

Haven High Academy

Marian Road, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 9HB

Inspection dates

15–16 November 2016

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not acted quickly enough to ensure that outcomes for pupils improved. Achievement in English, mathematics and science, while improving, has been below national averages for too long.
- Leaders have not ensured that the new assessment system is consistently well embedded across departments. In some subjects, the targets set for pupils are not clear.
- Some subject leaders are new to their posts. They are not equally effective in holding teachers to account and raising standards in their departments.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are not consistently high. The most able pupils are not routinely challenged by the work they do.
- Not all teachers use the information they have about pupils to plan appropriate learning, especially for the most able pupils.
- Teachers do not use questioning effectively to assess pupils' understanding in class or to stretch the most able pupils.
- Tutor time is not used consistently well to ensure that pupils get off to a good start. In some cases, this is wasted time.
- Pupils do not have access to external, expert advice and guidance to help guide their choices.
- The information provided on the school's website for parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities lacks clarity.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have taken appropriate action to improve teaching and subject leadership. These changes are leading to improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- The school is a harmonious community. Pupils from different backgrounds are taught to respect one another and get on well together.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective support and make good progress.
- Teachers in the performing arts and vocational subjects use their good subject knowledge to enthuse pupils. Assessment in these subjects is effective in promoting pupils' progress.
- Leaders ensure that they listen to and act on pupils' opinions. The pupil-led 'teaching and learning group' has brought about improvements in teaching and behaviour.
- Governors use their skills and expertise to hold leaders to account. Their intervention has led to improvement.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and raise outcomes for all pupils by ensuring that:
 - all teachers assess pupils' skills and understanding effectively and amend tasks accordingly
 - all teachers use the information they have about pupils to plan appropriate learning, especially for the most able pupils
 - teachers become more skilled in teaching the most able pupils
 - teachers have equally high expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially in their written work.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and well-being by:
 - ensuring that tutor time is used consistently well to promote pupils' learning and well-being
 - improving the provision for careers information, advice and guidance
 - ensuring that all teachers insist on high standards for the presentation of pupils' work
 - improving the attendance of those pupils who are frequently absent from school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the new assessment system is consistently well embedded across all departments
 - all middle leaders are equally effective in holding teachers to account and raising standards in their departments
 - the information for parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is clear and of high quality.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that outcomes for pupils have improved quickly enough. For too long, pupils have left the school ill-prepared for further education, employment or training.
- Leaders did not take action quickly enough to improve the quality of middle leadership, which has been too variable. Recent appointments appear promising and have led to some improvements in outcomes for pupils, but not all middle leaders are equally effective in their roles.
- The school's assessment system is not well embedded across all departments and is currently confusing. It does not allow leaders to have clear and accurate information about how well pupils are doing across the school.
- Improvement planning is not well developed across the school. In some cases, plans lack focus and clear objectives and do not link clearly to the whole-school priorities.
- There has been too little emphasis on developing the skills needed to teach the most able pupils.
- However, the leadership of teaching has improved and some teachers have been helped to improve their practice through the coaching programme, for example. Performance management is used effectively to reward those teachers whose practice is more effective.
- At the instigation of governors, leaders commissioned an external review of pupil premium funding. This has led to some improvements in the attendance and achievement of eligible pupils.
- The school uses catch-up funding effectively to accelerate the progress of pupils who begin school with low levels of literacy and numeracy. Records show that the majority of eligible pupils made significant progress as a result of targeted intervention and support.
- The use of the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been effective in training teaching assistants and providing pupils with the appropriate support. However, not all teachers have been helped to develop their practice in teaching pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Information on the provision for these pupils lacks clarity, as parents would not easily be able to find information regarding the local offer.
- Leaders ensure that they listen to and act on pupils' opinions. For example, the school's 'teaching and learning group' told leaders that they should do more to reward good behaviour, and in response leaders implemented the 'Haven Pathways' programme. The programme has been effective in raising the profile of good attendance, punctuality and positive attitudes to learning.
- The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced. Pupils appreciate the range of subjects on offer and say that they feel motivated by the wide range of options open to them at key stage 4. There is a good range of extra-curricular trips on offer, although leaders are not able to say whether all groups of pupils take up these opportunities.

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is made through the social studies curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities and the school's assembly programme. Pupils understand the skills and qualities needed to be an effective member of the school community.
- Leaders have been successful in creating a culture of respect and ensuring that different groups of pupils understand the school's values and get on well together. The school serves a very diverse community effectively. The ethos that leaders have established ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The executive headteacher is a national leader of education and has a successful track record of securing improvements in other schools in the trust that the school is part of. Two of these schools are currently rated outstanding. These partnerships have been successful in improving transition arrangements for pupils and creating opportunities for staff to work across phases to moderate pupils' work.
- Leaders acknowledge that there is insufficient expertise within the trust to improve this school and have sought additional support from the Lincolnshire Teaching School Alliance. This support has been effective in identifying the key issues in departments and leaders have taken appropriate action in response.
- The school has maintained its links with the local authority. The lead education adviser provides leaders with an external, objective view of the school's performance.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a strength of the school.
- Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. Some have a successful record of improving other schools. They use their skills well to hold leaders to account.
- Some of the recent improvements to the school have come about as a result of governors' intervention. For example, they insisted that leaders carry out a review of pupil premium spending following disappointing outcomes for eligible pupils and that leaders addressed the weaker elements of middle leadership. They ask middle leaders of underperforming departments to provide direct reports to governors and ensure that they are rigorously challenged on their performance.
- Governors work well with leaders of the trust and have a good understanding of their responsibilities.
- Decisions regarding teachers' pay are taken in conjunction with school leaders. Governors ensure that there is a clear rationale for awarding pay increases.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured, through appropriate training, that staff have a good knowledge of the risks that pupils may be vulnerable to, including radicalisation and extremism, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Early help assessments are used to identify what support can be put in place for pupils for whom a referral to children's services may not be appropriate. Staff work well with other agencies to ensure that pupils get the support they need when they are at risk. Weekly meetings of the pastoral team ensure that staff share appropriate information and concerns and work together to keep an eye on pupils they are worried about.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not assess pupils' understanding well in class. Sometimes they move the learning on without ensuring that all pupils have grasped the key concepts.
- Teachers do not use all the information they have about pupils to ensure that work is set at the right level. Too often, the work set for the most able pupils is not sufficiently challenging.
- The assessment information provided for pupils is confusing. For example, in one subject there are two different assessment systems in use. It is difficult for pupils to know precisely what they need to do to progress.
- Not all teachers have equally high expectations of what pupils are able to do, especially in their written work. In some lessons, boys get away with producing less work than girls and teachers do not challenge this. As one parent wrote, 'gender is no excuse'.
- Sometimes, tasks are set at too low a level, requiring little more than simple recall of knowledge. Homework is not consistently well used to stretch and develop pupils' understanding.
- Work in mathematics is overly focused on developing calculation skills. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- The school's 'BEST' system (Be proud of, Even better if, Spelling and grammar, Target) is used well by some teachers to help pupils improve their work. In some cases, teachers' feedback is too lengthy to be effective.
- Pupils enjoy warm, positive and supportive relationships with their teachers. Lessons are, for the most part, calm and purposeful.
- The support for pupils who join the school with low reading ages is largely effective in helping these pupils to improve their reading skills. Each pupil has the opportunity to practise reading with an adult and a record is kept of their progress. Some of the pupils who spoke with inspectors would welcome more opportunities to develop their phonic awareness.
- Good use is made of the school's library, which hosts reading classes on a regular basis. The most able readers do not read challenging texts on a regular basis in class, however.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Where pupils make most progress it is because teachers use their good knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, their subjects to engage pupils in their learning and ensure that they know how to be successful.
- Additional adults work well to support pupils in class. On occasion during the inspection, it was difficult to distinguish teaching assistant from teacher as they worked seamlessly together to support and challenge pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress as a result of well-coordinated support.
- There are particular strengths in the teaching of performing arts subjects and vocational courses. In these subjects, teachers are effective in assessing pupils and setting appropriate tasks.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The provision for careers information, advice and guidance is underdeveloped. Pupils learn about different careers through the school's social studies programme. They do not have access currently to external, impartial advice and guidance and so do not have all the information they need to make decisions for their next steps.
- Tutor time is not well used throughout the school. While some tutors use the session to build relationships and engage pupils in discussion, this is not consistently the case. For many pupils, this is simply dead time.
- The school's 'Haven Pathways' programme is effective in teaching pupils the skills to be successful, resilient learners. Pupils who earn 'expert learner' status wear their badges with pride and act as positive role models for others.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying in the school and that they trust their teachers to deal with it, should it occur. Pupils from different backgrounds are helped to understand and respect each other's culture. The school is a safe, harmonious community.
- Pupils and parents speak highly of the pastoral support in the school. As one parent wrote, 'The school is supportive and caring. Learning support is fantastic and the pastoral team are always on hand to deal with issues big or small.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some teachers accept standards of work that are less than pupils' best. They do not always address poor presentation, for example.
- Pupils' levels of concentration are not consistent. When work is not at the right level, their attention wanders and there is some low-level disruption.
- Attendance remains below national averages. Staff from the pastoral team have had some success in reducing the absentee rates of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school remains too high.
- Pupils' conduct around school is generally orderly. Although very busy at both break and lunchtime, the dining room is well managed. Pupils are, in the main, punctual to lessons.
- Pupils whose behaviour has been particularly challenging receive effective support. School records show that the number of incidents declines over time for most pupils, and the school's Refresh room is successful in re-engaging pupils in their learning. The proportion of pupils who receive a fixed-term exclusion from school remains well below national averages.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision off site. Staff keep in regular contact to monitor their attendance and behaviour. Records show that these placements have been effective in improving pupils' attendance and engagement.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement. The progress that pupils make is too variable between subjects because the quality of teaching is inconsistent. While now showing signs of improvement, this has meant that too many pupils have left the school ill-prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at key stage 4. Early indications for 2016 are that these standards are now met.
- From their different starting points, Year 11 pupils in 2015 did not make enough progress in English and mathematics. This was especially true of the most able pupils. Very few of the most able disadvantaged pupils made sufficient progress.
- Information provided by the school, together with scrutiny of pupils' work, points to improved rates of progress in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils in the current Year 11 who are on track to make the progress expected in these subjects is rising.
- Across the school, pupils' learning and progress show signs of improvement. This is the case in religious studies and to a lesser extent in modern foreign languages. Achievement in history and geography remains variable and is dependent on the quality of teaching. Pupils achieve well in vocational subjects and in performing arts subjects because the quality of teaching in these subjects is more consistent.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in science have been below national averages. Changes to leadership and the curriculum in this area are leading to improved pupil outcomes.
- In some subjects, differences in attainment and progress between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing. This is not consistently the case across all subjects, however. The school's use of pupil premium funding has been effective in raising the achievement of individual pupils, but there is more to do to ensure that these pupils make consistently good progress across the school.
- The achievement of the most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils across the school remains variable. This is because teaching is not sufficiently challenging for these pupils and because improvement plans do not focus closely enough on strategies to raise the achievement of these pupils.
- The least able pupils make progress in line with national averages. Strategies to improve the learning and progress of these pupils are largely successful.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are now making better progress from their starting points than was previously the case. Support for these pupils, whether in class or through small-group and one-to-one intervention, is generally effective in helping them to catch up.
- A very small number of pupils attend off-site alternative provision. Records indicate that these pupils are making good progress on their courses.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the well-coordinated and targeted support they receive.

School details

Unique reference number	138754
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10019171

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 modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,038
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jessica Gale
Executive Headteacher	Adrian Reed
Telephone number	01205 311979
Website	www.hhtc.org.uk/
Email address	havenhigh@bwaf.net
Date of previous inspection	5–6 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish. However, the information for parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities may find it difficult to find information about the local offer, as this is contained in the policy for special educational needs and/or disabilities and not listed separately.
- Haven High Academy is slightly larger than the average-sized secondary school. It was last inspected in June 2013 and judged to be good.
- The school is part of the Boston Witham Academies Federation, which includes three primary schools and a children's centre. Sixth-form courses are provided through a partnership with Monk's Dyke Tennyson College.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than the national average. The majority of these are from Eastern European backgrounds.

- Over one third of pupils speak English as an additional language. This is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than the national average.
- The executive headteacher is a national leader of education.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at First Steps Vocational Training Centre.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress at key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 40 lessons across different subjects. Most of these observations were carried out jointly with school leaders.
- Pupils' work in a range of subjects was reviewed. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in class and met formally with pupils from different year groups to hear their views about school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, governors and representatives from the trust. The lead inspector met with the lead education adviser from Lincolnshire local authority. One inspector spoke by telephone to First Steps Vocational Training Centre.
- Inspectors visited the learning resource centre and looked at the interventions in place for pupils who join the school with low levels of attainment. Inspectors listened to pupils of different ability levels reading.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents, information about pupils' progress across the school, minutes of the governing body meetings, records of behaviour and attendance and information relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and of the 29 free text responses. They also considered 91 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 63 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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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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