

Hutton Church of England Grammar School

Liverpool Road, Hutton, Preston, Lancashire PR4 5SN

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is well led and managed. The new headteacher has reinvigorated the school community. He has heightened the expectations of staff and made leaders and teachers more accountable for their work.
- Governance is effective. Governors stringently hold leaders to account for the school's work. They have created a strong ethos which combines the school's traditions and Christian values with an unswerving commitment to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects. Progress by the end of Year 11 in English and mathematics is outstanding and progress in most other subjects is good. The pace of pupil progress has quickened this year.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very effectively and make progress that is at least as fast as other pupils.
- Teaching is improving quickly across the school and much of the teaching is excellent in all curriculum areas. Despite this, the quality of teaching is still variable. In particular, not all teachers have high expectations of what each pupil can achieve and some teachers do not provide pupils of different abilities with work that challenges them consistently.
- The quality of teachers' questioning varies. Some teachers do not routinely use questioning to check pupils' understanding and deepen their thinking.
- Training for staff has improved markedly. The headteacher is aware of the need to further develop subject leaders to increase the consistency of teaching and to share the excellent practice that exists more effectively.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and during less structured times. Pupils are polite, friendly and keen to do well. Attendance is consistently above national averages.
- The personal development of pupils is strong and the school's efforts to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of pupils are exemplary.
- The school has a broad and balanced curriculum that serves its pupils well. Pupils also benefit from an exceptional range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Teaching and assessment in the sixth form is particularly effective. Students make good progress overall and nearly all students move on to appropriate destinations. However, not all students gain relevant work experience during their time in the sixth form and leaders do not carefully track students' participation in enrichment activities.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by sharpening the focus of training for teachers in order to share the best practice more effectively and further reduce variability in the quality of teaching.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and assessment, thereby accelerating the rate of progress across the whole curriculum, by ensuring that teachers:
 - all have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set work that consistently challenges pupils with different prior attainment
 - question pupils effectively to assess their understanding and deepen their thinking.
- Ensure that all students in the sixth form complete relevant work experience and that leaders carefully track and monitor participation in enrichment activities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new headteacher joined the school in April 2016. Since that time, he has rejuvenated the school community and created a renewed sense of urgency and purpose. One member of staff summed up the views of many when she described how she felt 'energised' by his fresh approach and new ideas.
- Leaders have created an ambitious culture. Pupils are expected to become the best they can be, both academically and socially. They are supported to develop a strong values and have a clear sense of right and wrong.
- The new headteacher has increased expectations throughout the school and he has made leaders and teachers more accountable for their work. He has improved the effectiveness of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching. Leaders' monitoring now focuses sharply on the impact that teaching and assessment has on the progress made by different groups of pupils. As a result, leaders have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders ensure that systems for managing the performance of staff align closely with whole-school development priorities. Teachers are set ambitious targets for the progress made by pupils and they are made accountable for pupils' outcomes in their areas.
- The new headteacher recognises the critical importance of developing middle leadership within the school. He has improved the way that subject leaders are managed. Despite this, the effectiveness of subject leadership remains variable, particularly in relation to the consistency of teaching within subjects. Leaders do not consistently share the best ideas about teaching effectively and, as a result, variability in the quality of teaching remains.
- Leaders have also ensured that training opportunities for teachers have improved. In particular, teachers value the different aspects of teaching they develop as part of cross-curricular teams. They also appreciate the many opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools. As a result, teachers feel that there is a renewed vibrancy to the debate about what constitutes effective teaching and learning.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who join the school with attainment below national expectations is being used to remove the barriers that can stop these pupils from doing well. In particular, leaders have ensured that pupils receive specific additional teaching that carefully addresses gaps in their knowledge and understanding. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making progress that is as fast as others at the school and the majority of pupils needing to catch up with their peers are making accelerated progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve exceptionally well because leadership in this area is particularly strong. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) passionately leads this area of the school's work with commitment and tact. This small group of pupils benefit from bespoke support that enables them to flourish. The progress made by the majority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding and compares favourably to others. Teaching assistants are used to great effect and every effort is maintained to ensure that these

pupils feel at ease within the school environment. For example, pupils appreciate the 'snack and chat' group that provides them with a safe, quiet and friendly environment over lunchtimes. The school's special educational needs funding is used effectively.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength of the school because leaders create numerous rich and varied opportunities for pupils to become caring and responsible citizens in modern Britain. Pupils are particularly knowledgeable and tolerant of different faiths. The 'breathe' spirituality day, for example, was used as a vehicle for enhancing pupils' understanding of different world religions.
- Leaders provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that serves them well. Pupils are taught all the subjects of the national curriculum in key stage 3 and this provides them with a solid foundation for future study. Leaders have made minor modifications to the key stage 3 curriculum to support all pupils to make rapid progress. For example, low-ability pupils receive additional lessons in functional literacy to support their achievement across the whole curriculum.
- Many pupils appreciate the breadth of subjects taught in key stage 4. Pupils are aware that they can opt to study subjects that are not available in most schools. For example, one Year 10 pupil explained to the inspector how grateful he was to be able to study economics. Leaders are keen to maintain the breadth of the curriculum so that every pupil has a pathway that will inspire them to fulfil their potential. In particular, leaders are keen to maintain the school's strengths in creative subjects.
- Pupils benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities. They participate in a wide range of sports, from water polo to rugby. Among other opportunities, they can also join the sewing or chess club. The school has a strong tradition of excellence in the performing arts. Pupils recently performed 'Les Miserables' together with girls from a nearby high school and a recent 'battle of the bands' contest was used as a vehicle for showcasing some of the best musical talent at the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have played a pivotal role in the creation and maintenance of the school's ethos and culture. Governors insist that the school's traditions and Christian values are combined with a sustained focus on preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Governors have high expectations of school leaders and they were uncompromising in their quest to appoint a headteacher who embodies the values of the school following the departure of the previous headteacher.
- In turn, governors have responded to the new headteacher's expectation that governors stringently hold leaders to account for the school's performance. Governors feel they have developed greatly and it is evident that they systematically challenge leaders, particularly in relation to pupil outcomes. Together, the governing body and new headteacher form a strong partnership which is already improving many aspects of the school's work.
- Governors are keen to ensure that their skills are regularly updated and they frequently undertake a skills audit to ensure that they are in a strong position to oversee all aspects of the school's work. Governors are keen to grow and develop and they partake enthusiastically in training opportunities to develop their ability to govern effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because leaders have established a culture whereby all staff understand their responsibility to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- The school's record of recruitment checks on the suitability of adults to work with children meets requirements.
- Staff are vigilant to signs of abuse and neglect. Systems for making referrals to the designated safeguarding lead are understood by all and used effectively. Record-keeping is precise and the school liaises well with a range of external agencies and with pupils' parents.
- Staff receive regular training on different aspects of safeguarding, including e-safety and how they can keep pupils safe from people with extreme views and from being radicalised. There is a robust induction programme for staff new to the school and those who work part time.
- Teachers clearly understand what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of a colleague.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Information from leaders' quality-assurance processes and from first-hand inspection evidence shows that teaching overall is good and improving.
- Leaders have been uncompromising in their commitment to ensuring that pupils are taught by subject specialists. As a result, teachers have strong subject knowledge, which they use to plan stimulating work for pupils. This strong subject knowledge helps teachers to spot and address pupils' misconceptions and enables them to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- A great deal of teaching is highly effective and supports pupils to make rapid and sustained gains in their learning. In these lessons, teachers have exceptionally high expectations of pupils and they provide work for pupils which is challenging and carefully matched to their aptitudes and abilities. Some excellent examples of effective questioning were seen, in which teachers' questioning carefully assessed pupils' understanding and challenged them to think more deeply about complex issues.
- Although it is evident that teaching is quickly improving, leaders acknowledge that there is still too much variability in the quality of teaching. Not all teachers routinely use questioning to check pupils' understanding and deepen their thinking. Furthermore, not all teachers have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and, as a consequence, some teachers do not consistently provide pupils of different abilities with work that challenges them to make the fastest progress possible. The variation in teaching quality is more pronounced in areas of the curriculum where outcomes are less impressive, particularly in languages and humanities.
- The quality of assessment is also variable across the curriculum. Assessment in English, mathematics and science is of a very high quality throughout the school. Teachers in these subjects know precisely how well their pupils are attaining and they intervene quickly to ensure that pupils who are at risk of falling behind are supported effectively.

Specialist teaching assistants in these areas are making a marked contribution to developing the effectiveness of teaching. In contrast, assessment in other areas of the curriculum is less effective and, in some subjects, teachers have developed an overly generous view of the progress being made by pupils. As a result, underachievement is not always spotted and pupils do not always receive the bespoke support needed to ensure that they make fast progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders make sure that pupils are cared for well.
- Pupils are committed to doing their best. They wear the school uniform with pride, are punctual to lessons and diligently complete their homework. These attitudes and behaviours ensure that very little time is wasted in lessons.
- British values are promoted effectively alongside the school's Christian ethos. Pupils' understanding of democracy has been developed in many ways, such as through their participation in a mock European Union referendum.
- The school's work to promote equality is strong and helps pupils to become tolerant and respectful of others. For example, pupils have recently learned about the life of the computer scientist Alan Turing, as a vehicle for learning about the harmful effects of homophobia and different forms of discrimination.
- Strong links with global, national and local charities encourage pupils to help others and develop a sense of social responsibility.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare at the school. Pupils know whom to speak to if they encounter bullying and they are confident that members of staff will resolve any issues effectively.
- Pupils say that the use of derogatory and prejudicial language is very rare at the school because of the work done by the school to promote respect and understanding. They particularly valued a recent talk given by members of the police on the damaging impact of different hate crimes.
- Pupils respond positively to the school's work to keep them safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and are aware of how to manage risk outside school. For example, pupils have received advice and guidance on how to cycle safely to support the large group of pupils who cycle to school.
- Leaders have effectively prioritised the promotion of pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing. The benefits of regular exercise are actively promoted and participation rates in extra-curricular sport are very high. Leaders have employed a counsellor who is deployed to support pupils to maintain their mental health. The school has also recently embarked on a joint project with Lancaster University to promote awareness of different aspects of mental health.
- The school works closely with alternative providers to ensure that the very small number of pupils in alternative provision are safe and well looked after.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school has a clear behaviour policy and has established procedures for dealing with poor behaviour that are clearly understood by pupils.
- Pupil behaviour in the vast majority of observed lessons was positive and focused. In the small minority of lessons where low-level misbehaviour was evident, teachers managed this effectively using the school's systems. As a result, the negative impact of poor behaviour was minimised and little time was wasted. Conversations with pupils and teachers confirmed that behaviour in lessons is good and that pupils are responsive to instructions given by teachers.
- Pupils behave well around the school site. Pupils are friendly and courteous. They generally move around the site in a calm and considerate manner.
- Pupils' attendance is good and consistently above the national average. Staff at the school effectively promote the virtues of high attendance and the school has robust procedures in place for monitoring absence and supporting individual pupils whose attendance drops. Leaders are taking effective action to address the small group of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who are regularly absent from school. As a result, the attendance of these groups is improving.
- There are very few incidents of serious misbehaviour at the school. Rates of exclusion are below national averages and reducing quickly. The school utilises an 'isolation' facility as an alternative to fixed-term exclusion. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high in this facility and pupils are supported to ensure that they keep pace with their academic studies on the rare occasions they are removed from their usual lessons.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. Pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. This is a result of strong teaching, effective assessment and interventions that provide carefully targeted support for pupils at risk of falling behind in their studies.
- Outcomes across the rest of the curriculum are good, particularly when compared to the progress made by all boys nationally. The school's positive and ambitious ethos has made a strong contribution to instilling within pupils a tangible commitment to doing their best and achieving highly.
- Leaders provided information that indicates pupils are beginning to make faster progress in subjects beyond English and mathematics. They attribute this improvement to the development of teaching across the curriculum. Leaders also provided information that indicates that pupils throughout the school are making strong progress. Despite this, leaders do acknowledge that pupils in some years are making faster progress than others. Leaders also accept that progress in key stage 3 remains strongest in English and mathematics and they are keen to see more rapid progress being made across the curriculum and particularly in languages and humanities.
- Pupils make strong progress from different starting points. The overall progress of

pupils with low, middle and high prior attainment compares favourably to boys with similar starting points nationally. Leaders have focused on accelerating the progress made by the most able pupils and there is clear evidence that these endeavours are having a positive impact.

- Pupils who start the school needing to catch up with their peers are well supported and make quick progress. This is because these pupils receive carefully targeted support that addresses gaps in their understanding. These pupils work with specialist numeracy and literacy teaching assistants who deliver appropriate interventions. As a result of this work, the majority of pupils needing to catch up make strong progress and most advance to levels that are very similar to those of other pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress from their starting points and their achievement is at least as good as other pupils. Teachers know the disadvantaged pupils very well and they are exceptionally supportive and attentive to their needs. Teachers have high expectations of these pupils and they ensure that they receive the necessary support to thrive.
- The school has a very small group of pupils who are educated by alternative providers. Leaders work in close partnership with these providers. However, due to complex needs, these pupils have made variable levels of progress in the past.
- Pupils benefit from extensive careers guidance, which becomes increasingly detailed and frequent from Year 9 onwards. Pupils are provided with valuable information about different options available to them when they leave school. They also have individual meetings with an independent careers advisor. As a result of this work, and the wider efforts of the school, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and the overwhelming majority of pupils advance to destinations that are well suited to their interests, aptitudes and aspirations.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The sixth form offers an academic curriculum, with students following a range of A-level courses. There are no vocational courses offered.
- Leadership of most aspects of the sixth form is strong. Leaders and teachers know the students very well. They provide all students with highly individualised support that enables them to achieve well and progress to an impressive array of appropriate destinations. However, not all students currently complete work experience while in the sixth form. As a result, not all students gain valuable first-hand insights into the world of work that would help them to develop and refine their future plans.
- Students benefit from an extensive range of opportunities to enrich their academic studies and these play an important role in their wider personal development. For example, students celebrate Christmas and raise money for charity by completing an annual 'Santa Dash' which involves them running a mile dressed as Father Christmas. The sixth form has a renowned debating society and many thriving sports clubs. Sixth-form staff run a selection of trips and visits that take students to places such as New York and Krakow. However, leaders do not currently track and monitor students' participation in enrichment opportunities. As a result, leaders cannot be sure that all students are taking full advantage of the impressive opportunities on offer.

- Many students choose to take advantage of the many opportunities to gain leadership experience while in the sixth form. From participation in the vibrant sixth form council to being a senior prefect or supporting younger pupils with their reading, students gain valuable experience that enriches their time in the sixth form and makes an important contribution to the running of the school.
- Rates of attendance are high in the sixth form and students' punctuality is excellent. The proportion of students completing their studies compares favourably with national averages.
- A small number of students enter the sixth form without attaining a grade C or above in English or mathematics. These students receive appropriate teaching and support. The success rates when these students retake these examinations are significantly above national figures.
- The progress that students make in the sixth form in relation to their GCSE grades is impressive and was well above national averages in 2015. Students' progress was broadly in line with national averages in 2016, although information provided by leaders indicates that the pace of progress has accelerated again this year. Overall, rates of progress compare favourably to national averages.
- Teaching is consistently strong across the sixth form. Teachers have high expectations of what and how students learn. Students are supported effectively to become proficient and resilient independent learners.
- Students are deeply committed to their studies. They are articulate, engaging and speak with pride about the sixth form.
- Students receive a wealth of information that helps them to make informed decisions about their career planning. In addition to regular talks from employers and universities, students benefit from personalised expert advice from the sixth form leaders and independent careers advisor. The majority of students go to university after the sixth form. However, leaders ensure that students are well informed about the range of opportunities available to them after the sixth form.
- Students are encouraged to look after their physical and mental well-being now and in the future. For example, students have recently contributed to the compilation of a cookbook that was designed to provide students with cheap and healthy recipes when living independently. The school counsellor is also on hand to support students to maintain their mental health.
- The sixth form leaders' work to keep students safe is highly effective. Students receive valuable information on topics from healthy relationships to road safety. As a result, students talk knowledgeably about potential risks and they say they are able to make informed decisions about matters relating to their own personal safety.

School details

Unique reference number	119794
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10032817

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 comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	909
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Tipping
Headteacher	Mark Bradshaw
Telephone number	01772 613112
Website	www.huttongrammar.org
Email address	head@hutton.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2008

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Hutton Church of England Grammar School is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much

lower than the national average, although the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

- The school is for boys. However, the sixth form is mixed. There are a higher proportion of male students in Year 12 and Year 13.
- One pupil currently attends off-site provision at Shaftesbury High School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across a range of subjects and year groups, including some joint observations with school leaders. They also carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, and talked informally with others at break and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. An inspector listened to a group of four pupils read.
- Discussions were held with staff, including senior and middle leaders and classroom teachers. A meeting was held with the chair of governors and four other governors. An inspector also met with representatives of the diocese and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised information about the school's performance and a range of other documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, its development plan and a selection of policies. They also looked at the school's website and information on the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.

Inspection team

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Tanya Sheaff	Ofsted Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
Kath Harris	Ofsted Inspector
Annette Patterson	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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