

Boldon School



Mrs Elizabeth Hayes,
Headteacher



Potential future
leaders

Boldon School is located in a former mining area within Tyne and Wear. It is situated centrally around the three villages of Boldon Colliery, East Boldon and West Boldon, in a neighbourhood with a strong sense of community. Students are also attracted from a wide area of South Tyneside. The location ensures a good social mix as the majority of our intake is from the former colliery village. Just under half of our students are disadvantaged; many come from one parent families, live in neglected housing or have relations in prison. The school is a true comprehensive and is committed to supporting, challenging and helping all young people to achieve their potential.

We enjoy outstanding facilities as we moved into our new school, constructed under Private Finance Initiative (PFI), in November 2006. The £18 million development provides the optimal environment for 21st century education, allowing students to flourish and succeed.

On entry, students are placed into ability sets for mathematics and English; the English groupings are also used for other curriculum areas. As students progress through the school, they are grouped according to ability for more subjects. At Key Stage 4, which begins in Year 9, there is a personalised pathway programme incorporating traditional and modern courses aimed at meeting the needs of all learners.

We also have post-16 education at Boldon through a local partnership; we offer a variety of level 3 courses and there are 30 young people studying at our school.

REPORT CARD

- » Headteacher: Elizabeth M Hayes
- » Location: Boldon, South Tyneside
- » Number of pupils on roll: 595 including 30 in post 16 provision
- » Ofsted grading (Mar 2015): Requiring Improvement (Good for leadership and management; behaviour and safety of pupils)
- » Teaching staff: 45
- » Learning support assistants: 9
- » Postcode area for deprivation: 5.7% (0 is highest deprivation and 100 is lowest)
- » Disadvantaged students: 44%

“Strongly improving school”

School results over time

Criteria	2015	2016
% 5+ A*– G	99.4	96.2
% 5+ A*– C	64.7	65.2
% 5+ A*– C grades including English and mathematics	57.5	58.0
% ‘The Basics’	60.5	62.0

We predict that these results will be even better in 2017.

Despite Ofsted’s conclusion that the school Requires Improvement in spring 2015, they acknowledged that it is a ‘strongly improving school’. Although hugely disappointed at this inspection result, we were delighted to be graded as Good for leadership and management and behaviour and safety of pupils. As a team of staff and governors we then set about the task of continuing to raise the achievements of students, particularly those who are disadvantaged, the most able and those with special educational needs, whilst improving the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better across all areas of the school, in line with Ofsted’s findings.

The senior leadership team drives forward change and the Headteacher regularly switches their roles to enable fresh thinking coupled with promotion opportunities for these colleagues.

After the 2015 Ofsted inspection, a major focus of improvement was to completely overhaul the school’s staffing model. Many small departments were merged to improve efficiency, resulting in eight faculties each with a leader and co-ordinator. The focus of the teaching workforce is, therefore, raising achievement through engaging teaching and high-quality learning. A dedicated team of pastoral staff has been established; these colleagues deal effectively with the many challenges faced by our students which are linked to the deprivation within our locality.

The main focus for our work over the past two years has been securing good and outstanding teaching across the school coupled with rigorous marking which supports the students on their learning journey. Some of our teachers, mainly middle leaders, delivered school-based training; raising both the profile and skillset of these staff and, at the same time, provided excellent examples of ways to tackle effectively Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) teaching, smart marking and literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. We have recently introduced video-enhanced operation to record teaching and learning and this has hugely supported the sharing of good practice.

Conscious that our students use modern technology throughout their daily life, we have invested in two phone applications Show my Homework and GCSEPod where we are in the top 5% nationally for the usage of this app and Show My Homework. The students enjoy these ways of independent learning and we reward both staff and youngsters when they successfully use these applications.

Excellent attendance, punctuality and student achievement are celebrated and commended through our extensive rewards system. The students enjoy receiving rewards and prizes which recognise a whole plethora of successes.

Absorbed in learning





Budding future scientists

We have recently changed the school code of dress in response to the student voice and this includes shoes and sensible-length skirts, making our students smarter and preparing them for the importance of dress code in their future careers.

Our motto is 'innovate, focus, achieve' – three key words for us here at Boldon School. However, before the learning can take place our students have to be impeccably behaved. Although we have never experienced very poor behaviour at the school, we have raised the bar enormously with our expectations of the students. Our behaviour policy has the strapline 'No student has the right to disrupt learning of others. Teachers will have disruption-free learning areas in which they can teach and students will have disruption-free learning spaces in which they can learn'.

The Hive is a further resource in school for students with either special education needs or at risk of exclusion. It is a supportive but challenging environment, staffed by teachers and other professionals. The impact of this change in policy has resulted in a very calm school; students enjoying learning more as there is far less disruption and a clearer path for young people who make poor behavioural choices.

The students are involved in a huge programme of extra-curricular opportunities, such as Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, Boldon's Got Talent, world of work days, activities week, Show Racism the Red Card workshops, football academies and sea cadets. We firmly believe in the value of activities beyond the normal school day and we offer a daily club for students who require a calm place with computer facilities to complete their homework.

The governing body of our school has been very proactive and it challenges senior and middle leaders to account for the progress in the school. A standards committee was formed two years ago and this has been instrumental in monitoring and challenging improvements particularly in achievement.

Learning never stops and every day there is a new challenge to meet. The staff at Boldon are very focused in their work and they know that we are all at the school because we believe in young people and their potential. The local community is tightly knit and second and third generation unemployment does not help as we try to equip the students for jobs which have not yet been created. However, we take pride in the skills we teach and the opportunities we create for students, as every young person deserves the chance to innovate, focus and succeed.

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