates with Thirsk High School and Sixth Form College and Boroughbridge High School for 16 to 19 provision.
- The school currently does not use external providers to support its curriculum. In the academic year 2015/16, Askham Bryan College was used as an external provider.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- At the time of the inspection, the chair of governors had been in post for one day.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed various lessons. An inspector looked at the work of disadvantaged pupils across a range of subjects. Some of these activities were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Various pupils were heard reading.
- Inspectors met with three groups of students, senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 137 responses that had been submitted to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including school improvement plans, assessment records, various case studies relating to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Patricia Head	Ofsted Inspector
John McNally	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Muxworthy	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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