

Heckmondwike Grammar School

Address: High Street, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire, WF16 0AH

Unique reference number (URN): 136283

Inspection report: 12 May 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils across the school achieve highly. They thrive meeting the high levels of academic challenge that the school provides them. They develop detailed knowledge over time and produce very high-quality work across subjects, including in mathematics, sciences, creative subjects and languages. Pupils talk confidently about what they have learned and how teachers support them to progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers and also achieve well.

Pupils' high achievement is reflected in their results in national tests and examinations. The GCSE results that pupils achieve are among some of the best nationally. This includes the results achieved by disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have been relentless in improving the examination results in the sixth form. As a result, the examination results achieved by sixth-form students have improved in recent years.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders ensure that pupils attend school regularly. They communicate their high expectations that regular attendance supports high achievement. Pupils are keen to attend school. This includes disadvantaged pupils. Leaders carefully track pupils' attendance and quickly take action if pupils need extra support to attend school regularly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who struggle to attend school routinely are also well supported.

Pupils behave calmly and respectfully at school. They show high levels of self-discipline when learning. This includes students in the sixth form, who take their academic studies very seriously. In class, pupils are very focused and take part fully in lessons, without disruption to their learning. Due to how well leaders communicate their high expectations, incidents of serious misbehaviour are rare. The school's rules and routines are understood and followed by all. As a result, suspension rates are very low. Pupils who need support to manage their behaviour receive it.

Pupils feel safe in school and show respect to each other and to staff. Incidents of bullying, or other forms of discrimination, are rare. When they do happen, staff deal with them effectively.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed a rich and ambitious curriculum. It is well sequenced and supports pupils to develop detailed knowledge across a broad range of subjects, over time. Leaders regularly review the curriculum to make sure that pupils secure their learning as they progress through the school.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They bring this knowledge to life in classrooms through high-quality teaching. As a result, pupils are highly engaged in their lessons. They are challenged to understand ever more complex ideas, expand their vocabulary and

increase their confidence in explaining what they are learning. Teachers use assessment to check pupils' work and help them understand what they need to do to improve it.

The high-quality teaching that the school offers benefits all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers make sensitive and often seamless adjustments for pupils who need further support to learn alongside their peers. Pupils who need extra help with reading, handwriting or mathematics receive this and quickly catch up. This includes students who join the school in the sixth form. Here, leaders have put into place a bridging programme to make sure that students have the subject knowledge they need in order to study A levels successfully.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

High-quality teaching is a priority for all here. This teaching particularly supports pupils with barriers to their learning. These pupils' needs are quickly identified, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders give teachers clear guidance so that they can meet individual pupils' needs effectively and ensure that these pupils make the same progress as their peers. Leaders carefully consider the needs of individuals and make thoughtful adaptations to learning where necessary so that all pupils can enjoy the ambitious and academically challenging opportunities that the school offers.

Staff work very effectively to ensure that pupils with SEND get the support they need both within school and from external agencies when required. This includes securing additional funding for pupils who have emerging needs.

Leaders have high expectations for all, and this is reflected in their work with pupils experiencing disadvantage and pupils who are known to social care. When needed, staff put in place thoughtful and sensitive support. Leaders track the progress of every pupil carefully. As a result, pupils reach the high academic expectations that the school places on them.

The school does not use alternative provision and has not done for some time.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders know the school and their roles very well. They monitor the performance of the school closely and make effective decisions to address areas of concern. For example, leaders have focused on improving outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils with barriers to their learning in recent years. Leaders have also made significant improvements to the sixth form since the last inspection. As a result of this careful work by leaders, pupils across the school do very well both academically and in school life beyond the classroom.

There is very effective professional development for staff at this school. Staff training is focused on making sure that teachers develop their subject knowledge and expertise. Staff have had a great deal of training on how to support pupils with barriers to their learning in recent years, and this has had significant positive impact. Leaders make effective use of external organisations to provide additional staff development when needed.

Staff are proud to work at the school and feel that leaders are mindful of their workload and wellbeing. They value the thoughtful professional development that they receive, which encourages them to develop their subject expertise and professional goals.

The school is supported by a highly effective and committed governing body. It provides effective support and challenge to senior leaders and draws on external expertise when required. Through the work of the governing body, trustees fulfil their responsibilities and duties effectively.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Pupils at this school have a wide range of opportunities to explore their interests and abilities beyond the classroom. Leaders focus on developing pupils' skills and personal growth through extra-curricular activities and strongly encourage them to pursue their passions. The school offers a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, which pupils participate in fully. Many of these clubs and activities are led by older pupils, giving them significant leadership experience. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate in extra-curricular activities at the same high levels as their peers. Leaders pay close attention to make sure that all pupils participate in the wider life of the school.

Pupils benefit from a well-sequenced personal development programme right from the start of Year 7. Leaders have shaped the programme based on what pupils say is important to them. As a result, the programme is well matched to pupils' age and context. In personal, social and health education, pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and how to be safe both online and in their community. They also develop a precise understanding of what it is to be a young person in modern Britain. Pupils develop an awareness of fairness and tolerance and can discuss, with maturity, issues surrounding diversity and equality.

The careers education provision has been refined in recent years. Pupils who have a particular career aspiration can join a pathway from Year 10. These careers pathways are linked to different areas of interest, including humanities, medical sciences, science, technology, engineering and mathematics, apprenticeships, Oxbridge and business. Pathways offer pupils additional opportunities to attend visits and listen to external speakers linked to their area of interest. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given additional support to help them choose their next academic steps. Pupils leave this school very well prepared for continued education or employment.

Expected standard

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the sixth form. There has been much work to develop the sixth-form curriculum in recent years. For example, all students in the sixth form benefit from a well-thought-through personal, social and health education programme.

All students study A levels at this school. Many students achieve above the national average in their examinations. This includes students with special educational needs and/or disabilities or students experiencing disadvantage. However, some students with low prior attainment do not achieve as well as their peers nationally. Leaders have started to provide extra support to these students, but the impact of this work is at an early stage.

Learning in the sixth form is well sequenced. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, and, generally, lessons are taught well. However, sometimes, teachers do not always check carefully enough to make sure that all students have understood new material before moving on. This means that, sometimes, students can develop gaps in their knowledge that are not picked up on.

Students in the sixth form take part in a wide range of additional activities beyond the curriculum, including academic societies and the arts.

All sixth-form students are placed on a pathway that links to their future aspirations. This includes trips, tailored careers education and visits by external speakers all linked to students' areas of interest. All students are supported to take part in meaningful work experience in Year 12.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to come to this school. They know that the school staff have very high ambitions for them, and pupils rise to these high expectations. The school's traditional motto, 'nil sine labore', or 'nothing without work', is reflected in the school's values of respect, responsibility and excellence. Pupils' positive attitudes towards their peers, teachers and studies reflect these values.

Pupils feel safe at this school. They know that discrimination is not tolerated. They are confident that staff will deal with any poor behaviour such as bullying quickly and effectively. The school teaches pupils how to be safe both in the community and online. They also learn how to look after their physical health and their mental wellbeing.

Pupils at this school develop a love of learning. They enjoy their lessons and are challenged to achieve their best by staff. As a result, pupils in Years 7 to 11 consistently achieve highly in national examinations. This is increasingly the case for students in the sixth form, where they achieve well and often make the progress expected of them.

Outside of the classroom, pupils have a wide range of opportunities, where they explore their interests and abilities in depth. The school has over 100 clubs and activities on offer, many of them run by the pupils themselves. Pupils take part in house competitions and events, including sports, music and drama. The house system at this school is well organised and gives pupils an opportunity to feel that they are part of a larger team. Pupils also attend many trips and visits linked to both their studies and their wider interests.

Pupils receive effective support to decide on their next steps after leaving school. They go on to attend a wide range of universities, apprenticeships and other destinations that are closely matched to their abilities and aspirations.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to improve the progress and achievement of students in sixth form, especially those who require additional support to reach their potential by the end of Year 13.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to refine their improvement of pastoral support so that they can achieve and sustain high standards of attendance, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Heckmondwike Grammar Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the headteacher, Peter Roberts, and overseen by a board of members, chaired by Derek Cross.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, school leaders, staff, governors and pupils during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Peter Roberts

Lead inspector:

Gemma Dixon, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Martin Featherstone, Ofsted Inspector

Lindsay Oyston, Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Ferstenberg, Ofsted Inspector

Yvonne Bootman, Ofsted Inspector

Mike Kilgannon, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 12 May 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,468

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

1,400

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

5.82%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.20%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

1.16%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	99.5%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	99.0%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	96.7%	45.3%	Above

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	80.2	46.1	Above
2023/24 (final)	78.5	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	77.1	46.3	Above

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	1.00	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.78	-0.03	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	94.1%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100.0%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	92.9%	25.2%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	73.6	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	78.4	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	69.4	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	1.19	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.06	-0.57	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	94.1%	53.1%	41.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	100.0%	53.1%	46.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	92.9%	52.4%	40.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	73.6	50.4	23.2
2023/24 (final)	78.4	50.0	28.3
2022/23 (final)	69.4	50.3	19.1

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	1.19	0.16	1.02
2022/23 (final)	0.06	0.17	-0.11

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	98%	92%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	100%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	99%	94%	Above

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	39.20	35.00	Above
2023/24 (final)	40.22	34.38	Above
2022/23 (final)	35.95	34.16	Close to average

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.2	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.6%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	3.7%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	3.8%	9.0%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.6%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.3%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	26.5%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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