

Welburn Hall School

Kirkbymoorside, York, North Yorkshire, YO62 7HQ

Inspection dates 1–2 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- As a result of good leadership and management the good practice identified at the previous inspection has been further developed.
- Leaders and an effective governing body work well together in promoting good learning across the school. The governing body is well-informed and maintains close oversight of the school's performance.
- Teaching is typically good. Pupils in all key stages learn well in lessons. Consequently, pupils' achievement is good from their different starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have very positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between pupils and staff are outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is high.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal and social development. They support each other very well.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the school are outstanding. Parents agree that their children are safe, and staff as well as pupils confirm this.
- Very good links with the local community and educational partners enable pupils to follow work-related learning courses.
- Pupils are prepared well for adulthood in modern multicultural Britain. They display tolerance and patience with others.
- The school has the support of parents. They would recommend the school to others.
- Provision in the sixth form is good. Students follow a wide range of activities that develop their independence well. This prepares them well for when they leave school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Recent improvements in the use of teaching assistants are not yet fully secure across the school.
- The range of externally recognised courses does not fully meet the needs of students in Key Stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- The residential provision was not inspected at this inspection; it was last inspected in May 2014.
- Inspectors visited 10 lessons and a member of the senior leadership team accompanied inspectors during most of these visits.
- Meetings were held with all members of the senior leadership team and the subject leaders for mathematics and physical education. Discussions also took place with the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, and a local authority officer.
- The inspection team collected the views of parents from the 10 who completed the Parent View, the online questionnaire, and additional information from the school’s own survey of its parents.
- Inspectors considered the views of 31 staff that completed the Ofsted questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with pupils in order to give them an opportunity to talk about the school. They listened to some pupils read, and scrutinised pupils’ English and mathematics workbooks.
- The inspection team examined a range of documentation, such as those relating to safeguarding procedures; the school’s own judgements of its strengths and areas for development; school improvement plans; attendance records and behaviour logs and information about pupils’ progress and achievement.

Inspection team

Henry Moreton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Bailey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Welburn Hall School is situated in the predominantly rural area of Ryedale, North Yorkshire.
- It is a residential school that caters for pupils aged eight to 19 with a wide range of learning needs. These include: physical difficulties, moderate or severe learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions, sensory impairment, profound and multiple learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties and complex medical conditions.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an Educational, Health and Care Plan.
- Boarding provision is organised on a flexible basis. All 16 to 19 year-olds board Monday to Friday and approximately two-thirds of the remainder board for one, two or three nights a week.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium, is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Pupils are predominantly White British. A small number come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Pupils have usually attended a mainstream school or another special school before coming to Welburn Hall. They join the school at different stages in their education.
- The school uses alternative provision at Lady Lumley school in Pickering and, more typically, at Askham Bryan College, near York.
- Since the previous inspection, the leadership team has been re-structured and the leadership of the governing body has changed. Currently, the school is undergoing changes in its non-teaching staffing structures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure outstanding learning is consistent across the school by checking that recent developments in the use of teaching assistants are firmly secured in everyday practice.
- Ensure students in Key Stage 4 are given even more choices by developing the range of externally recognised qualifications.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and the governing body have worked well together to maintain an effective, safe and caring school. They have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school's provision. Together with staff they are self-critical and strive for excellence. Staff make pupils' personal development and independence priorities. They ensure that pupils learn effectively and have established an ethos where behaviour is outstanding.
- The headteacher has developed a culture that places the highest importance on the quality of relationships. Her commitment to pupils' rights and promoting equality of opportunity lie at the heart of the school's work. As a result, discrimination and unfair practice are not tolerated.
- Leaders have an accurate picture of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance both in school and when they attend off-site provisions.
- There are good procedures for monitoring teachers' performance and improving the quality of teaching. Regular checks are made on learning in lessons and progress over time as seen in pupils' workbooks, as well as half-termly assessments of pupils' progress.
- Middle managers carry out their duties effectively. For example, they have ensured that improvements in the school's management of reading are starting to make a difference, and that plans for giving sixth formers more options are well underway.
- Leaders use additional funding effectively. The pupil premium has been used to purchase specialist learning aids, and to provide additional support for individuals. It has also paid for additional provision such as music therapy and pupils' participation in school residentials. Year 7 catch-up funding has targeted English and mathematics resources. The impact of this additional funding is evident in the improved progress made by disadvantaged pupils and that of the lower-ability students in Year 7.
- The school has made good progress in implementing the new National Curriculum. The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is supported by an extensive range of activities, including in music, the arts and drama. These give students a good understanding of cultures and religions other than their own. As a result, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is very well used to fund specialist instructors and training for teachers, for example in gymnastics. It is also used to enable pupils to access more advanced swimming sessions and participate in a wide range of activities such as archery, boccia and canoeing.
- Good careers advice is an important part of the very effective work-related learning programme. Work experience and college links contribute well to preparing students for leaving school. All leavers transfer into continuing education or, for the most able, into work-based training. Students' personal achievements, such as using public transport independently, all help to prepare them for their futures.
- Leaders have developed strong relationships with people in the local community, many of whom visit the school to take part in the many social activities such as productions and performances.
- Links with parents are strong. A typical comment is, 'My family have full confidence in Welburn Hall School. My son is looked after and given the best opportunity for learning to the best of his ability every day. We are lucky to be part of such a special school.'
- The staff have similarly positive views about the school, a typical comment being, 'It is a pleasure to be part of a very positive, supportive and professional team who focus on enabling our pupils to achieve their full potential.'
- The local authority makes a good contribution to helping the school to improve through the challenge and support provided by the link officer and the advice provided for the governing body.
- The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Safeguarding procedures are very secure and reviewed regularly. Effective recruitment procedures, underpinned by good advice from the local authority, ensure that the school only employs adults who are suitable for working with children.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is ably led, ambitious for pupils and has a clear vision for the school's future.
 - Governors have ensured that all of the areas for improvement from the previous school inspection have been systematically addressed. For example, subject leaders now monitor and evaluate provision in their areas of responsibility and this is evidenced by, for instance, improvements in pupils' reading and their active participation in a wide range of physical education and sport.
 - At the same time, governors have overseen other significant developments including the re-organisation of the leadership team, improvements to support given to teachers in the classroom and the school's arrangements for office and administrative support.

- Governors receive regular reports about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. They get the information they need to know in order for them to plan over the longer term. As a result, their strategic planning is improving, as instanced by their plans to improve the provision in Key Stage 2 and in the sixth form further.
- Governors understand the quality of teaching and the arrangements for managing teachers' performance. They know how good teachers are rewarded and how underperformance is tackled.
- Governors monitor the expenditure of all additional funding very closely. They have detailed knowledge of the impact of the pupil premium, Year 7 catch-up funding and the primary physical education and sport funding. As a result, governors understand how these monies have contributed to raising standards and to the improved progress made by disadvantaged pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Fixed-term exclusions are used sparingly. There have not been any recent racist instances or incidents of bullying. Parents and staff agree that pupils are free from intimidation and harassment, and pupils confirm this is the case.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour extends to when they are on work experience, attending alternative provision and on the many visits, including the residential experiences. This is because of staffs' high expectations.
- Pupils make excellent progress in learning how to develop relationships. Typically, a member of the support staff commented, 'Our children care for, support and encourage younger and less able children in both learning and play... I see examples of this every day,' reflecting the observations of inspectors.
- The most able pupils listen to others read and are very supportive in their oral and written comments.
- Pupils enjoy being at school and this is reflected in their attendance as well as their conduct. They wear their uniform with pride.
- Pupils make excellent progress in all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their appreciation of British values. Recently, they participated very enthusiastically when electing a head girl and head boy for the first time.
- There are very occasional instances of potentially disruptive behaviour but this is unavoidable given the complexity of some pupils' learning difficulties and conditions. Staff manage and record any disruption that occurs exceptionally well. Such is the ethos that exists in lessons and around the school, that the learning of other pupils is rarely affected. Pupils are very tolerant towards others.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- All parents and staff who completed questionnaires confirmed that students are safe and this was supported by inspection evidence.
- Effective training ensures staff's knowledge is up to date in matters of pupils' safety and well-being. This means that pupils have an age appropriate understanding about sex and relationships and risk taking, including the safe use of the internet.
- The school places significant weight on ensuring pupils develop independence and does so while emphasising the potential dangers in the community.
- Pupils are very well supervised in and around the school. Effective risk assessments maintain their safety when they are learning in the community and further afield. Pupils are safe when they are studying in local schools and colleges because they are well supervised.
- Pupils have a good understanding about road safety because of the well-managed programme for travel planning.
- School leaders and the governing body regularly review the safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure their effectiveness. They are well supported in this by the local authority.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good. Pupils with different types of learning difficulty are taught equally well. Learning is sometimes outstanding because of the quality of the relationships between pupils and all staff. Pupils' interest in their work has a strong impact on their positive attitudes and behaviour. This improves

as pupils move through the school.

- Pupils respond positively in lessons because staff use communication approaches well. These include symbols and signing as well as electronic communications systems. This was used well in enabling pupils to access therapeutic music and in developing their independence.
- Phonics (recognising the sounds linked to letters) is taught well as a result of staff training. This and an improved range of reading books in the well-stocked library, encourages pupils to make good progress in becoming more fluent readers.
- Pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and indicate preferences. Adjustments to the curriculum are, for example, enabling sixth formers to exercise much more choice about what they learn, tailored to their lives after they leave school.
- Teaching in all subjects makes a good contribution to developing pupils' communication skills and supports their progress in literacy. Skilled use of questioning gives pupils the opportunity to demonstrate understanding, which they are keen to do. The most able pupils assess the work of others.
- Teachers develop pupils' numeracy skills well not only in mathematics but in other subjects too. In science, for example, there is a strong emphasis on estimation and using the standard units of measure.
- Teaching assistants are making an improving contribution to the overall quality of teaching. They enjoy excellent relationships with pupils and are quick to nip potential incidents in the bud. Their skills and expertise are well used in the sixth form where they take a lead in the different curriculum themes.
- While teaching is good, it is not yet outstanding because there are still some inconsistencies across the key stages in how well the teaching assistants are used.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils enter the school working at levels that are below those expected for their age. By the time they leave the school, pupils have made good progress in developing their skills in English and mathematics and outstanding progress in their personal development.
- The most able students make good progress and because of this, they usually move on to work-based training at the age of 19.
- Pupils make good progress in the alternative provision where because of good teaching and excellent relationships, they acquire skills that enhance their employment prospects.
- There are no significant variations in the rates of progress of different groups of pupils. Pupils with different types of learning difficulty achieve equally well. Boys and girls make comparable progress and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do just as well as others in the school.
- The additional funding that the school receives has a positive impact on the performance of disadvantaged pupils, including their achievement in English and mathematics, and ensures that their progress is as good as their classmates.
- Good teaching results in many pupils making better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Many make better than expected progress in developing their communication skills. Pupils' reading records show that they read often and to different people, including to each other. Workbooks in English and mathematics show good use of information and communications technology, and the use of photographic evidence. There is an emphasis on developing pupils' life skills, for example, using numbers to manage bus and train timetables, estimating and measuring in science and cookery.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because of the rather limited range of nationally recognised qualifications on offer to pupils.
- Many sixth formers make outstanding progress in their personal development and independence. They are attentive listeners and develop a mature understanding of their own strengths and targets. By the time they leave school, those with less complex conditions have begun to narrow the gap between their attainment and that of students nationally.

The sixth form provision

is good

- The provision is led and managed well. It meets the needs of individual students through providing activities that interest them and enable them to learn well. Students are prepared well for the next stages of their lives, with all making a successful transfer into continuing education or training.
- Over the three years they typically spend in the sixth form, students follow individual academic programmes based around three major themes: horticulture, catering and animal care. These programmes take into account students' aspirations and future plans. There are plans in place to add

sport to the options and also to give students more choice.

- The quality of teaching is good. Learning is planned to develop students' independence. The life skills developed include shopping, cooking and travel, alongside work related learning such as college courses and work experience. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and have a practical focus so that students are able to read timetables and use money.
- Students achieve well in English and mathematics and, above all, in their work-related skills. The behaviour of students in the sixth form is outstanding. They interact maturely with each other and with staff.
- Students are always accompanied when they are off-site and so the school know about the sixth formers' attendance and behaviour, as well as their progress.
- The school's overall safeguarding procedures ensure that sixth formers are safe. There is high level of staff supervision, with teaching assistants playing a key role.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	121766
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	449489

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	8–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Aber
Headteacher	Hazel Smith
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2011
Telephone number	01751 431 218
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