

Inspection of Graham School

Woodlands Drive, Scarborough YO12 6QW

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Graham School is on an improvement journey. Many aspects of the school's work show improvements. Some improvements are clearer than others. Leaders are getting on with ensuring that the quality of education that pupils receive is high quality. Curriculum maps show that this is heading in the right direction. Leaders have raised expectations for how pupils conduct themselves. There are signs that most pupils can follow appropriate behaviour routines.

Most pupils behave well in lessons. However, in corridors and outside spaces a small number of pupils are disruptive. The number of placements in seclusion is high. It has not reduced over time. There are small improvements in attendance, but too many pupils do not attend school regularly. This limits their learning. Most pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying can happen, but staff generally sort it out.

The school has an on-site provision called The Hub. It is for pupils who struggle in mainstream lessons. Pupils are taught in well-equipped modern facilities. They follow an adapted curriculum that meets their needs well. Pupils are well supported to build social skills and improve their resilience. When they are ready, pupils return to regular lessons with targeted support.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils experience an inconsistent curriculum. For example, in science, the curriculum is clearly thought out and well delivered. In other subjects, such as English and history, the curriculum is less well embedded. These subjects have well-thought-out curriculum maps, but their implementation is variable. Pupils' subject knowledge is uneven. Too frequently, they cannot remember what they have learned.

Leaders prioritise reading. They see reading as everybody's business. They have developed a carefully considered approach to encourage reading across the school. It is well designed to meet the interests and abilities of all pupils. Pupils who need help to develop their reading skills are well supported. They receive personal intervention to build their phonic knowledge and comprehension.

The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is closely monitored. Leaders for SEND ensure staff are fully informed about the individual needs of pupils across the school. This allows staff to provide focused support in lessons. Pupils with SEND generally do well as a result. They value the support they receive.

There is a contrasting picture of pupils' behaviour. In lessons, pupils are generally much more settled. Typically, there is little low-level disruption. Most pupils fully engage in learning. In corridors and outside spaces, this is not consistently the case, and a small number of pupils' behaviour is not appropriate. It can be loud and disruptive. Some behaviour is boisterous during social times. A small number of pupils race about and engage in rough play. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that

this behaviour is the norm.

Pupils attend seclusion if their behaviour does not meet leaders' expectations. While in seclusion, they access elements of the lessons they are missing. Pupils generally understand the reasons for their placement. However, the use of seclusion has increased over time. The number of placements is notably high. Pupils' behaviour around school requires improvement. Similarly, leaders recognise that their attendance strategies are not yet effective. Though there are small improvements in pupils' attendance, improvement is too slow.

Leaders ensure there are ample opportunities for pupils' broader development. Pupils follow a well-structured personal development curriculum that has evolved over time. It includes coastal safety and developing an understanding of people who are different in the local community. Leaders ensure that pupils' careers guidance is thorough. Pupils are well supported about the opportunities available to them. This includes pupils with SEND, who receive extra guidance. Most pupils move on to positive destinations when they leave school.

Governors and trustees recognise that the school is improving. Many improvements are still to be realised. Governors and trustees have an optimistic view of the school. They have ambition to get the best out of the school and pupils. Most staff say that leaders thoughtfully consider their workload and well-being. Early career teachers feel well supported by leaders. They receive regular mentoring.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Recruitment checks on adults before their employment are thorough. Leaders continually seek ways to further develop their practice to keep pupils safe. Staff know what to do if they have worries about the conduct of another member of staff. They understand whistle-blowing procedures and feel confident to report any information.

Staff recognise the importance of supporting the welfare and safety of pupils. They access training to help them know what to do and how to act in the best interests of pupils. This ensures their knowledge and understanding are kept up to date effectively. Leaders make appropriate safeguarding referrals to external agencies. This ensures pupils receive swift targeted support.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have redeveloped the curriculum. The implementation of the new curriculum is inconsistent. In some subjects, the curriculum is clearly thought out and well delivered, while in other subjects, the curriculum is less well embedded. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are consistently well implemented across

the curriculum.

- Pupils' recall of subject knowledge is inconsistent. This means they frequently cannot remember what they have learned. Leaders should ensure appropriate strategies are in place to ensure pupils know more and remember more.
- Some pupils' behaviour is not appropriate. The environment around school is not always calm and orderly. Leaders should further develop their systems and approaches to limit negative behaviour around school.
- Leaders' actions to improve pupils' attendance show small improvements. However, too many pupils do not attend school regularly. This limits pupils' learning because they miss valuable lesson time. Leaders should further develop their attendance strategies to ensure pupils attend school regularly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	146769
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10267822
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	973
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Myers
Principal	Emma Robins
Website	https://gra.hslt.academy
Date of previous inspection	20 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Hope Sentamu Learning Trust.
- The school has an additional provision on site called The Hub. The provision has been developed to support pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour in the school's mainstream lessons.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision provider.
- The school measures itself against the Gatsby benchmarks to ensure pupils receive high-quality careers advice.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, early career teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees and governing body in an on-screen meeting. An inspector met with local authority education representatives in an on-screen meeting.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The provision for teaching reading was also scrutinised.
- An inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding lead. The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records, relevant policies and other safeguarding documentation. The inspector reviewed the processes that leaders use to identify and help pupils who need support. In addition, the lead inspector scrutinised the school's records of checks carried out on adults who work at the school.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents. This included any free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Mills, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Downs	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Lewis	Ofsted Inspector
Julian Appleyard	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023