

# Longbenton High School

Hailsham Avenue, Longbenton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE12 8ER

## Inspection dates

13–14 November 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress pupils make in the school is inconsistent and not good across a range of subjects, including mathematics and English.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Planned work does not meet the needs of all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and all those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in the main school.
- Expectations of what pupils should produce are not consistently high enough. Consequently, pupils' presentation and attitudes to learning vary and are not good.
- Assessment is not used consistently well. Work set for pupils is not challenging them to make good progress. Questioning is not consistently effective in checking pupils' understanding.
- Over time, leaders, including governors, have not ensured that the school's curriculum leads to good outcomes for pupils. Writing skills are not promoted well.
- Over time, government funding for disadvantaged pupils has not been used well to support good learning, behaviour and attendance for these pupils.
- Subject leaders' skills in assessing pupils' progress are inconsistent. They, and senior leaders, have not ensured that the school's assessment policy is used consistently. This contributes to inconsistent outcomes for pupils.
- Students' progress fluctuates across courses and is not consistently good in the sixth form.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and new senior leadership team have identified the areas that need to be developed, and improvements are occurring.
- Staff are clear about the school's priorities and are beginning to address them. There is capacity for the school to improve further.
- The SEN resource area for autism, the Melrose Centre, provides good support for pupils.
- Sixth-form students are good role models for others and support younger students well.
- Pupils are given high-quality careers advice, which helps them to raise their aspirations.
- Governors are ambitious for pupils and know the school well. They are now challenging and supporting leaders to make improvements.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, to enable all groups of pupils to achieve well, by ensuring that:
  - assessment information is used skilfully to set work that is appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils
  - skilful questioning is used consistently well to check pupils' learning and deepen their understanding
  - pupils constantly strive to improve the quality of their work
  - teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and presenting are consistently high
  - pupils' writing, spelling and English grammar skills are enhanced across a wide range of subjects to enable them to write well and at length.
- Improve students' progress in the sixth form so it is consistently good across courses.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare to be at least good by ensuring that:
  - pupils concentrate fully and develop good attitudes to learning
  - pupils take pride in their work, presenting it to the highest standard
  - absence and persistent absenteeism of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND is reduced to average or below average
  - exclusions for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are reduced to average or below average.
- Improve the impact of leaders, managers and governors by making sure that:
  - teachers are skilled in meeting the needs of all groups of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with SEN support in the main school
  - effective use is made of the pupil premium funding to ensure learning and behaviour, for eligible pupils, are at least good
  - subject leaders are skilled and accurate in checking the progress of all groups of pupils to make sure that it is at least consistently good
  - teachers use the school's assessment policy consistently, leading to good progress for pupils
  - the curriculum leads to pupils making good progress and achieving good writing skills
  - professional development results in good subject leadership and good teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Over time, inconsistencies in leadership have resulted in the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and their personal development behaviour and welfare requiring improvement. Consequently, leadership and management require improvement.
- The headteacher has established a secure senior leadership team over the past two years, and it is having a positive effect on improving the school. Senior leaders have been successful in stopping a decline in pupils' outcomes and have taken strong action to improve the quality of teaching and other aspects of the school. Although not good overall, leadership is exhibiting clear capacity to improve the school further.
- Leaders and governors have established a set of clear key priorities for improving the effectiveness of the school. Systematic professional development is focusing well on the priorities, and staff are clear about what is expected of them. Although improvements are occurring, professional development has not resulted in teaching and leadership being good currently.
- There are subject leaders who are using a wide range of information to determine pupils' progress accurately and to hold teachers to account for their work. However, some subject leaders have not yet honed their skills sufficiently to ensure good teaching in their subjects. Leadership has not been thorough to ensure that the school's assessment policy is used well enough to improve pupils' progress to be good.
- Senior leaders make sure that there is a wide range of subjects for pupils to study. They review and adapt the curriculum choice for pupils. Although improving, the curriculum has not led to good progress for pupils. Writing skills are not developed well enough across subjects.
- Leaders promote careers education and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. Through assemblies, tutor time and a wide range of subjects, pupils develop a clear understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Over time, additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils has not been used successfully to overcome barriers to learning for these pupils. In the past year, there are signs that the funding is having a better effect on learning and attendance, but the provision for these pupils has not led to good outcomes and behaviour. Some funding is allocated to subsidise trips and visits so that pupils can participate fully in the life of the school. A recent review of pupil premium funding has helped to focus plans more clearly on the individual needs of these pupils.
- Allocated funding for pupils with SEND is used very effectively to support the work of the Melrose Centre and pupils who have an education, health and care plan. For other pupils with SEN support in the main school, provision is not resulting in strong progress across the curriculum.
- A bespoke training programme and coaching support is in place for newly qualified teachers. This is supporting the development of their teaching skills well. Good links with local universities help with recruitment of new staff.

- The local authority provides training for staff and leadership, support to strengthen subjects and training for governors. This work has assisted with the recent improvements in the school.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors know the strengths and areas for development of the school well and have a good range of skills. In their meetings, governors are highly focused on checking the school's key priorities to ensure that improvement is occurring.
- Increased challenge from governors has supported some of the improvements that were made in pupils' progress in the past year. Governors know the school should be performing better and are holding leaders, including subject leaders, to account fully for their work.
- Governors keep a close eye on additional funding such as pupil premium funding, Year 7 catch-up funding and funding for those pupils with SEND. They commissioned a review of the pupil premium funding in December 2017. As a result, barriers to learning for these pupils are being tackled more successfully than in the past. Governors are clear about the variations in support and progress between pupils with SEND in the Melrose Centre and other SEN pupils. They are taking steps to resolve this so that all have good support.
- Governors have used local authority training well over the past two years to increase their effectiveness. Some governors are new to their role and have benefited well from an induction programme and training. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are eager for all groups of pupils to do well.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that pupils, including those at off-site provision, are safe and protected from harm. There is a clear ethos across the school that sets the safeguarding of pupils as a priority. Child protection training for staff and governors means that they are knowledgeable and up to date in terms of the most recent guidance and legislation.
- Staff are vigilant and know what to do should they have any concerns about pupils' welfare. The school works appropriately with external agencies and ensures that safeguarding matters are followed up.
- Governors make sure that all adults on the school site are checked to confirm that they are fit to work with pupils. The school's central register of these checks is well kept. Governors are diligent in checking the central register and meeting the designated safeguarding leader to ensure that systems and processes are effective.

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

### **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school and requires improvement.

- Work set is not consistently well planned to meet the varying needs of all groups of pupils. Assessment information about pupils' learning and their needs is not used well to plan and ensure good progress. This slows the progress of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with SEN support in the main school.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high and the pitch of work does not precisely meet the abilities of pupils. Teachers do not assess clearly when greater challenge is needed for pupils to make faster gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils' presentation and accuracy in presenting work varies across subjects and classes as teachers' expectations are inconsistent.
- Questioning varies and is not used well enough to measure how much pupils have learned and to deepen their knowledge and understanding. There are times when pupils' short responses lack depth of understanding and some pupils are not engaged and encouraged to answer. Inspectors noted good examples of questioning. For example, pupils in design technology responded to questions in depth and showed a clear understanding of how to use tools safely and efficiently.
- An analysis of current pupils' work by inspectors showed that work can be too easy and not challenging enough. It showed that the school's assessment and feedback policy is not used consistently across subjects to enable pupils to make good progress. Inspectors' analysis of work showed that English grammar, punctuation and spelling is not developing well. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length and show a depth of understanding of what is being learned.
- In the Melrose Centre, pupils' work is well matched to their needs because support plans are used well to plan appropriate work. As a result, pupils' learning is developing well, although writing skills are not consistently good.
- There are good examples of teachers using skilful questioning, setting challenging work and expecting pupils to produce high-quality work. This results in pupils rising to the challenge and making good progress. Senior leaders have focused on strengthening teaching across the school and there are signs that it is improving.
- Good relationships exist between pupils and staff and lessons flow smoothly.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils do not consistently take enough pride in their work to ensure good progress. There are examples of neat presentation, accurate work and pupils' detailed responses to improve their work. However, there is too much variation across and within classes.
- Most pupils are confident, well-mannered and are very positive about the school. Assemblies, visitors to school and the school's personal and social development programme promote a tolerance and respect for others. Equality and diversity are promoted well, as is democracy. Pupils participate in electing their school council and know that they are listened to by staff and leaders.

- Pupils say that they are safe. Most pupils say that they enjoy school. Pupils are very confident that staff deal with bullying incidents swiftly and very effectively. School records indicate there are very few incidents of bullying. Pupils are clear about how to keep safe when using the internet. There are good links with off-site providers to make sure pupils are safe and are benefiting well from the provision.
- The school is a calm and orderly place to be. There are well-organised systems and routines that pupils understand clearly. Pupils are punctual to lessons and make their way to lessons quickly and quietly. Pupils are keen to contribute to charity work and collect money to support a link school in Kenya.
- Pupils say 'staff are kind'. There are good systems in place to support and help pupils' emotional well-being. Almost all parents responding to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, indicated that their children are well-cared for and are happy at school.
- Careers advice and guidance is given to all year groups. The school has a well-organised programme of careers education and provides one week's work experience to Year 10 pupils. Visits from university staff and employers successfully promote pupils' continuity in education or employment with training.
- The needs of the pupils in the Melrose Centre are well met by staff. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. The provision is held in high regard by parents.
- Staff and parents are confident that pupils are kept safe.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons varies according to the quality of teaching they receive. Most of the time, pupils listen well and are attentive, although they can lose concentration when the pace of learning slows and work set is not well-pitched to their abilities.
- Leaders' actions have resulted in pupils' attendance improving to broadly average overall. However, absence for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND remains above average, with too many regularly absent.
- Over the past two years, exclusions from school have been broadly average, although above average for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.
- The school's new behaviour system focuses well on using rewards to support positive behaviour. There has been staff training and consistent use of strategies with mentoring support for those pupils whose behaviour can be challenging. As a result, exclusions since the start of September have reduced in comparison to the same period of time last year, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Regular checks and home visits are made to ensure that pupils are safe and attend more regularly.
- Usually, pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day and do what is expected of them. They socialise well together at breaktime and lunchtime.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils are not making good progress, because work set by teachers is not appropriately challenging and well-matched to their needs. As a result, current outcomes require improvement.
- Published information for those pupils leaving school at the end of Year 11 shows that overall progress has been below average and not improving quickly. In particular, the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEN support in the main school has been slow. From broadly average starting points, attainment is below average overall.
- New leadership has assisted the headteacher well in stemming the decline in pupils' progress at the end of key stage 4. In 2018, pupils' progress, including progress for disadvantaged pupils, improved quickly in a range of subjects and is closer to average but still below. However, overall progress in English and mathematics did not improve strongly and remained below average, especially for disadvantaged pupils. School information shows that disadvantaged pupils made above average progress in drama and child care in 2018. Differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally diminished from 2017 to 2018 but still remained wide.
- Those pupils with SEND who are supported in the Melrose Centre and have education, health and care plans make good progress. Other pupils with SEND make less than average progress. Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching for these pupils is skilful and meets their needs across the school.
- Current pupils' work shows progress is improving across a range of subjects, including mathematics and in some English work. However, progress is still inconsistent overall. Examples of increased challenge were seen in some mathematics and history work, and showed increasing progress. However, variable challenge is still evident and leads to progress that requires improvement to be good.
- There is a very small proportion of pupils attending off-site provision in key stage 3 and in key stage 4. The school checks the progress and attendance of these pupils regularly. Clear gains in attendance are resulting in improvements in learning.
- Pupils eligible for support through the Year 7 catch-up funding are making good gains in reading, which has been the main focus for these pupils. Gains in mathematics are also evident.
- Reading is promoted well by the school with regular reading at the start of English lessons. Younger pupils said how much they enjoy using computer systems that test their understanding of what they are reading.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## Requires improvement

- Students' progress has not been consistently good across academic courses and has varied over the past three years.
- Leadership has recognised the differences in progress in academic courses. They have recognised that the progress of the small number of students following vocational courses needed improving. Leaders have introduced more thorough checking of

teaching and students' progress. This is beginning to have an effect and students' progress is improving.

- There is some very effective teaching in the sixth form where students benefit from teachers' strong subject knowledge, high expectations and skilful questioning. As a result, learners know what is required of them and develop their work to a high standard.
- There are very few pupils entering the sixth form without a good GCSE grade in English and/or mathematics. These pupils are given good support to improve GCSE grades in preparation for further studies after the sixth form.
- Good, impartial careers advice helps students to choose suitable courses in the sixth form that match their needs and aspirations. This has helped to increase retention on courses to be at least average. The school has good links with local universities, and former students who are now attending universities provide additional advice on life at university, finance and university applications. An above average proportion of students go on to higher education while others move on to employment with training.
- Students benefit very well from work experience and a wide range of enrichment opportunities in school and in the local community. They help younger pupils with learning and sport and are good role models for pupils.
- Students receive good advice in the sixth form and take part in a range of activities to prepare them for life after the sixth form. They know how to keep themselves safe and feel well-supported by staff. Students are very positive about their experiences in the sixth form. Behaviour is excellent and they are proud to be members of the sixth form.



## School details

Unique reference number	108645
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	10052887

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 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	798
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Palmerley
Headteacher	Paul Quinn
Telephone number	0191 218 9500
Website	<a href="http://www.longbenton.org.uk">www.longbenton.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:lhs@lblearning.com">lhs@lblearning.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	6 May 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average. One in three pupils is disadvantaged.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. Exceptionally few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for SEND is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average.

- The school has additionally resourced provision, The Melrose Centre, for 25 pupils with autism and associated learning difficulties.
- The school collaborates with a local school, George Stephenson High School, in delivering its sixth-form provision.
- The school uses two alternative off-site providers for a very small number of key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils. They are Moorbridge Pupil Referral Unit and PALS.
- There have been significant changes in leadership and governance since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed on 1 September 2015. However, there has been considerable flux in leadership, with significant change in both senior and middle leadership. There has been significant change in teaching staff since the previous inspection. Since September 2018, there has been a new chair and vice chair of the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning throughout the school, some jointly with senior leaders.
- During the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils and students, both individually and in groups, about learning and safety.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils reading.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing body and six other governors. An inspector held a meeting with the school's improvement adviser from the local authority. An inspector held a telephone conversation with one of the school's off-site providers.
- Inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plans, a number of school policies and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed the 238 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents (Parent View). They also analysed the 67 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Jim McGrath, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Pridding	Ofsted Inspector
Melanie Kane	Ofsted Inspector
Shelley Heseltine	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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