

# Longridge High School A Maths and Computing College

Preston Road, Longridge, Preston, Lancashire PR3 3AR

## Inspection dates

12–13 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The positive improvements that leaders and governors have made have increased pupil progress in some year groups but not across all years groups.
- The progress and attainment of boys, middleability pupils, and of disadvantaged pupils, were below national averages in 2016.
- Overall, outcomes for pupils in English and mathematics for those in the upper school are improving, but remain below national averages.
- The improvements in teaching have not helped pupils equally in both key stages to improve their learning over time. The progress of pupils in key stage 4 is not as fast as it is for pupils in key stage 3.
- Leaders, governors and staff are increasingly ambitious for every pupil. The school is now improving. Steps taken since the last inspection are increasing the progress of pupils, especially those in key stage 3.
- Governors have used training and external support well to ensure that they challenge senior leaders more effectively.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to improve the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, especially middle-ability disadvantaged pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching is improving. However, some teaching does not challenge pupils to make good progress.

- Some teachers do not use their questions effectively to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The level of absence of pupils in Year 11 is not reducing as fast as the absence of pupils in other year groups.
- Some teachers and middle leaders are not consistently using the school's assessment system to inform pupils' future learning and to improve pupils' progress.
- Leaders have effectively reduced the level of persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 3.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils say they feel safe. They speak very positively of the support they receive from staff.
- The quality of extra support to improve reading, writing and spelling skills is good. Consequently, more pupils now read more regularly.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching so that more pupils make faster progress by:
  - challenging pupils of different abilities so that they develop their knowledge, skills and understanding more rapidly
  - devising and planning questions that deepen pupils' thinking and understanding.
- Ensure that leaders and managers check that teachers and middle leaders use the assessment system consistently well to inform pupils' future learning and to improve the progress that pupils make.
- Improve attendance, especially in Year 11.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In the past, the quality of teaching varied across the school and between and within subjects. Consequently, pupils made better progress in some subjects than in others. As a result of actions taken by leaders, including subject leaders, this variability in quality has reduced. Pupils, especially younger pupils, are beginning to make better progress.
- Staff share leaders' vision to improve the quality of teaching. Staff have become increasingly enthusiastic about the training opportunities offered by the leaders to improve their practice. Teachers and other adults have visited other schools to explore best practice. They have also acted on advice from the local authority. Most teachers have grasped these opportunities. However, not all teachers have had the support that they need to incorporate the best practice into their own teaching.
- Leaders recognise that teachers still need to improve challenge and develop their questioning skills. They have appropriate plans in place.
- The emerging improvement in teaching has been accompanied by a concerted effort by subject and senior leaders to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' progress. Middle and senior leaders now have a more realistic view of the progress pupils make.
- There are some subjects, such as mathematics, science, history and geography, where improvements to teaching and outcomes have been slower. However, school leaders and governors have taken steps to recruit new staff as necessary.
- The actions taken by those newly appointed staff are increasingly evident. More pupils, especially middle-ability disadvantaged pupils, now make faster progress.
- The leaders of English, mathematics and science are eager to work together to tackle the legacy of lower achievement and have implemented clear plans to improve provision.
- Leaders have improved assessment systems to check pupils' progress. However, these systems need time to embed to improve learning and progress.
- Leaders have introduced a number of well thought through plans to focus on the needs of particular groups of pupils so they can begin to reach higher standards. In particular, high-quality support for disadvantaged pupils has improved progress for these pupils across key stage 3.
- This additional targeted support has also been effective in improving key stage 3 pupils' attendance. Leaders now use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to support higher aspirations and improve their learning and progress.

- The Year 7 catch-up funding and additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also used effectively.
- However, the signs of improved progress and attendance are less evident in key stage 4. Leaders recognise that this continues to be an area for more rapid improvement. They have devised effective plans to remedy these weaknesses.
- Leaders' arrangements to ensure that pupils develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, are strong in all curriculum areas. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to develop their skills in taking responsibility, in helping others in school, in helping out in the community and in expressing their views and opinions maturely through their school council. Pupils know the council is where they can make a difference to their school.
- Pupils benefit from regular sessions to explore health, well-being and relationships. Leaders also ensure that pupils understand the risks associated with social media and the internet. Additionally, there are good opportunities for pupils to plan their future careers. Specific events are organised where outside speakers and theatre groups visit the school to help pupils learn about risks outside school, including risks of extremism. There are also many opportunities pupils have to learn about British values, such as democracy and free speech. Pupils enjoy constructive discussion around more controversial topics.
- Leaders and governors reviewed the school's curriculum to ensure that it is effective and meets pupils' needs. As a result, leaders have decided to begin GCSE courses in Year 9, so that pupils have longer to develop the skills they need, particularly for the new examinations. In addition, pupils make decisions about courses, for example in science, at the end of Year 9 after having had experience of GCSE-level demands.
- Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities on offer, including a wide variety of sporting activities after school.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governors have taken part in training to help them to develop a clear understanding of the school's assessment system and how progress is measured. Governors have the appropriate skills and expertise to hold leaders to account. Governors actively sought an audit of their skills which identified clearly which areas they needed to develop. An action plan has been put into place.
- Governors are united in their determination to improve their expertise in leadership and the quality of teaching so that they can evaluate leaders' actions improve the school.

They have created link governors to each subject and pastoral area. Link governors explore their area over time and report back on improvements at meeting.

- As assessment systems have improved, governors have gained a much clearer understanding of the school's emerging strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors have supported the headteacher and school leaders in securing improvements to accountability. They have also challenged weaker practice. Governors evaluate evidence that accompanies applications for promotion and pay awards shrewdly because they are determined to develop the highest calibre of teaching. They have supported the headteacher in making changes in staffing, particularly to improve leadership.
- The governing body is aware of their statutory duties, including for safeguarding, and fulfil these duties successfully.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safeguarding policy is up to date and meets requirements. Procedures to inform leaders about concerns for pupils are followed through carefully. The local authority and the school work well together to take serious concerns to a higher level. Staff are vigilant in identifying pupils who may be at risk. There are extensive support systems across the school to ensure that those pupils who are vulnerable are well supported by skilled and knowledgeable staff. Training is regular and pupils describe their understanding of extremism and the risks in using social media networks and online communication frameworks clearly.
- All staff, particularly pastoral staff and form tutors, monitor attendance closely. Increased and innovative monitoring has led to a reduction in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who were persistently absent.
- The attendance and safety of pupils who are educated away from the school site is regularly checked, and progress on courses taken by pupils is closely monitored.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- The effectiveness of teaching was variable at the last inspection. This variability has now reduced. More pupils, especially those lower down the school, now make better progress. However, there have been differences in the alacrity with which a small number of teachers have taken up opportunities to include good practice into their teaching. This is because not all teachers have had the support they needed to adopt newer approaches.

- Training in questioning techniques, so pupils have to think for themselves, has helped many teachers to avoid giving answers to pupils too quickly. Use of these techniques has strengthened pupils' understanding, especially where understanding is initially fragile or pupils lack confidence in giving answers that might be wrong. However, some teachers need to think more carefully about how they devise and plan questions that deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- In pupils' written work seen, it was evident that teachers provide younger pupils with frequent opportunities to write extended answers. For example, pupils describe and explain different points of view on a controversial topic with ease. This strength in teaching is less evident for older pupils. In older pupils' books, descriptions were briefer and the use of more complex sentence structure or vocabulary was less evident. Leaders' strategies to support and develop pupils' learning in key stage 3 have been effective. However, there is still much more to do in key stage 4.
- Pupils are articulate, discuss topics and give their views confidently. In Year 7 history lessons, pupils could talk about the range of evidence for a historical event, both to the class and to other pupils. They developed a good understanding of what constitutes pertinent and significant evidence compared with less relevant facts and opinions. Pupils were able to reach their own decisions about what happened. Their learning and confidence were well supported by the teachers' good subject knowledge.
- Some teachers take specific steps to make sure pupils understand, read and spell more-complex subject terminology. However, this is not widespread across teaching or systematic across subjects. Pupils do, however, have extensive opportunities to read regularly. Those pupils with weaker reading skills are well supported to improve.
- Although teaching is improving, there remains a lack of challenge in a small proportion of teaching. This slows learning and progress. Some older pupils in particular said that work was sometimes too easy.
- Additional taught support is offered to any pupil at risk of falling behind. Leaders ensure that this type of support is extensive and responsive to individual pupils' needs.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and want to succeed. They take pride in their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have interviews in Year 10 to begin to make choices for education or training after Year 11. They also take part in online tasks that help them evaluate their skills

and talents, leading to suggestions for possible career options. The new key stage structure means that pupils have support at the end of Years 8, 9 and 10 to select sensible options that will support future choices well.

- Pupils take part in an active school council and they talk confidently about the suggestions that they had made in this forum that had been taken up by school leaders. They clearly feel they have a voice in the school which is listened to carefully.
- Pupils said that they know how to manage the risks from misuse of mobile phones and from social networking sites because of regular discussions in form time.
- Pupils also expressed confidence that bullying would always be dealt with quickly and effectively. The school organises particular events such as visiting groups who act out the consequences of decisions made in certain circumstances, such as associating with gangs.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and the vast majority have good attitudes to their learning. Most want to do well, although some pupils' attention wanes if they do not understand the task in hand, or the task is too easy.
- Although attendance declined overall by a small amount, the level of persistent absence of disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has reduced. Average attendance of year groups up to Year 10 are close to or above the national averages. However, attendance of pupils in Year 11 has been significantly lower than that of other year groups.
- The overall attendance measures for 2017 clearly show improvement for disadvantaged pupils and for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are vulnerable, particularly for those pupils who are well supported in the lower school. This is because of the additional support that pupils receive in these classes.
- The school is a calm environment where pupils support each other and work closely together. The pupils spoken to said that one of the best things about the school was the relationships that they have with staff who support them successfully. Pupils are considerate of each other. They understand the differences in people's lifestyles and beliefs because they recognise that they are part of a diverse world. There were no examples of derogatory or discriminatory language overheard during the inspection. Some pupils said that the term 'gay' might occasionally be used thoughtlessly but that this would be challenged and pupils were in no doubt that this was unacceptable. Pupils knew the full implications of such a term.

- The rate of fixed-term exclusions has reduced steadily and significantly in the last three years, both overall and for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils were permanently excluded in 2016/17 due to significant issues linked to events outside of school. Punctuality to school and to lessons is good and improving due to the reviewed approach to managing pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning. The school has also introduced two areas of provision to support and redirect pupils whose behaviour or attitude require support to improve. Consequently, fewer pupils are now excluded from school.
- Pupils spoken to said they felt safe in the school, and all pupils expressed that view in the pupil questionnaire. Most pupils would go to a member of staff if they needed help. Older pupils were firmly of the view that the new, revised approach to managing behaviour had significantly reduced the remnants of challenging behaviour that sometimes distracted pupils from their learning. They were pleased that they now had the opportunity to fully concentrate on their work.
- The school ensures that pupils educated away from the school site receive similar advice and support about extremism, social networking sites, online networks and how to manage risks outside school. Leaders ensure that they behave well and that they are safe.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- The attainment of pupils overall has continued to be in line with national averages over the last three years. Historically, however, the attainment of some groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, middle-ability pupils, boys and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been lower than other pupils nationally.
- Pupils arrive at the school working at levels similar to other pupils nationally. Some pupils, including many most able pupils, achieve the standards expected of them, by the end of key stage 4. Other pupils, however, make less progress in their learning. This is because they are not routinely challenged to achieve their potential.
- Most able pupils make good progress, especially in English and in mathematics, and attain standards similar to most able pupils nationally. They achieve the standards expected of them in modern foreign languages and in science. The vast majority attain at least eight good GCSE passes.
- Since 2016, actions taken by leaders have started to improve the progress made by pupils, particularly those in key stage 3. While the progress of older pupils in key stage 4 is also beginning to improve, it is not improving as quickly as in key stage 3.



- School leaders have worked closely with the local authority, with schools in the teaching school alliance and with other external partners to ensure that assessments of pupil progress are more accurate. Leaders and governors now have a more accurate picture of where progress is improving. They know and understand the challenges that lie ahead.
- Pupils who attend courses at alternative provision make good progress. Leaders monitor these pupils' progress carefully.
- More pupils than previously are progressing to employment, education or training; in 2016, all pupils successfully moved on to employment, education or training after Year 11.

## School details

Unique reference number	119749
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10036779

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
	Community
School category	11 to 16
Age range of pupils	Mixed
	759
Gender of pupils	The governing body
Number of pupils on the school roll	Mrs J Beckford
	Mrs J Green
Appropriate authority	01772 782316 <a href="http://lhs.lancs.sch.uk">lhs.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Chair	<a href="mailto:jgn@lhs.lancs.sch.uk">jgn@lhs.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Headteacher	10–11 November 2015
Telephone number	
Website	
Email address	
Date of previous inspection	

### Information about this school

■ The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

■ The school is a smaller than average 11 to 16 secondary school with specialisms of mathematics and computing. It serves a rural community.

- There have been some changes to the senior leadership team; a number of new teachers and some subject leaders have also been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.
- Pupils are mainly of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.
- 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, in 2016.

- The school is a member of the Preston Teaching School Alliance.
- A small number of pupils follow courses away from the school site at a number of different providers, including Creativity Works Preston, The Larches pupil referral unit, Shaftesbury House pupil referral unit, Preston's College, Myerscough College 14 to 19 provision and the Preston Vocational Centre.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in a range of subjects; some observations took place jointly with the headteacher and senior leaders. Inspectors also visited classrooms during intervention and form time sessions.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally about their learning and activities in school.
- Inspectors studied a range of the school's documents, such as development plans and the school's evaluation of its own work. Inspectors also explored how effectively the school uses the pupil premium funding, the catch-up funding and funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- In addition, inspectors also examined assessments of pupil progress, records of attendance and behaviour and a range of policies, including safeguarding policies. Inspectors looked closely at the school's records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching across the school. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's records of the monitoring of the progress, attendance, safety and behaviour of pupils educated away from the school site.
- Together with the headteacher and a senior leader, inspectors looked at a range of pupils' written work across subjects from the previous school year. Pupils were spoken to more formally about their work and their learning across all year groups.
- Several meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, with senior and middle leaders and with teachers and a range of non-teaching staff. Inspectors met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors also considered the 80 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire and took account of the responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires completed during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Nell Banfield, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Dympna Woods

Ofsted Inspector

David Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

Bernard Robinson

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