



## **SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE**

### **INSPECTION REPORT FOR FOCUS SCHOOL – HORNBY CAMPUS**

**DfE No: 888/6054**

#### **The key inspection judgements for this school are:**

<b>The quality of education</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' personal development</b>	<b>outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>2</b>

#### **Compliance with the Independent School Standards:**

The school meets the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

#### **Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:**

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

**Date of inspection: 1 – 3 February 2016**

## **SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

This is a good school which has made considerable progress during the current academic year. The quality of learning and of teaching is good, as is the quality of leadership, management and governance. Pupils' progress and achievement are now good and improving, although there has been some underachievement in the past, particularly in the upper part of the school. Pupils' personal development and behaviour is outstanding. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Following significant staff changes last year, including the appointment of a new headteacher, a revised management structure has promoted the use of a wider range of teaching styles, improved pupils' attitudes, developed pastoral support and ensured that the pupils' voice is more valued. Staff morale is now high and this has led to positive developments. Given that these improvements have been developed over less than a term and a half, this remains work in hand. The school is aware of the need to ensure greater consistency in planning, assessment, marking and feedback, along with evaluating how consistently and effectively these changes have been implemented. The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards are met.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- ensure that developments and changes are securely embedded by providing a period of consolidation in which their effectiveness can be rigorously monitored and evaluated;
- continue developing consistent assessment, marking and feedback processes across the whole school which are designed to raise pupils' attainment; and
- ensure that the more able pupils are always fully challenged to achieve their best.

## **SECTION B: INFORMATION**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:**

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE).

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed lessons in both the primary and secondary departments in a range of subjects. They examined samples of the work of pupils across all Key Stages. They observed daily life throughout the school including at break and lunchtimes. They examined the school's documentation, records and website. They held discussions with staff and with individual trustees. They took account of the responses of parents and pupils to the pre-inspection questionnaires, and whilst in school held discussions with groups of pupils representing each Key Stage.

The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Dr Martin Bradley
Team inspectors:	Dr Mike Maddison
Lay inspector:	Mr Mike Thomas

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:**

Focus School – Hornby Campus is an independent non-selective co-educational day school for pupils aged seven to eighteen years old. Originally established in Preston, the school moved to its present site in the village of Hornby near Lancaster, in September 2011. It is registered as a school of special religious character, having a Christian ethos based on scriptural values and Christian beliefs. The school is owned by the Whinfield Study Trust and is affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust (FLT). The pupils come from families living mainly in the towns of Lancaster, Morecambe, Preston, Liverpool and the surrounding villages. There are currently 91 pupils attending, of whom 36 are in the primary department and 55 in the secondary department, including ten pupils in the sixth form. The school is governed by a Board consisting of trustees and other volunteers.

## **SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

### **1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. It has improved considerably during the current year.

#### **Pupils' learning and achievement**

Pupils' achievement is good. The most recent analysis of pupils' performance reveals an improving picture at all key stages. The higher expectations held by all staff have helped to raise standards across the curriculum. More pupils are on track to achieve their target grades at GCSE and at A level and to make at least the progress expected of them. The challenge now is to ensure that more students achieve beyond this expected progress. Recent underachievement at Key Stages 4 and 5 and variations in pupils' progress in some subjects is being tackled robustly by the new headteacher and her senior colleagues. Tracking of pupils' progress is monitored by Key Stage Learning Leaders overseen by the Director of Student Learning. This is a clear and potentially effective system which is using pupils' performance data more widely to set targets, monitor progress and identify underachievement. There is still much to do to ensure that pupils achieve well in all their subjects. Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs (SEND) are supported effectively in their learning and are making good progress. Those identified as being able, gifted and talented are being more effectively challenged, though more has yet to be done to ensure that they are always set work which matches their ability.

Achievement is also beginning to improve because pupils are learning more in lessons as a result of better teaching. This is the case in all Key Stages including in the examination classes in Key Stages 4 and 5. Where teaching is highly effective, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are well guided to strengthen their knowledge and understanding and to enhance their skills. Pupils are able to articulate what they are learning and how it builds on their prior knowledge. The high quality discussion and debate observed in lessons, and pupils' ability to explain orally what they are learning, what they do well in their work and what they need to do to improve, are distinctive strengths of learning in this school.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are generally well paced and ensure that the pupils remain on task, concentrating well. A good range of teaching styles is used. Pupils commented on the ways in which they have made increased progress and acquired new knowledge and skills following changes instigated at the start of the current academic year. Parents supported these views. As yet the developments are not fully reflected in pupils' progress, but the impact upon their motivation and enthusiasm for school is particularly evident. Pupils work hard, making intellectual, physical and creative effort and show clear capacity to think and learn for themselves. The school uses the 'self-directed

learning' principle, which pupils considered had helped them to improve their grades. Strategies to promote good behaviour are both consistent and effective.

Lesson planning has improved and is now good overall. Most subjects provide clear learning targets for pupils, although in a minority of cases the progress sought over the year is relatively limited. Class time is mainly well managed and a good balance is held between exposition and pupils' activities. Paired and small group discussions successfully extend learning. Pupils' abilities and attainment are generally well known to staff and provide a good basis for differentiated work. Resources are of high quality and range and support learning effectively.

The school is developing its assessment procedures, using teacher feedback, both written and verbal, to support pupil progress. At present the impact of this is relatively limited as the improvements in teaching have yet to be reflected in overall outcomes for pupils. For some, the effects are evident in their improving attainment although the new system has yet to be fully embedded. A revised marking process is being developed. Teachers have sought to link assessment much more closely to planning focussing more closely on improving attainment.

### **The quality of the curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is good. It blends the National Curriculum programmes of study and FLT's own schemes of work. The curriculum supports well the aims and Christian ethos of the school and the Trust. It also enables the pupils to sit a range of external examinations at 16 and 18 and move on beyond school to make the most of the opportunities which are available.

There is strong personalised provision for all pupils. Individual pupils' timetables are adapted to suit their needs and abilities. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported in their learning with teachers sensitively providing help and assistance. Management changes have enabled the SEND coordinator to work in Key Stage 2, mainly with small groups or individuals in class. This is appropriate provision designed to identify and meet the pupils' needs, especially since they enter the school with a wide variety of Key Stage 1 experiences. More able pupils are also well catered for, with a range of supplementary studies such as Latin in Key Stage 3 and additional GCSE subjects, such as law, further mathematics and statistics, in Key Stage 4. Not all teachers are yet setting work which really challenges more able pupils. Too often the most challenging work is for those who finish first rather than a means of providing work matched to ability, stretching more able pupils from the outset.

In line with FLT's belief in learning for life, the school is committed to developing pupils' confidence using self-directed learning tasks. This is still developing but pupils have responded well to the self-directed learning tasks set during this academic year enabling them to take more responsibility for their own learning.

The school offers a wide programme of visits and visitors, including sporting and musical opportunities. The weekly enrichment period enables pupils to undertake additional studies with those in Key Stage 5, for example, working on Career Advancement Programmes in sales and marketing or preparing speeches for their forthcoming assessment in public speaking through the London Academy of

Music & Dramatic Art (LAMDA). These opportunities effectively broaden pupils' knowledge, deepen their understanding and strengthen their skills, not least their confidence and self-esteem. Overall, the curriculum is a strength because it enables the pupils to make marked gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills, supporting effective progress in their learning and their personal development.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The quality of pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils know and understand their school's values and can talk about their importance in their lives. The emphasis upon integrity, care and compassion, respect, responsibility and commitment helps to strengthen their personal development and underpins their attitudes and beliefs. Pupils become mature, polite, considerate and thoughtful young adults.

Pastoral care is strong and the revised house system takes care of pupils' needs effectively. Pupils enjoy the house activities and are keen to be involved in the increasing number of leadership roles which are being provided for them. These include the School Council and the Events Team: they take these responsibilities seriously, along with their involvement in community events. Senior leaders acknowledge that they now need to develop more leadership roles for pupils in Key Stage 2.

Pupils' behaviour is generally exemplary in lessons, and elsewhere. Pupils say bullying hardly ever occurs and they are clear that it is soon dealt with because adults are quickly made aware of any issues and, in the words of one pupil, "there is always someone you can talk to".

Pupils are very supportive of the school. They speak eloquently of its strengths and struggle to find aspects which could be improved. They enjoy coming to Hornby Campus. Their very high attendance is well above the national average. They particularly like the system of merits and certificates, saying that these rewards motivate them to do well in their work.

Pupils are tolerant and have a healthy respect for each other and for adults, as well as for people with differing views. These qualities are strengthened through the assemblies and the personal social, health, and citizenship education programme (PSHCE) lessons and whole day activities.

The school promotes fundamental British values extremely well. Pupils have a detailed appreciation of what it means to be British. Whole school elections for Head Boy and Head Girl as well as for the School Council, together with for example, a debate on the arguments for and against Scottish independence, have focused pupils on the significance of democratic freedoms. Pupils have an excellent respect for the rule of law and are well aware that with rights come responsibilities. There is a very strong commitment to supporting charities and pupils regard raising money for those who are in need as a principal way in which they can show care and compassion.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is outstanding. Pupils work extremely well together and they especially enjoy the increasing opportunities for group activities and self-directed learning tasks. They have an exceptionally strong moral code which defines their views and responses. Pupils explore other countries and ethnicities through 'culture days', gaining a deeper understanding of the world in which they live. Last year all the boys in Key Stages 4 and 5 visited a Roman Catholic school in Lancaster to meet with Muslim boys to discover more about their culture. This broadened their understanding and strengthened their awareness and respect for those with other perspectives and from different faiths.

Staff training this year, and an audit of subject contributions to SMSC, are strengthening even further this aspect of its work. There is good awareness of the importance of protecting pupils from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

The school plans to extend the careers' guidance it provides for younger pupils in Key Stage 3 and its current provision for older pupils is well organised. Work experience in Year 11 is supplemented in the sixth form Career Advancement Programme. This prepares the pupils very well for the next stage of their education, apprenticeship or employment, to best suit their aspirations and their needs.

The school's ethos permeates all aspects of school life and helps to explain the high degree of maturity and responsibility shown by all pupils. It also promotes the extremely calm and purposeful learning environment and the resultant improving level of achievement at the school.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The quality of safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The independent school standards are met. Pupils' behaviour is promoted extremely effectively. Appropriate arrangements are made to safeguard and to promote the welfare of pupils who come from more than one local authority area. Although few in number, any incidents of sanctions related to pupils' misbehaviour are suitably recorded. The school's anti-bullying strategy has made such incidents extremely rare and is backed up by a 'kindness' campaign to remind pupils of the need to show consideration towards others. The responses to the pupils' questionnaires very clearly demonstrated that they feel valued and safe. Staff are well deployed to ensure pupils' supervision. The school has effective procedures to prevent radicalisation and extremism and these are supported by its pupil support policies and the overall ethos of the school. The health and safety policy, supported by an external consultancy, and particularly effectively implemented by the teacher responsible for health and safety working with the school site supervisor, is well monitored. This includes ensuring that first aid training is up to date and medical arrangements are good. Fire safety requirements are fully met. Admission and attendance registers are well maintained. Risk assessment procedures for activities both on and off site are effective and well understood by staff. The school fulfils its duties under Equalities legislation.

Pupils have healthy lifestyles. A recent pupil survey conducted by the physical education teacher has led to increased participation and improved performance. Pupils have also taken up the 'mile a day' challenge enthusiastically.

Staff recruitment procedures are good. Vetting arrangements are effective and include volunteers as well as any supply or occasional staff.

#### **4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance are good. They have considerably improved in the course of the present academic year following the appointment of a new headteacher. She has successfully reviewed the structure of the senior management team which is supported by the Learning Leaders Team which monitors pupils' progress in each Key Stage. This structure has moved from the previous focus on school houses to a learning leadership system for each Key Stage, supported by the Director of Student Learning. The new deputy headteacher now deals with pastoral matters. These arrangements have enabled a much clearer view to be taken of pupils' learning and progress as well as of teaching, planning and assessment. They have also given a greater prominence to the student voice, which has been welcomed by the pupils. In addition a whole school approach has ensured that the primary department is an integral part of the school. These major developments are being embedded effectively using well considered strategies. Many changes, including assessment and reporting on pupil progress, have yet to complete a full cycle, and as such have not yet been fully implemented. The report format has been revised and is clear and understandable, indicating current grades, target grades and other relevant information informing parents whether the pupil is on track to meet their stated targets. The staff and pupils support the developments enthusiastically. Parents have acknowledged the positive impact of changes. Overall the developments have provided a significantly enhanced vision and educational direction. This is now a strength of the school.

The school's website includes an appropriate range of policies and other information, including the school prospectus and the last inspection report. Along with the monthly newsletter, it is regularly updated.

The school has a clearly stated and strong ethos, supporting its Christian background. The analysis developed by senior staff of the strengths and weaknesses of the school has enabled them successfully to link performance development and professional development, thereby supporting improvement.

The school occupies a modern secondary school building and site. Regular maintenance is established and the former caretaker's school house is being renovated. The accommodation is good and extensive, allowing for specialist teaching rooms which are well equipped overall.

The information provided for parents is appropriate and meets the standards, as does the complaints procedure. There were no complaints in the last academic year.

## **Governance**

The quality and effectiveness of governance is particularly good. The school has seven trustees who, together with five other volunteers, form the school board. The membership of this structure is currently being reviewed. All members of the board have specific responsibilities within four main areas. The board meets monthly and its meetings are appropriately minuted. The board members have a good understanding of the independent school standards and work well with the headteacher to ensure that they are met. The headteacher regularly updates the board on progress towards meeting the aims of the School Improvement Plan which is a good working document. The provision of a good amount of high quality resources is a priority for the board.

The board has actively sought to gain the opinions of pupils, staff and parents regarding the school. The appointment of a new headteacher was followed by her leading the revision of the management structure, along with changes to the school organisation. These major changes have had a very positive effect on pupil and staff morale and show signs of raising pupils' performance and progress significantly. The challenge which the board has provided the school, along with highly committed volunteer support has had a major impact on the school, raising its aspirations and enabling the staff to set clearer and more demanding goals for all. This is a significant achievement for the board and the school community.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Focus School – Hornby Campus			
Address of school:	Melling Road, Hornby, Lancaster, LA2 8LH			
Telephone number:	015242 22159			
Email address:	<a href="mailto:hornbycampus@focus-school.com">hornbycampus@focus-school.com</a>			
Web address	<a href="http://hornby.focus-school.com">http://hornby.focus-school.com</a>			
Proprietor:	Whinfield Study Trust			
Campus Administrator:	Mr Caleb Simpson			
Head Teacher:	Mrs Louisa Carter-Davies			
DfE Number	888/6054			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	£2,500			
Age range of pupils	7-18			
Gender of pupils	Mixed			
Total number on roll	full-time	91	part-time	0
Number of compulsory school age pupils	Boys:	33	Girls:	48
Number of post-compulsory pupils	Boys:	5	Girls:	5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need	Boys:	1	Girls:	0
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Type of inspection	Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008			

**This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk).**