

# Huntington School

Huntington Road, Huntington, York, North Yorkshire YO32 9WT

## Inspection dates

11–12 October 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and senior leaders have established an impressive culture of high aspirations. Teachers and pupils share a steely determination to succeed. As a consequence, the school has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Senior and middle leaders are highly effective in bringing about improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school's approach to teachers' professional development is exceptional. The school's 'Research School' status has had an extraordinary impact on teachers' understanding of how to improve their practice.
- The school is steeped in research-based practice, which is leading to pupils making rapid gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Governors have a sharp and incisive knowledge of the school. They provide strong support to leaders. The minutes of governing body meetings show that governors are diligent and committed to improvement.
- Pupils now make at least good progress from their starting points, in all year groups and across almost all subjects, including English and mathematics. The progress made by pupils in key stage 3 is particularly strong.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well across the curriculum and in all year groups. Work in pupils' books shows that their progress matches that of other pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and high expectations of their pupils. Work to help pupils extend their vocabulary is resulting in pupils' assured and confident use of language.
- Occasionally, teachers do not check precisely on how well some pupils are developing their knowledge and skills during lessons.
- Pupils really enjoy coming to school and are very proud to speak about the school's many strengths. Attendance is higher than the national average for secondary schools. A few disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent. The school is calm and orderly throughout the day. Pupils are friendly and polite to each other and to adults.
- The sixth form provides an outstanding education. Students are purposeful and confident. They benefit from excellent careers guidance which ensures that they go on to further study, employment or training that is closely matched to their aspirations.

## Full report

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

- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and reduce the number who are persistently absent.
- Iron out the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers check carefully on the progress pupils make during lessons
  - pupils know what they need to do to make rapid gains in their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Governors and school leaders have secured significant improvements since the previous inspection. Leaders have strengthened the culture of learning so that pupils are highly motivated and keen to do well in all aspects of their work. Pupils' behaviour and their personal development are outstanding. Leaders have taken highly effective action to improve the quality of provision in the sixth form so that outcomes are now outstanding for students.
- Pupils, parents and staff are very positive about how the school is led and managed. They recognise and value the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and are excited about the future direction of the school. The school's status as a national 'Research School' is acting as a catalyst for development and improvement, and work in this area is exceptionally well led.
- School leaders and staff have a strong moral purpose. They are ambitious for their pupils and put their needs above all else. The curriculum reflects leaders' integrity because it is designed to match pupils' needs and aspirations regardless of performance table measures. Leaders have made provision for almost all pupils to study a modern foreign language because research tells them that pupils will develop valuable skills for their future. Leaders are also passionate about ensuring that all pupils succeed and prosper in their life beyond school; this area of work is a great strength.
- All staff are supported by the school's highly effective performance management process. Teachers have a deep understanding of how pupils learn. They are supported in testing out theories of how to improve their teaching further through the excellent work of the Research School. Leaders are innovative in using an evidence-based approach to checking that changes to teaching or the curriculum are firmly grounded in evidence and linked to appropriate research. This exciting approach attracts and retains high-quality teachers and non-teaching staff.
- The professional development of all staff is exemplary. Leaders believe that 'every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better.' The school's training programme responds flexibly to emerging and established priorities and is personalised around the needs of each teacher and teaching assistant. The support for recently appointed teachers and those new to the profession is very strong.
- Leaders now make much more effective use of pupil premium funding. It is used to help individual pupils overcome specific barriers to their learning. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils are now making better progress.
- Leaders also use catch-up funding expertly. Pupils with lower standards of English and mathematics on their arrival at the school benefit significantly from high-quality intervention outside the classroom. For example, most pupils who have extra help with their reading markedly improve their reading age.
- The improved curriculum is now rich and meets the needs and aspirations of all pupils. Though highly academic, there is also vibrant provision in the arts and in sport, with

excellent further opportunities provided through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is now a strength of the school's work, particularly for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

- The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning is outstanding. Pupils are able to speak in detail and with great passion about the exciting range of topics related to life in modern Britain that they cover within the curriculum. Pupils are passionate about the importance of tolerance and respect for others.
- The comprehensive careers and guidance programme, 'Aspirations', also enhances pupils' preparation for life after school. They have an exceptionally well-developed understanding of occupational pathways, including apprenticeships. Consequently, they are highly motivated in their discussions about the exciting opportunities that are available to them in the future.
- Funding is used very effectively to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make very strong progress. They are very well supported within the curriculum, and very well-developed links with parents and other agencies further enhance their progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance of the school is highly effective. Governors are deeply committed, appropriately experienced and suitably tenacious in their work. They share school leaders' high aspirations for the school and are rightly proud of the improvements that have been made since the last inspection.
- Documentation shows that governors' scrutiny of the school's work is particularly thorough in the areas of teaching, pupils' progress and the use of funding and resources.
- Governors are equally demanding of themselves, and role-model the school's commitment to continuous improvement. Each year they set improvement priorities for themselves; for example, this year they are establishing a 'golden thread' linking the effectiveness of their own work to pupils' outcomes.
- Governors play a full part in establishing the priorities for improvement and regularly measure progress towards targets set out in the school's development plan. They scrutinise progress information by subject, year group and pupil group, and are able to ask challenging questions as a result. They are committed to ensuring that the level of challenge they offer continues to improve.
- Governors effectively monitor the system for managing the performance of staff. They are also determined to ensure that the quality of training for all staff and governors is of the highest standard.
- Governors take their safeguarding role very seriously. They are well trained and the records of their work show that they regularly monitor the suitability of adults to work at the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school is an orderly environment, where relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very strong. As a result, pupils told all inspectors that they feel very safe in the school. They have great confidence that, should they have any concerns for their safety or well-being, staff will address them thoroughly.
- There is a well-established culture of safeguarding. Staff know what to do and who to go to if they have concerns. Staff take appropriate actions in a timely fashion when the need arises. The liaison with parents and other agencies is strong and all staff are fully trained to meet the latest government guidance on keeping pupils safe.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example through high-quality online safety initiatives. In discussions with inspectors, pupils showed an excellent understanding of the importance of careful internet use.
- Governors are well trained in safeguarding and in the safe recruitment of new staff. They undertake an annual audit of safeguarding practice across the school and ensure that all necessary measures are fully in place.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. Pupils respond very positively, achieve very well and take pride in how they present their work. Relationships between teachers and pupils are harmonious and positive, creating an environment in which pupils make rapid gains in their learning. The atmosphere in classrooms is supportive and cooperative.
- Staff have very successfully focused on improving pupils' reading, comprehension and communication skills. Pupils have many opportunities to read a range of texts in different media. They participate in discussion with confidence and listen carefully to, and build upon, the ideas of others.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics and English is a strength of the school. Teachers show great passion and expert subject knowledge in their challenge and support of all pupils.
- Teachers' questioning skills are strong as a result of their deep understanding of how pupils learn. Questions are designed to check pupils' understanding and challenge them to think hard. Occasionally, this excellent practice lapses and some teachers do not check carefully enough to make sure that pupils understand the work they are doing. Consequently, a few pupils are unsure about the aspects of their work that need to be developed.
- Many pupils have developed a love of reading. The library is a hub of activity at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they are reading. Low-attaining pupils who were listened to reading by inspectors used the skills they had been taught to tackle unfamiliar words confidently. The most able pupils are also making significant gains in their reading. They are fluent and read with excellent expression.

- Pupils are well motivated, enjoy practical activities and work well together when asked to participate in group tasks. Pupils quickly settle to tasks, are proud of their work and are genuinely interested in the subject matter.
- The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about the quality of teaching in the school and the progress their children are making. They are equally positive that the homework teachers set is appropriate and contributes to pupils' learning.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are self-confident and self-aware. They are proud of their school and speak eagerly of their ambitions for the future. Pupils are keen to make a positive contribution to life at school and willingly take part in music and arts-related activities.
- The school's personal, social and health education is well delivered in tutor times and through lessons across the curriculum. Pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives.
- Pupils understand the importance of physical and emotional well-being and this contributes to their success in gaining the highest possible grades. Pupils appreciate the genuine interest that teachers take in all aspects of their achievement and welfare.
- Pupils know how to stay safe online. Pupils take this very seriously and talked to inspectors about how they report any evidence of online bullying.
- The school's records show that there is very little bullying in any year group. This is supported by pupils, who say that bullying is very rare and that if it arises, it is dealt with promptly.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is generally impeccable. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and dealt with very effectively. Staff have a detailed system for tracking pupils' behaviour and staff are well-supported in maintaining a consistent approach to promoting good behaviour. Pupils respond very well to staff expectations, maintaining a high standard of conduct.
- The school is calm and orderly at breaktime, lunchtime and between lessons. Pupils arrive punctually to lessons, well equipped and keen to learn. Disruption to lessons is rare and the majority of pupils have excellent attitudes to learning.
- The school is successful in helping pupils who have specific behavioural difficulties to overcome their barriers. Leaders are committed to the wider community and do their best to support pupils who move to the school after having being at risk of exclusion in their previous school.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average. However, within this there is some

variation for disadvantaged pupils because a few are persistently absent. The school works closely with these pupils and their families and their attendance is improving. Nevertheless, despite the school's best efforts, disadvantaged pupils' attendance does not match that of other pupils.

- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View agreed that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved. This was also the view of pupils who completed Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics, often better than pupils nationally, and this has been consistently positive since the previous inspection. Current learning and progress show that the achievement of pupils in key stage 3, which has been good over time, has improved further due to highly effective teaching.
- The progress, from different starting points, of pupils in a range of subject areas other than English and mathematics is also better than for pupils nationally. In science, history and geography particularly, pupils' progress is strong.
- Continuing improvements in the quality of teaching and highly effective staff recruitment and retention result in the large majority of pupils currently in the school making good and often outstanding progress. This is particularly the case for middle- and higher-attaining pupils.
- Leaders and governors use the pupil premium funding very effectively. As a result, the differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally are diminishing rapidly. In English, disadvantaged pupils outperform other pupils nationally.
- Pupils benefit from challenging work that closely matches their abilities and aptitudes. They make very strong progress in English and mathematics from their assessments at the end of key stage 2. Leaders now use the Year 7 catch-up premium very effectively to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils eligible for the funding.
- The excellent provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities results in this group of pupils making good or better progress from their starting points. The few pupils who have an education, health and care plan make very strong progress. This is because teachers have the highest expectations for pupils, no matter what their learning difficulty or disability.
- The most able pupils make excellent progress across all subjects, with many achieving the very highest grades in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This is because they are challenged very well. The excellent quality of teaching increases their confidence because they understand how making mistakes is as valuable as getting things right.
- Pupils make good and often outstanding progress in mathematics because they are expected to solve problems. They can explain why they have chosen different skills to answer difficult questions.
- Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future. Last year, all pupils who left Year 11 went on to high-quality employment, education or training.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## Outstanding

- Students' outcomes have gone from strength to strength. Progress was above the national average in 2016 in all academic subjects. The school's information about students' current progress demonstrates that this excellent progress is being sustained.
- Students who join the sixth form without the requisite grades in English and mathematics benefit from specialist teaching and are almost always successful in improving their grades.
- As in the main school, the quality of teaching is excellent. There is little in the way of variation in the quality of teaching between subjects. Students have articulate and reasoned conversations with their teachers, which accelerates their learning. Students' attitudes to their studies are very positive and result in their very strong progress.
- Students have a mature approach and take responsibility for ensuring they make the most of their study out of lessons as well as in class. Teachers help students to be precise in their understanding of how well they are doing and exactly where they need to focus their efforts.
- Students are very well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. The curriculum offers a rich range of experiences, including the opportunity to take part in lively debates about current issues and a comprehensive programme of work experience.
- Thoughtful and closely tailored careers guidance is a strong feature of sixth-form provision. A consequence of this highly effective programme is that students are very aware of the range of opportunities open to them. All students gain places in employment, higher education or training.
- As in the main school, students' behaviour is excellent. Students' enjoyment and commitment to their studies are evident in their excellent attendance.
- Leaders have the same meticulous and thorough approach found throughout the school. Leaders know what works well, and they are quick to intervene at the first sign of any underachievement. The school's evidence-based approach results in thorough self-evaluation and precisely focused improvements.

## School details

Unique reference number	121673
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10036511

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	Community
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	1,465
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	281
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Bayliss
Headteacher	John Tomsett
Telephone number	01904 752100
Website	<a href="http://www.huntingtonschool.co.uk">www.huntingtonschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:mail@huntington-ed.org.uk">mail@huntington-ed.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Huntington School is larger than the average-sized secondary school and has a large sixth form.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils identified as having SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is below average.
- The school does not enter students for GCSE before Year 11.
- A very small number of sixth-form students attend courses at The Joseph Rowntree School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision for any pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons across key stages 3, 4 and 5. A significant amount of this activity was conducted alongside school leaders.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, middle leaders and other teachers. Inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority and with three members of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with six groups of pupils and discussed with them their learning and their views of the school. Inspectors listened to the reading of pupils in key stage 3.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader and scrutinised a range of records, including the record of checks on the suitability of staff to work with children, welfare plans and actions taken to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors also scrutinised a wide range of documentation that the school produces as part of its self-evaluation and development planning. Inspectors also looked at policies and documents published on the website and those made available during the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 194 responses from parents to Parent View as well as the responses from pupils to the pupil questionnaire.
- A Senior Her Majesty’s Inspector and two of Her Majesty’s Inspectors visited the school for one day on 16 November 2017 to gather additional evidence. They observed lessons jointly with senior leaders, met with a range of staff and scrutinised a sample of pupils’ work. The inspectors also met with governors and looked at a range of the school’s documents.

## Inspection team

John Townsley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Bernard Clark	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Welford	Ofsted Inspector
Geoffrey Lumsdon	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Cook	Ofsted Inspector
John Downs	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Gammack	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Hewitt	Senior Her Majesty’s Inspector
Debbie Redshaw	Her Majesty’s Inspector

Michele Costello

Her Majesty's Inspector

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