

# York High School

Cornlands Road, York, North Yorkshire YO24 3WZ

## Inspection dates

11–12 January 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- The school did not meet the government's minimum standards for pupils' achievement and progress in 2015. Leaders confirm that this is also likely to be the case for 2016.
- York High is a coasting school. Year 11 pupils have failed to reach their potential over a three-year period.
- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has not improved fast enough. Weak teaching has resulted in pupils' inadequate progress between Years 7 and 11, particularly in science and modern foreign languages.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what all pupils, but especially the most able, can achieve.
- Disadvantaged pupils make much less progress than they should. Teachers do not identify and address gaps in their learning with sufficient rigour.
- The progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is inconsistent across year groups and subjects.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are accurate and robust in all subject areas.
- Attendance, although improving, is still too low for disadvantaged pupils. Too many pupils are persistently absent from school.
- Subject leadership, identified at the school's previous inspection as an area for improvement, remains weak.
- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. They have not developed a thirst for learning and either switch off or talk among themselves when lessons are not interesting and engaging.
- Leaders, including governors, have not acted urgently enough to improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are fully equipped to succeed in their next stage of education or employment.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are very positive about the school's work to help them understand diversity and value individual differences.
- The 'aspiration' leader ensures that careers information, advice and guidance are strong.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are confident in adults' ability to tackle the rare instances of bullying. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

## Full report

In accordance with sections 44(1) and 13(3) 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good in order to improve the progress made and the standards reached by all groups of pupils by:
  - using accurate assessment information consistently to inform teachers' planning for pupils' progress
  - delivering teaching in all subject areas that is carefully matched to the needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring that teachers have the very highest expectations of all pupils, including the most able and most-able disadvantaged
  - developing teachers' questioning skills further in order to probe pupils' understanding, extend their thinking and deepen their learning
  - providing interesting and engaging learning tasks consistently, which capture pupils' interest so their attention and commitment do not wane.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - developing assessment procedures further to ensure that the information in the school's assessment management system is accurate and robust for every pupil in every subject
  - strongly supporting and challenging the work of subject leaders in overcoming the impact of weak teaching over time on pupils' achievement, particularly in science and modern foreign languages
  - using additional funding more effectively to improve quickly the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 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.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders took some action to stem the decline in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment during the last academic year, for example in English. However, the quality of teaching in some subjects is not good enough and is inadequate in the key curriculum area of science.
- Middle leadership, which is the leadership of subjects at York High School, is not effective. Many subject leaders are relatively new to post and, although enthusiastic, have not yet developed the essential skills required to ensure sustained and rapid improvement. Subject leaders, when checking pupils' workbooks during the inspection, evaluated teachers' compliance with the school's marking policy, rather than the progress made by pupils.
- The leaders' decision to make it compulsory for all pupils to follow a GCSE course in modern foreign languages led to some disengagement and very low success rates. Work has begun to address this issue and implement more appropriate pathways for pupils with low prior attainment.
- Leaders have not spent the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. In 2016, using the new Progress 8 measure, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils from their starting points in Year 7 to the end of key stage 4 was in the bottom 10% of all pupils nationally. In addition, using the overall Attainment 8 measure, their attainment was almost one GCSE grade below other pupils nationally.
- The coordinator for special educational needs has identified clear priorities for improvement. Initial work with some subject leaders is beginning to bear fruit. For example, Year 7 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress in mathematics due to improved provision for their needs. This improved curriculum provision is not consistent across the school.
- Leaders' decision to increase the time allocation for English and mathematics has proved beneficial, as have the extra teaching sessions for pupils with low prior attainment. The proportion of pupils who achieved a GCSE A\* to C in English and mathematics increased from 29% in 2015 to 50% in 2016.
- In response to poor results in 2015, leaders remodelled the school's senior leadership structure and learning leader teams. Learning leaders have responsibility for a number of subjects and report directly to senior leaders. They have had some impact in subject areas such as English.
- Leaders have had some success in their use of the literacy and numeracy catch-up premium. In 2016, the proportion of Year 7 pupils who had not reached the expected standard in English or mathematics by the end of their first year of secondary schooling reduced by half.
- At the request of senior leaders, York local authority responded quickly following the poor GCSE results in 2015 and commissioned support for the school from a local teaching school alliance. This support centred upon using data to accelerate progress. As a result, persistent problems with the school's tracking data are beginning to diminish. However, in some subject areas such as modern foreign languages, teachers'

predictions of pupils' 2016 GCSE results were inaccurate by at least one grade.

## Governance of the school

- In the past, governors have been too slow to challenge leaders to raise standards. More recently, the governing body, with the support of the local authority, recruited additional governors with the requisite skills and accepted that the school was not doing well enough.
- Further actions, including the restructuring of committees to allow governors to question the impact of actions undertaken by members of the senior leadership team more rigorously, are proving to be beneficial. For example, governors now have a better understanding of published assessment information. They challenge senior leaders more effectively about the impact of actions undertaken in relation to money spent.
- Governors understand the link between performance and pay progression. Staff do not make progress up the school's pay scale as a matter of course. Governors monitor the impact of teachers' support plans.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding policies, procedures and training are in place so that all staff know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' welfare.
- The school's record of recruitment checks is fully compliant.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Staff, following the lead of the student welfare officer, 'go the extra mile' for vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Pupils feel safe in school.
- The governor with responsibility for safeguarding is highly involved with the school and meets with senior leaders on a fortnightly basis. The governor talked to a group of pupils about issues such as sexting, staying safe online and bullying during the most recent audit of safeguarding. As a result, governors have a deep knowledge of pupils' awareness of staying safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- The quality of teaching over time is inadequate. Very few pupils make the progress overall that they should from their individual starting points.
- Over time, teaching has been inadequate in science, particularly in key stage 4. A parent expressed dissatisfaction that five different teachers taught her child in science during a GCSE year.
- There is a legacy of poor teaching in Years 10 and 11. For example, in English, a number of lower prior attaining pupils were unable to read words such as 'suffocating,' 'rogue' and 'conflicted'. They were unable to access the curriculum offer in English.

- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They do not use their knowledge of pupils' strengths and areas for development to plan work with just the right level of challenge to ensure rapid progress. Leaders carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work with inspectors and identified that some Year 11 pupils with average prior attainment produce written work of a Year 7 standard. Leaders identified that the lack of challenge for the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils is a particular area of concern.
- Pupils told inspectors that they repeat the same work too often. For example, in geography, pupils said they studied Rwanda in Years 7 and 8 and noticed no difference between the geographical content and level of difficulty between the two years.
- Teaching quality varies widely between and within subjects. Stronger teaching leads to better progress in subjects such as mathematics, religious education and graphics.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in lessons. They quietly enable pupils by providing an appropriate level of adult input. However, outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remain inconsistent across the school.
- In some lessons, especially in mathematics, teachers use questioning effectively to gauge pupils' progress and extend their learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Careers information, advice and guidance are strong. Close and effective working links with local work providers, colleges and sixth forms enable pupils to gain first-hand knowledge of available post-16 options. Pupils make informed choices. As a result, the overwhelming majority of older pupils pursue appropriate education, employment or training pathways once they have left the school.
- Parents recognise and appreciate the school's strong pastoral care and support for pupils. Staff use daily tutor time effectively to develop the 'whole pupil'. As a result, pupils have a deep understanding of diversity and individual differences. In 2016, the school won a Stonewall Youth Award in recognition of the work done by pupils to address the discrimination and bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Incidents of homophobic and other forms of bullying have decreased. Pupils are confident that staff deal with the occasional incidents of bullying robustly.
- The curriculum provides a range of activities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Provision in religious education is particularly strong, as evidenced by lessons on 'the power of prayer' that took place during the inspection.
- The very small number of pupils who attend off-site provision on a part-time basis are cared for well. Communication between the provision and the school is effective. Staff use clear procedures to check pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Over time, the number of pupils who are absent and persistently absent is well above average. More recently, attendance levels have risen because of work carried out with individual pupils and their families. However, disadvantaged pupils are still less likely to attend school than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Too many pupils have not developed independent learning skills and are overly reliant on teachers in lessons. For example, some pupils prefer to wait for a teacher to answer a vocabulary query rather than use the available English/Spanish dictionaries. These pupils do not show a real thirst for learning. Pupils exhibit low-level disruptive behaviours in lessons in which the work is too easy or the activities unengaging.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well around the school site. However, there are some instances of boisterous behaviour during lesson changeover time.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- The school did not meet the government's minimum standard for pupils' achievement and progress in 2015. Leaders confirm that this is also likely to be the case for 2016.
- The school's Year 11 performance data meets the government's 'coasting school' definition. Leaders, over a three-year period, have failed to ensure that Year 11 pupils meet their potential.
- In 2015 and 2016, the proportion of pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils, failed to make the progress that they should be making. This is because of high and inaccurate in-year assessment information, for example in science, history and modern foreign languages, together with poor teaching over time and teachers' low expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The school's own assessment information demonstrates that significant weaknesses still exist in a number of subjects. The school's predictions show that outcomes for Year 11 in science and modern foreign languages will be disappointing once again at the end of the current academic year.
- The progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is inconsistent across subjects and year groups. For example, leaders assess Year 9 pupils as making the expected progress in English. This expected progress is not evident across all subjects or year groups. The progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is usually comparable with in-school progress, which is well below the national average.
- Outcomes in key stage 3 are beginning to show signs of some improvement but remain inconsistent. For example, in science, the school's checks show that Year 8 made good progress during the autumn 2016 term, while Year 9 made disappointing progress.
- Leaders currently use the Year 7 catch-up premium wisely to provide closely targeted support in reading and mathematics. The proportion of Year 7 pupils who had not reached the expected standard in reading or mathematics reduced from 29% at the beginning of the 2016 academic year to 15% by the end of the year.

## School details

Unique reference number	133946
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10000834

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	747
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patricia Miller
Headteacher	David Ellis
Telephone number	01904 555 500
Website	<a href="http://www.yorkhighschool.co.uk/">www.yorkhighschool.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:reception@yorkhighschool.co.uk">reception@yorkhighschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	7–8 March 2012

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium funding on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for support through pupil premium funding, is above average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receiving support is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school has received support from a teaching school alliance since the beginning of

the last academic year.

- The school uses the Danesgate Community as an alternative provider.
- The school did not meet the government's minimum floor standards for secondary schools in 2015 and 2016.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons across a wide range subjects in all year groups. Observations on the first day of the inspection were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher with responsibility for teaching and learning.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their workbooks to find out more about how well they were learning. The lead inspector read with three Year 7 pupils and listened to Year 10 pupils reading during an English lesson.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. Formal meetings were held with a group of key stage 3 pupils and a group of key stage 4 pupils.
- Additional meetings were held with senior leaders, learning team leaders, subject leaders, governors, a representative of the local authority and the headteacher providing support on behalf of a local teaching school alliance.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school more broadly and looked at a range of documentation. This included policies and improvement plans relating to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' achievement, the curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, together with two surveys of parental views carried out by the school.

## Inspection team

Belita Scott, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Pridding	Ofsted Inspector
Fiona Dixon	Ofsted Inspector
Beverly Clubley	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Cook	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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