

George Pindar School

Moor Lane, Eastfield, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO11 3LW

Inspection dates

22–23 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Over time, pupils do not make the progress they should in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. Pupils' current progress remains weak, particularly for those with low starting points.
- Teaching is too variable in quality. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are often too low. The work set is not adjusted well enough to reflect pupils' varying needs and abilities.
- Pupils' behaviour is inadequate and requires urgent improvement. Too many pupils are excluded from school, especially disadvantaged pupils. Attendance is consistently low.
- Disadvantaged pupils underachieve. The use of additional government funding for these pupils has not improved their learning, behaviour or attendance well enough.
- In the past, leadership and governance has failed to bring about the necessary improvement. Consequently, the school's performance declined.
- Leaders do not use the information gathered from their checks on teaching to identify where teachers need to improve their knowledge and skills. The good teaching that exists in the school is not effectively shared among staff to promote wider improvement.
- The skills of some middle leaders in improving teaching, learning and assessment in their subjects are still developing.
- Recent improvements in the management of teacher performance have not had time to impact fully on pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the school. He is taking effective steps to get the school on track. He is increasingly well supported by recently appointed senior and middle leaders.
- Governors now have a better understanding of the school's performance. This, coupled with the improved support from the local authority, is helping them to support and challenge school leaders more effectively.
- The range of extra-curricular activities on offer is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy and participate in a wide range of activities.
- Pupils receive extensive careers advice and guidance. As a result, every pupil at the end of Year 11 in 2016 went on to employment, training or further education.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe.

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?

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, so that it is at least consistently good across all subjects and leads to improved outcomes, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve and ensuring that learning proceeds at a good pace
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information effectively to plan for pupils' different starting points, and that planning is adjusted, if pupils are not making at least good progress
 - sharing more effectively the good practice in teaching that exists in the school.
- Urgently improve the behaviour of pupils by ensuring that:
 - there is a rapid improvement in pupils' attendance, especially for the disadvantaged pupils
 - there is a large reduction in the number of exclusions, especially for the disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and governors so that they can secure rapid and sustained improvement to teaching and outcomes for pupils by:
 - analysing the information gathered from the recent more rigorous monitoring of teaching to identify where staff need extra training to improve their knowledge and skills, so that pupils can make better progress
 - continuing to develop the skills of middle leaders, so that they are consistently using the information from monitoring to improve teaching, learning and assessment in their subjects
 - ensuring that the new performance management processes are rigorous and effective
 - ensuring that members of the governing body act promptly on the findings of the recent local authority review of governance.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium 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

- Since the last inspection, leaders and governors have not focused sufficiently on securing the good progress of pupils. The local authority was also slow to take action. As a result, standards declined.
- The new headteacher has a clear and ambitious vision for the school's rapid and successful improvement. He is well supported by the new leadership team and a rapidly developing team of middle leaders. Pupils talk already of the positive impact of his leadership. They particularly like the new emphasis on rewards in addition to sanctions in the behaviour management system.
- Up to September 2016, leaders were too generous in their evaluation of the school's performance. Senior and middle leaders did not check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress effectively. They did not have high enough expectations or take swift enough action to eradicate poor teaching and weak outcomes.
- Leaders have not been successful in tackling issues of attendance and behaviour. Attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils, is well below the national average, despite some very recent small improvements. Similarly, the number of exclusions, both permanent and fixed-term, is too high and disadvantaged pupils are excluded more often than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Historically, leaders' use of the additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils has not been effective. Current leaders are aware of this and there have been some improvements since September 2016. However, prior to that leaders have not checked the impact of their actions robustly enough.
- The new headteacher was quick to see that the objectives set under the former performance management system were not serving to improve standards. He has made the process more rigorous and linked teachers' objectives to school priorities. Middle leaders are enthusiastic about the changes and recognise early impact from the changes.
- Current leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are tackling the weaknesses identified in a systematic way. They have introduced more rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and now use assessment information more effectively. Regular meetings with middle leaders are used to pinpoint which pupils are underachieving. As a result, middle leaders put into place action plans for individual pupils.
- Leaders have introduced a more rigorous range of measures to check the precision of assessment at key stage 4. These include more regular testing and external checks on the school's assessments to confirm their accuracy. This approach is still developing but is already making a difference.
- The new leadership team has reviewed the curriculum and plans are in place for the changes to be implemented in September 2017. Leaders are committed to keeping a broad, balanced curriculum, including the performing and visual arts. However, they do see the need to increase time for English. Leaders' curriculum review also highlighted

the need for personal, social and health education to be delivered across all year groups for one hour per week.

- In planning the curriculum, leaders are aware of their responsibility to develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Presently there is a well-planned programme delivered in cultural studies, other timetabled lessons and in form time. The strong programme of extra-curricular activities enhances this provision. During the inspection, for example, inspectors observed a lesson where pupils were enthusiastically researching whether certain celebrities would go to heaven or hell based on Christian beliefs and another where the focus was extremism and recent terrorist attacks. Pupils praised the cultural and social benefits of their involvement in school productions.
- The local authority is now providing more effective support. The work with governors following on from the review of governance and the school's involvement in the local authority's project focusing on provision for disadvantaged pupils are just two examples.
- Parental views on leadership and management are mixed. A number of parents comment on the positive changes taking place since September 2016 and the supportive pastoral care systems. Other parents are critical of the quality of teaching and behaviour and lament the disappointing examination results that their children achieved.
- Leaders have used funding for special educational needs to identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. The experienced special educational needs coordinator ensures that appropriate support is put in place for these pupils. However, the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is inconsistent because of the variability of the quality of teaching in different subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been diligent enough over time in holding leaders to account for pupils' underachievement and the performance of staff. Since September 2016, there has been a review of governance by the local authority. This highlighted several shortcomings. Governors have accepted this report and are acting upon the recommendations. As a result, governors now have a more realistic picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors know how the pupil premium funding is being used but they have failed to scrutinise whether it is making enough difference to the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

The governors know that the 2016 GCSE results were not good enough, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and they realise that their view of the quality of teaching in the school has been too generous. This awareness, linked with continuing support from the local authority, puts governors in a better place to support and challenge the new leadership team.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a good understanding of procedures because they have regular training. They look out for pupils who may be at risk. Leaders work with local agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Record-keeping shows that referrals to other agencies are followed up in a robust manner. The local authority supports school leaders well on safeguarding matters.
- Leaders make appropriate checks on adults who are working in the school. Detailed records of these checks are maintained.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep safe and the risks which might affect them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teaching over time has failed to meet the varying needs of pupils. As a result, progress has been inadequate, particularly for key groups of pupils such as the disadvantaged.
- The quality of teaching is improving, but remains extremely variable across and within subjects. Recent approaches to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are still in their early stages.
- Middle leaders are now monitoring the progress of pupils more effectively and this is leading to more effective teaching in English, mathematics and science. However, the improvements are not consistent across the English faculty. As a result, some groups of pupils are still making inadequate progress in this key subject. It is an improving picture in mathematics, but the new policies are not firmly embedded and this leads to inconsistencies.
- A close scrutiny of pupils' workbooks in science showed the new assessment policy is starting to have a positive impact. However, teachers do not provide enough challenge for the most able pupils. There was also evidence of work being left unfinished, particularly by lower-ability pupils.
- Across subjects, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Planning does not always take into account the pupils' starting points and, as a result, some of the work is not challenging enough for some pupils and not well understood by others.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers have high expectations and explain clearly what they want pupils to learn. In a drama lesson, for example, a lower-ability group responded extremely well to the challenges set by their teacher. In an art lesson, the teachers' high aspirations for the class generated high levels of motivation and concentration by all pupils. Their workbooks showed that they had developed a good knowledge of techniques from a range of contemporary artists.
- Pupils understand how the school is developing their reading and in conversation with them a strong picture emerges of the encouragement of reading and development of reading skills. High-ability pupils read with fluency and meaning and low-ability pupils read with adequate fluency and have the techniques to help them overcome any difficulties they come across in their reading.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Leaders' work in this area has had a positive effect on the majority of pupils, but there is still a minority who lack the self-discipline to attend school regularly and follow the school rules.
- Leaders have worked hard to establish an ethos of respect, trust and tolerance. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults are positive.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying and feel that school staff deal effectively with the few incidents which occur. The effective curriculum for personal development has ensured that pupils do not tolerate any racism or homophobia.
- Pupils say that there is always an adult they can talk to if they need support. They are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe online and in the community because of the work the school does to help them understand and respond to risks to their safety.
- Pupils appreciate the valuable advice they receive throughout the school to help them make good choices in their key stage 4 options and for what they do after GCSE. As a result of this effective guidance, in 2016 every pupil who left at the end Year 11 went on to further education, employment or training.
- The extra-curricular activities are a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy and participate in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities, which contribute well to their personal development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Some pupils exhibit poor conduct both in classrooms and around school. As a consequence, over time incidents of exclusion have been high. Despite the efforts of leaders, they remain at a level significantly above the national average.
- For the last three years, attendance has been low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Despite some very recent small improvements, attendance remains significantly below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent remains very high and disadvantaged pupils are more likely to be persistently absent than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Since September 2016, leaders have established an alternative centre within school to reintegrate pupils after exclusion and work with those at risk of being excluded. The project is very much in its infancy and to date it has had little impact on the level of exclusions.
- A very small number of pupils over time have been educated off the school site. There are good links with the off-site provider and pupils engage with this provision effectively. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that these pupils remain safe.

- Many pupils in the school make a positive contribution to their learning and behave appropriately. They enjoy learning when they receive good teaching, and very positive relationships exist between these pupils and their teachers.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Over time, weak teaching has led to inadequate progress across a range of subjects including English, mathematics and science.
- Progress overall for the Year 11 pupils who left the school in 2016 was significantly below average. Too many pupils did not make the progress they should have. Pupils made significantly less progress than their peers nationally with the same starting points in humanities, science and modern foreign languages.
- The 2016, GCSE results also showed considerable differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. This underachievement was most acute in English, mathematics, science and humanities, where the performance of the disadvantaged pupils was in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally. Weak teaching, high levels of absence, exceptionally high rates of exclusion and ineffective use of the pupil premium funding to support learning and progress all contributed to this serious underachievement.
- The new headteacher's quick grasp of the weaknesses and the changes he has made so promptly are starting to have an impact. Progress of current pupils in mathematics, science and humanities is more rapid. However, a close scrutiny of pupils' workbooks in humanities showed that the improvements are less clear with lower ability pupils. The work set for these pupils is often not well matched to their needs and there are numerous examples of unfinished work. Similarly, in science, there is evidence that teachers are not setting appropriately challenging work for the most able.
- The varying quality of teaching within the English faculty is leading to big differences in the rates of progress of different teaching groups. Across both key stages, some groups are making more rapid progress, but some classes are making insufficient progress.
- Rates of progress in modern foreign languages vary according to the language. Progress in German is more rapid, but pupils in French are not making adequate progress.
- Since September 2016, leaders have put a real emphasis on the progress of disadvantaged pupils and this is starting to have an impact. Across subjects, disadvantaged pupils are starting to make more rapid progress. However, this is not seen consistently in English. Leaders are aware that this improvement is long overdue and that the aim must be for disadvantaged pupils to make progress in line with other pupils nationally with the same starting points.
- In 2016, the most able made progress broadly in line with the national average, but the most able girls made better progress than the boys. However, teaching still does not always provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils, preventing them from making more rapid progress.

School details

Unique reference number	121674
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10032005

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	625
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Fox
Headteacher	Julian Leader
Telephone number	01723 582194
Website	http://gps.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	admin@gps.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average.
- The school uses alternative provision for a very small number of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average.
- A lower-than-average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs support is higher than the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2016. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2017. A number of middle leaders are new in post.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning in parts of lessons, with seven sessions observed with senior leaders.
- Throughout the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both informally and formally, about their learning and safety.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and scrutinised samples of work in pupils' books. Middle leaders accompanied inspectors in scrutinising English, mathematics, science and humanities books.
- The lead inspector held meetings with four governors and a representative of the local authority. An inspector held a telephone conversation with the manager of the off-site provision. Inspectors also held meetings with senior and middle leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school, the school improvement plan, records of local authority visits including their review of governance and minutes of governing body meetings. They also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 42 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, and 50 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Pridding, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Welford	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Swallow	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Rogers	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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