

Laurence Jackson School

Church Lane, Guisborough, North Yorkshire TS14 6RD

Inspection dates

22–23 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes are not yet good. Although progress is improving, pupils do not make consistently strong progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics requires improvement. Pupils' progress has been weaker over time and variability remains in current rates of progress.
- Despite some improvements, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils remains low.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has been significantly slower than that of other pupils nationally. Although some differences are diminishing, they are not doing so rapidly enough.
- In a number of subjects, middle-ability pupils make slower rates of progress than similar pupils nationally.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have strengthened leadership at many levels across the school. They have taken robust and positive action to improve the quality of teaching.
- Pupils are making good progress in key subjects, such as English, humanities and science. Good teaching in these areas leads to good rates of progress.
- Governors show a passionate commitment to the school and its ongoing success. They are strategically involved in its improvement and make regular visits to check standards and challenge leaders on progress.
- Pupils are polite and respectful young people who demonstrate a clear pride in their school and their wider achievements. Teachers are committed to their well-being and their personal development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve and sustain the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - building upon pupils' prior learning more rapidly and stretching middle-ability pupils more fully
 - spreading the good practice brought by new teachers and leaders
 - addressing any remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Improve the achievement and attendance of disadvantaged pupils by:
 - embedding new school-based interventions and ensuring a shared focus on academic progress and personal development
 - complementing intervention activities with a sustained focus by all teachers on the progress of disadvantaged pupils in the classroom
 - building further upon recent improvements in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Further improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - addressing remaining underachievement in some optional subjects
 - providing consistent challenge for middle- and lower-ability pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and his senior team have established a culture of high expectation that is spreading across the school. A sustained focus upon improving the quality of teaching and strengthening learning behaviours is contributing to improving outcomes in a number of subjects.
- Leaders have built a strong team ethos where all staff understand and support the school's goals. While challenge has increased, morale remains very positive as teachers feel supported and value their professional development, which is influencing improvements in teaching.
- Senior leaders and governors have challenged weaker teaching and leadership in recent years and as a result weaker teaching has been eradicated and the quality of leadership across departments has improved.
- The leadership of teaching and learning has significantly improved over the last two years. It is contributing to a cultural change that is influencing improvements in a number of subjects across the school.
- Leaders and governors have a clear view of the school's performance and can identify strengths and areas for improvement. They have tackled many areas for improvement although this has not yet resulted in consistently strong outcomes for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Middle leaders have a stronger role in spreading good practice and in holding their teams to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Their work has contributed to greater consistency in the quality of teaching, although feedback is not consistent across departments.
- An improving quality of teaching is evident in subjects such as English and science, where clear leadership, effective planning and convincing subject expertise are leading to much stronger rates of pupils' progress. Although improving, progress in mathematics has remained more variable and slower.
- Leaders have introduced new initiatives over the past year that are providing more focused support for disadvantaged pupils. There is evidence that progress is improving for the most able disadvantaged pupils. However, progress remains significantly weaker for middle- and lower-ability disadvantaged pupils, who constitute the majority of the cohort.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum where leaders strive to put pupils' interests ahead of simple performance-table measures. There is strong provision in many core subjects at key stage 4 but this is not matched in some optional subjects, where progress can be weaker. The increasing rigour evident in the key stage 4 curriculum is not consistently matched at key stage 3, particularly in the experiences of middle- and lower-ability pupils.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a cohesive programme that links themes in tutorial sessions and assemblies with issues covered in lessons. Pupils benefit from an extensive extra-curricular programme

involving sport, music, performing arts and drama. The school has the highest competitive sports participation programme in the local authority and has developed a significant hub for music, with over 140 pupils accessing music tuition. The high extra-curricular participation rates at key stage 3 are not as closely sustained at key stage 4, although all pupils participate in inter-house competitions.

Governance of the school

- Governors show a passionate commitment to the school. They have developed effective committee structures that provide strategic oversight and give them a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have appropriate expertise to hold leaders to account, often inviting leaders to meetings to account for underperformance.
- Governors have worked with school leaders in the more strenuous conversations and actions that have tackled weaknesses in teaching and leadership in recent years. They have supported leaders in holding teachers to account through the stronger implementation of performance management procedures.
- Governors oversee appropriate financial diligence and hold leaders to account for the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium. Although improvements are emerging, the actions of governors and leaders has not enabled differences in progress and attendance for disadvantaged pupils to diminish rapidly enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders are committed to their duties to keep children safe. The actions taken to check the suitability of adults working at the school are extremely thorough and records are accurately maintained. Staff training is up to date and a number of governors are trained in safer recruitment. Teachers have a strong focus upon pupils' well-being and pursue any concerns about pupils' welfare rigorously. Pupils feel safe in school and their parents agree. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and were able to discuss the actions they could take to stay safe online. A safeguarding governor works with leaders to check safeguarding practices.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and improving and is enabling the majority of pupils to make better rates of progress. Teachers foster positive attitudes to learning among pupils and relationships between teachers and pupils are founded upon mutual respect.
- Through clearer leadership, robust planning and heightened expectations, the quality of teaching has significantly improved in English and science. This has contributed to improving rates of progress for the vast majority of pupils in these subjects.
- Although improving, teaching in mathematics has been more variable and resulted in weaker progress at key stage 4. There are signs that teaching is beginning to promote better understanding of mathematical processes although improvements are not consistently embedded across year groups.
- The leadership of teaching and learning has been re-energised in recent years, resulting in a developmental culture where teachers are supported and challenged.

Changes to leadership and staffing are leading to more sustained improvement although these are not yet fully reflected in pupils' outcomes.

- Convincing subject expertise, imaginative resources and effective questioning contribute to strong levels of progress in geography and history. Increasing challenge and thorough planning are improving pupils' progress in modern foreign languages.
- Pupils of differing abilities demonstrate the ability to read well. Least-able pupils were able to decode and understand words effectively while the most able read with fluency and expression.
- Time in lessons is generally used effectively. Pupils settle to their learning quickly and listen attentively. They move effectively between tasks although the most able pupils are on occasions not moved on to challenges swiftly enough. The most able are generally set challenging tasks and this has contributed to better rates of progress.
- Some of the work set for lower-ability pupils can be too basic and does not enable them to make good progress.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's home-learning policy. Pupils respond positively to homework tasks which they believe support and extend their learning.
- Targeted interventions, including the use of the Endeavour and Resolution areas, are being used to support progress and attainment for disadvantaged pupils at key stage 4. There is evidence that pupils value the support provided in these nurturing environments. However, the impact on their academic progress is weaker than that on their social and emotional development as differences in progress have not significantly diminished.
- Catch-up sessions for pupils who are not deemed 'secondary ready' are equipping pupils with reading and writing skills that are enabling them to engage more confidently with the curriculum. Strategies for addressing literacy needs across the curriculum are stronger than those for numeracy.
- The majority of teachers provide feedback in line with the school's marking and assessment policy. While the quality of pupils' work is strong in many areas at key stage 4, it is not as consistently strong at key stage 3, particularly for middle- and lower-ability pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Within its own Olympic values, the school actively promotes an ethos of cooperation and mutual respect. Pupils display a pride in the school and in their appearance.
- Pupils generally demonstrate a positive approach to learning, and low-level disruption is rare. They show confidence in their willingness to respond to questions, although they are not as assured in the steps they can take to deepen their learning.
- Leaders weave an attentiveness to pupils' welfare through many aspects of the school's work. Pupils' welfare permeates the curriculum and school practices, through initiatives such as the 'Sorted' programme and the provision of counselling services. Pupils can

describe how the school takes action to keep them safe in school and the wider community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the site is calm and orderly and they value the open and secure environment of their new building.
- Leaders' introduction of a new behaviour policy has improved standards of behaviour and greatly reduced low-level disruption. These higher expectations did produce an initial spike in fixed-term exclusions, but these have now decreased as new standards have become embedded.
- Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils are confident that their teachers reliably and swiftly address the rare incidents of bullying, although a minority of their parents are less confident.
- Leaders have intensified actions to improve attendance and overall rates have increased. Through more focused tracking and intervention, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils showed improvement in 2015 and 2016, although the picture is not consistent across all year groups. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remain more likely to be absent and regularly absent than other pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- While progress is improving in a number of areas, pupils do not make consistently strong progress in a wide range of subjects. In 2016, the improvements in the attainment and progress of pupils in English and science were offset by the slower progress that pupils made in mathematics and optional subjects, including drama and engineering.
- Although signs of improvement are emerging, pupils' progress in mathematics has remained below that seen nationally over time.
- While some differences are diminishing in the progress of disadvantaged pupils, they continue to make significantly slower progress than other pupils nationally. New initiatives are leading to more focused support but their underperformance has not been tackled rapidly enough.
- The increased rigour and challenge evident in many lessons was reflected in the work and books of key stage 4 pupils, who are making better rates of progress. The picture was less consistent at key stage 3, where middle- and lower-ability pupils were not stretched as fully and as a result made slower progress.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are beginning to make improving rates of progress. There is clear evidence of increased challenge in science and the humanities and specific interventions and enrichment activities are raising their expectations and subsequent outcomes.
- Many aspects of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have improved, and individual case studies illustrate good signs of progress, with pupils progressing to the next stages of their education. However, their progress remains slower than other pupils nationally, particularly in English.

- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education, although weaker progress in mathematics and for disadvantaged pupils tempers this preparedness for some pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	111724
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10001419

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Ankers
Headteacher	Tony Gavin
Telephone number	01287 636361
Website	www.laurencejackson.org
Email address	reception@laurencejackson.org
Date of previous inspection	29 February – 1 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Pupils and staff moved into the brand-new school building at the start of September 2016.
- The school is an above average-sized secondary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are both below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning across a wide range of lessons, a number of which were jointly undertaken with senior leaders.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, lunchtimes and at playtimes.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in books, in folders and in displays around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders. The lead inspector met the chair of governors and four members of the governing body. The lead inspector also met a representative of the local authority and talked to two school improvement partners on the telephone.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils in key stages 3 and 4. They also talked less formally to pupils in lessons and around the school site about aspects of their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors visited pupils educated at alternative providers and talked to additional providers on the telephone.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's own evaluation of its work, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 106 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, 48 free-text responses, 66 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 76 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Carl Sugden	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Merifield	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Gammack	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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