

'Relentless' drive to improve is recognised

Government watchdog praises high school following latest inspection

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Staff and pupils are celebrating after inspectors praised a school for its "relentless" drive to improve.

Sherburn High School has been rated as "good" across the board by Ofsted following its latest inspection.

In 2015 inspectors said the school required improvement in four out of five key areas, but now following its latest visit, the watchdog gave Sherburn High the second highest "good" rating.

Inspectors said "staff are proud of the way in which the school has improved".

Maria Williams, head teacher, now hopes to build on the "good" rating and receive the highest grade of "outstanding".

She said: "The report affirms what we have known for a long time that this school is good in all areas.

"We are thrilled to have the official stamp of approval from Ofsted but this community deserves an outstanding school and there is still further work to be done. We are in no way complacent and we are already planning for the next stage of our journey."



Maria Williams, head teacher of Sherburn High pictured with school councillors following the Ofsted report. (18-05-32 SU)

The report two-years-ago said that inconsistent levels of teaching meant low-ability pupils struggled to make good progress.

However, in its latest report, Ofsted highlighted some of the notable features of the school including topping the Selby district GCSE exam results tables last year.

It also said that pupils and staff had strong relationships and teachers were ambitious to improve further.

The school also has above average attendance,

according to the report.

It stated: "The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because leaders have been relentless in tackling weak teaching and have provided clear guidance on the standards expected of teachers and pupils.

"The school promotes strong values of respect and equality, which are well understood by pupils. Most pupils demonstrate these values consistently in school and show positive attitudes to their learning.

"Since the last inspection, outcomes have continued to improve strongly. In 2016, pupils who started year seven with average attainment levels had made good progress overall by the time they left year 11."

Meanwhile, inspectors rated achievement in the sixth form as "good" overall. They felt that year 12 and 13 students had a positive attitude to learning because of strong leadership from teachers.

However, the report said there was still some room for

improvement.

At times, teachers provided "insufficient challenges" for most able pupils and boys' writing skills were generally weaker than girls'.

In order to improve further, inspectors said the school should "eliminate the remaining variability in the quality of teaching", "ensure that all subject leaders are effective in tackling weaknesses" and "continue to raise the aspirations of boys and improve boys' writing skills."

Parents left confused following academy's change to holidays

Parents have expressed confusion over holiday dates at their children's school.

Brayton Academy will break up for half-term holiday on June 19, three weeks later than most schools in the area.

Most schools break up on May 26 for the traditional spring bank break. Until this year, so did Brayton Academy.

Although the term dates were announced at the start of the year, some parents were not aware of the

change until they recently checked their school calendars.

This had led to disgruntlement and confusion, particularly from parents who have children at other schools.

Parents with younger children at primary school will have to revise their holiday plans due to the difference in dates.

Sharon Burnett is one such parent. Her oldest child attends Brayton Academy but her two younger children are in primary school.

She said: "Our other two break up on May 26 and our oldest on June 19 for a week.

"So the holiday we booked we can't have. You can't take them out of school, but how are you suppose to take them on holiday in holiday time when they all break up at different times?"

The academy said the change of half-term dates was to allow year 11 pupils to focus on their GCSE exams during term-time. In previous years, year 11 pupils

would come into school during half-term to sit their exams, meaning there were fewer staff on hand to provide assistance.

By moving the half-term until after the GCSE exams have finished, the school hope to produce better outcomes for pupils.

The school published its school holiday dates last July.

The Selby Times understands that any holidays booked before the half-term dates were announced will be honoured by the school.

News in brief

Suspended sentence

A thief with an "appalling record" of offending has avoided jail for his latest crimes. Darren Burwell was already subject to a community order for previous thefts when he stole meat and alcohol in two raids at Tesco in Portholme Road, Selby, on April 20. The 49-year-old, of The Haven, Selby, admitted two counts of shoplifting as well as failing to turn up at York Magistrates' Court for a hearing on May 5. His previous offending included shoplifting alcohol, food and Christmas lights from the Co-op in Flaxley Road and Wilko in Selby town centre. Burwell was jailed for a total of 22 weeks, suspended for 12 months. He was also banned from Tesco, the Co-Op and Wilko for a year, ordered to complete a 30-day rehabilitation programme, and pay £200 costs.

Money thief jailed

A thief has been jailed after breaching the trust of a woman to steal more £1,300. David Horner took £1,300 from Cheryl Andrews in an incident at the Stan James betting shop in Selby Market Place. On the same day he also stole £54.80 from his victim at Sainsbury's supermarket in Abbey Walk. Horner, 45, of Cockret Road, Selby, denied two counts under the Theft Act following the incidents on October 23, but was found guilty of the charges. He was jailed for 20 weeks after York Magistrates' Court was told Horner's actions had caused "significant harm" to his victim. The defendant was also ordered to pay £1,354.80 compensation.

Rural crime warning

Police are warning rural residents to remain vigilant after two almost identical burglaries. Two incidents have taken place in Little Heck and Hensall, where thieves are believed to have used a sledge hammer to knock down walls to gain entry to outbuildings. The incidents took place between Monday May 8 and May 10. Police have stepped up patrols but are urging property owners to report suspicious activity and review security measures, such as CCTV.

Motorbike is stolen

Thieves stole a motorbike from the rear of a house in Selby. The blue and white Suzuki GXX600 was taken from a property in Milligate between 8pm on Saturday and 8.40am on Sunday. Call 101 with information.

Unpaid work order

A 60-year-old man has been ordered to carry out 250 hours' unpaid work after he was found guilty of assault. Anthony Merry, of Sand Lane, Osgodby, denied assaulting Ashley Hughes. Merry was also ordered to pay his victim £500 compensation and £705 costs following the altercation which happened in Middlecroft Drive, Strensall, on September 3.

Cooker fire call out

Fire crews were called to a house in Brayton just after 5.15pm on Sunday when a cooker caught light.

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