

Risedale Sports and Community College

Hipswell, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire, DL9 4BD

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2015

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the last inspection standards have risen sharply and pupils make good progress.
- The quality of teaching and learning overall has improved and is now good. Teachers use information on pupils’ learning to plan effectively so that all groups of pupils are appropriately challenged in their work.
- Gaps in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils when compared with their peers nationally are narrowing over time.
- Leaders at all levels have responded well to the areas of improvement given in the last inspection. Teachers’ targets are clear and specific, and literacy skills have improved, as has attendance.
- The associate and executive principals work tirelessly to drive standards and progress rates higher. Thus, the ethos and culture of the school is highly effective in securing good academic and personal outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils show mature and tolerant attitudes to those from traditions different from their own.
- The support offered to pupils who have a special educational or health need is good and ensures that their progress is similar to that of their peers.
- Pupils attend more regularly than previously and exclusions are reducing. Persistent absence has fallen sharply.
- Leaders ensure good-quality provision for the large proportion of pupils from military families. They ensure that pupils’ needs are met well, both emotionally and academically.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They are smart, diligent, punctual and ready to learn. Behaviour is good. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- Pupils say they are safe and know how to be safe both online and in their practical lessons.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and staff are positive about the quality of education the school provides.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attendance is not yet as high as it should be.
- Middle leaders need to ensure that the school’s marking and assessment policy is fully implemented by all staff so that pupils always make the best progress.
- Occasionally, staff do not quickly identify slowing of progress, particularly for a few of the highest-ability pupils in Years 9 and 11.
- The gaps in the progress of disadvantaged pupils when compared with their peers nationally and in school need to narrow further.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that the progress all groups of pupils make remains at least good by:
 - challenging teachers to apply the school's agreed marking and assessment policy to all pupils' work, so that they are challenged to do their very best at all times, particularly some higher-ability pupils in Years 9 and 11
 - challenging all pupils at all times to produce the highest-quality work and widen the implementation of writing skills development to all subject areas
 - ensuring that middle leaders are all equally skilful in using assessment information to track pupils' progress to enable swift intervention if, and where, progress requires boosting
 - matching the rates of progress made in pupils' writing to the strong progress seen in reading.

- Continue to focus on reducing the rates of absence so that attendance levels at least reach national averages.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the last inspection, the associate principal and senior team have been relentless in improving the quality of teaching to effect better outcomes for pupils. Additionally, the associate principal has challenged and supported staff and pupils to believe they can achieve and be successful. He has created a caring culture in which pupils can flourish and prepare well for their next stage in education, training or employment.
- The local authority, executive principal and other staff at the federated Northallerton School & Sixth Form College have supported leaders at all levels, including governors. This has had a major impact on driving up standards and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Results have risen sharply over the last three years so that in 2015 almost half of the Year 11 pupils gained five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including in English and mathematics. Given the very low starting points of the pupils on joining the school, these results represent good progress.
- Leaders do their utmost to provide well for a highly mobile school population. Pupils, for example joining the school midyear in Year 11, are supported by additional teachers in their study of courses not available at the school.
- Leaders review performance in all areas of the school accurately and robustly. As a result, school improvement planning is focused, meticulous and driven by regular monitoring and clear accountability.
- The leadership of teaching and continuing professional development is good. The school has a core team of leaders who are driving the quality of teaching higher through careful auditing of performance and bespoke training. Teachers are growing in confidence and skill in driving pupils' learning in specialist areas. Teachers are held to account for their performance which is linked to salary progression.
- The information held by the school on pupils' performance across all year groups and subjects is comprehensive and increasingly accurate. Senior leaders use this well to seek out medium- and long-term actions for improvement. However, not all middle leaders have the skills to use the information effectively enough in their own areas. There are still occasions, increasingly few, where pupils who show signs of underachievement are not noticed quickly enough. Middle leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching, on the other hand, are astute. They know where their staff perform best and they know the needs of their staff well.
- Both staff and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and its leadership due to good communication and a very strong ethos of care and support. Support for those who join the school with low literacy skills is good. The reading-recovery programme has resulted in some impressive gains. For example, pupils on catch-up activities in reading have made on average two years' progress in their reading age in less than a calendar year. Although writing still has some way to catch up with the gains made in reading, plans are in place for staff to further develop pupils' skills. Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively in this area.
- Pupil premium funding has been spent effectively to effect improvements in attendance and a reduction in persistent absence. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent within the school is declining. However, attendance improvements remain a challenge for the school.
- Leaders' actions are increasingly successful in narrowing the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and those of their peers nationally and within school. Gaps in both English and mathematics are closing. Inspection evidence suggests that this continues to be the case, except in Years 9 and 11 where they remain stubbornly wide. In part, these gaps are related to the challenging histories of some pupils.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that remains broad and balanced despite the small size of the school. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. While a few pupils say they would have liked some more choice in their GCSE options, most say they are happy with what they are studying. Careers education is effective with all but a very few pupils progressing to worthwhile next stages. School leaders have created a very close bond with the military garrison. Soldiers often support pupils in their learning, for example in reading programmes. There is a mutual support ethos between the army and the school through the unique 'community covenant' they have agreed.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body is shared with Northallerton School & Sixth Form College through the hard federation link that exists between the two schools.

- The local garrison commander of the army is a governor of the school and helps to ensure that the whole community is represented.
- The governing body has been restructured in the last year. Skills audits have been carried out and governors aligned to their skills and expertise. Training by the local authority has helped them to carry out their roles well.
- Governors hold leaders at all levels to account with regular challenges in meetings. Governing body minutes of meetings show that they ask searching questions and demand clear answers.
- Governors ensure that teachers make progress through the pay scales only when they can clearly demonstrate that they have reached all of their three performance targets.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Background checks on staff are thorough and well kept, and both staff and pupils are vigilant at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Since the last inspection, teaching has improved rapidly. The progress pupils make is now good overall, resulting in rising standards in GCSE examinations.
- Teachers' planning usually takes good account of the prior learning of pupils and lessons are taught at the appropriate level of challenge for most pupils. However, for a few most-able pupils, particularly in Years 9 and 11, and particularly in English, the level of challenge is not always as high as it should be. As a result, these pupils may not always make fast enough progress. That said, because of small numbers these figures affect disproportionately the published information on the school's overall progress rates. Overall, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make better than average progress as a result of the much improved teaching.
- Teachers know their subjects well. They have developed a clear culture of learning and respect with their pupils for whom they obviously care deeply.
- Teachers are relentless in auditing their own needs to improve their teaching and are open to others making constructive suggestions. A strong team of four lead practitioners drives support and training, and this is having a good impact on the quality of teaching.
- Teachers skilfully use questioning to check pupils' progress throughout lessons. Most teachers set clear targets to help pupils understand where they are academically, and what they need to do to improve. Most of the time, pupils respond well to any advice given by teachers in their marking. A few teachers are not using the school's marking procedures or data systems diligently enough. As a consequence, sometimes pupils, particularly the most able, are not always challenged to do their very best.
- Across all subject areas there is clear support for pupils to develop their love of reading. Teachers maximise opportunities for pupils to read widely and often. Language skills are developed increasingly well.
- Teachers support pupils' confidence through very strong working relationships and excellent care. Thus, pupils are confident enough to ask searching questions of their teachers and challenge staff appropriately when they are confused or want to share a considered opinion. Teachers are aspirational for their pupils. However, on occasion, some teachers do not always challenge poor presentation.
- Other adults in the classroom are deployed well. They know what they have to do through clear guidance by leaders and direction by the teachers with whom they are working.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are smart, courteous and show care for each other. They are punctual to lessons and are prepared for the learning that is about to take place. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good overall.
- Pupils say that they are safe and feel safe. Parents and staff overwhelmingly agree that this is the case. Pupils know how to spot signs of extremism and how to keep themselves safe online and in practical lessons.
- The school's work to support pupils' understanding of differences, through a very wide equalities awareness programme, ensures that they are tolerant to others.

- Pupils say that they feel prepared for leaving school and most know what they want to do when they leave. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said they have many opportunities to investigate possible career pathways, and those who already know what they want to do are given clear guidance in order to achieve their chosen direction. Even pupils who are undecided say that the school holds regular conversations with them to ascertain what support they might need and to develop their thinking.
- The promotion of British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Pupils know that adults will help them if they have any concerns. Similarly, pupils take part in a wide variety of community activities. In the recent 'poppy project' pupils worked with the local garrison and veterans to create their own field of poppies and raised £5,000 for the community.
- Attendance remains an important issue for the school. While rising overall, there are still a few pupils who remain absent for too long.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour around school and at social times is good and managed well. Pupils interact with each other comfortably and are supportive of each other. They appear happy and content.
- Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about pupils and their behaviour.
- Attitudes to learning are occasionally not as high as they could be. For example, a few pupils do not always take the advice given by teachers in marking, or sometimes they produce work that is not of the highest quality.
- The leadership of behaviour is good and records are well maintained and clearly focused to identify any patterns or trends of emerging poor behaviours.
- Fixed-term exclusions have reduced significantly but are not as low as they should be.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils often enter Year 7 with lower than average skills. By the time pupils leave, they have made up much lost ground but their performance is still below national averages. In 2015, close to half of Year 11 pupils gained five or more good GCSE passes, including in English and mathematics. Given their starting points, this represents good progress overall.
- The rates of progress for all groups of pupils are higher than national averages due to the good teaching that now occurs. However, there are still a very few most-able pupils who do not make fast enough rates of progress, particularly in the current Years 9 and 11.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well in their learning. Consequently, the progress they make is similar to that of other pupils in the school.
- The gaps between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers nationally in both English and mathematics are reducing overall and over time.
- Standards overall are rising. For example, in 2015, the number of higher grades gained by pupils in science rose from 27% to 65%, in religious education from 29% to 86%, in mathematics from 57% to 66%, and in English from 34% to 57% in just two years.
- Any pupils entered early for GCSE examinations reach the highest standards they are capable of and are only entered when the school is sure that they will reach the highest available grades.

School details

Unique reference number	121663
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10002063

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Barker
Associate principal	John A Kelly
Telephone number	01748 833501
Website	www.risedale.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@risedale.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school is part of a federation with Northallerton School & Sixth Form College.
- Approximately 40% of the children come from families who have one or more parents in the military. As a result, the mobility of pupils is high and often involves large numbers at a time. In-year admissions are frequent.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan or in receipt of special education needs support is less than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage with very few from minority ethnic backgrounds or whose first language is not English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The school does not use any off-site alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school enters some pupils early for GCSE examinations.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons and parts of lessons, one of which was a joint observation with leaders.
- Formal discussions were held with three groups of pupils, the governing body, senior leaders, middle leaders, lead practitioners, the associate and executive principals, and the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work in pupils' books in English and mathematics as well as in all lessons observed during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils before school and in social spaces during break times, holding informal discussions with them as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of supporting documents in regard to safeguarding and child protection, minutes of governing body meetings, performance management, progress data and external reports.
- Inspectors took account of 16 online responses to questionnaires by parents and of 37 staff and five pupils.

Inspection team

Colin Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Bernard Clarke	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Williams	Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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