

Wolfreton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118083
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	379538
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2012
Lead inspector	Marianne Young HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,740
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Wilson
Headteacher	Mr David McCready
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 40 lessons of which two of these were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team. Meetings were held with senior and curriculum area leaders, teachers, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, the local authority Improvement Partner and groups of students. Telephone conversations were held with parents who wished to speak with inspectors. Informal discussions were held with students at social times. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents provided by leaders, including policies, development plans, and analysis of students' performance plus minutes of meetings. When planning the inspection, inspectors took account of the two responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors gave due consideration to the 173 inspection questionnaire responses from parents and carers and also to those questionnaires returned by staff and a representative sample of students.

Information about the school

Wolfreton School is a larger than average-sized secondary school which is divided between two sites, one housing students in Key Stage 3, the other for students in the sixth form and Key Stage 4. The buildings are one and a half miles apart. Sixth form students are part of a well-established consortium with two other schools in the local authority. Buses operate regularly so that students can get to lessons in different places.

The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. The vast majority of students are White British. The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is almost half that found nationally. Although most students come from the locality, almost one third of students are resident in the neighbouring local authority. The school is a specialist language college and regularly provides training programmes for student teachers, working closely with other organisations. In addition, through well-established partnership links with local business and colleges, 17% of students in Years 10 and 11 attend training and courses at these establishments each week. The school met the government's floor standard for secondary schools in 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- Wolfreton School provides a satisfactory standard of education. Inspectors found that there are particular strengths in the leadership of the school, the additional activities provided to complement different subjects and within the teaching. The overall satisfactory progress made by students in 2011 where they reached broadly average standards, combined with more-able students not attaining the highest grades in a number of subjects, are key factors which limit the school's overall effectiveness.
- The sixth form is satisfactory and students benefit considerably because of the long-standing consortium arrangements which enable them to choose from a large number of courses. Students' achievement varies between subjects and is generally better in Year 12. Stronger teaching is appreciated, recognised by sixth form students and was confirmed during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed a range of lessons where student progress ranged from outstanding to inadequate. Leaders know that there is strong practice but at present there is not enough to improve the progress made by all students. Where lessons engage students in independent and group work, activities challenge them and the feedback provided ensures that they understood how to improve, progress is rapid and understanding is secured. However, where these features were weaker, low-level disruption occurs and students' often positive attitudes are not present. This situation was supported by both the comments from students and parents and carers.
- Students generally relate well to each other and adults. However, because of the split-site arrangement, younger students are unable to mix with older ones and this limits their social interaction with each other. Attendance has improved and very few students are persistently absent.
- The headteacher is well supported by senior leaders who have a thorough understanding of the challenges facing the school. Leadership of the sixth form

is being reviewed as currently roles and responsibilities are unclear and there is a lack of strategic direction so that student progress is not monitored appropriately. Inconsistency among curriculum area leaders is also apparent and this means that some have a more positive view of provision in their subject than that found during the inspection.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the overall quality of teaching improves and any inadequate teaching is eradicated so that students make appropriate progress by:
 - planning lessons that make good use of all the available data about students' needs given their starting points and capabilities
 - making sure that lessons engage students so that they are actively involved in their learning and through appropriate questioning understand how to make improvements
 - raising teachers' expectations of students' potential, especially those who are more-able
 - guaranteeing that there is a consistent approach in lessons when dealing with any potential disruption
 - spreading the current strong practice within teaching more widely.

- Eradicate the variability in middle leadership in order to strengthen the capacity for improvement by:
 - ensuring that all curriculum area leaders monitor, evaluate and bring about changes in their subject areas effectively
 - enabling leaders to evaluate the impact of the actions, including the quality of teaching in their areas, on the outcomes and progress made by different groups of students.

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities for leadership in the sixth form so that the progress made by students and any variability between subjects are considered and appropriate strategies implemented to bring about necessary improvements.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The prior attainment of students is broadly average over time. Despite some positive predictions and targets indicating above average attainment, in the key indicator of five or more GCSE grades including English and mathematics, these were not fulfilled. Consequently, students in 2011 attained broadly average standards and made satisfactory progress. Weakest progress was made in English where fewer students than anticipated made the expected progress. Similarly, students did less well than previously in a number of other subjects, especially in the proportion of

students who reached A* and A grades. Students made better progress in humanities, drama and design and technology. Leaders provided evidence during the inspection to support their view that curriculum changes, for example to some science courses and the entry policy for mathematics, are having a positive impact on student performance. Leaders are confident that the difference between the attainment of boys and girls predicted, but not averted in 2011, will not happen again. Inspectors noted that the more recent data trawl completed by senior leaders confirmed this view and that all groups of students in Year 11, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, are making better progress in many measures.

Students' progress in lessons is often limited because they are not given work that is sufficiently challenging and adapted to meet their individual needs. As a result, students' concentration and application to the tasks set in lessons are not maintained. Intervention and small group work was observed and here, students' capabilities were well considered enabling them to make good progress. The reading programme for students in Year 7 is engaging and interesting them in books through a mixture of structured learning and games. Consequently, students confidently and enthusiastically discussed their reading and favourite authors. Inspectors saw an inconsistent approach by teachers in lessons for students to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. Literacy was promoted more regularly because staff have been involved in recent whole-school literacy training.

Despite students' prior attainment before they join the sixth form remaining broadly similar, their outcomes have declined since the last inspection, at both AS and A2 level. Progress is satisfactory. Attainment between subjects varies and this is often linked to the quality of teaching and challenge provided in lessons.

Quality of teaching

Although teachers have benefited from helpful training so that the quality of their teaching improves, not all have put this work into practice. Consequently, inspectors saw a range of teaching from outstanding to inadequate and this inconsistency means that students' progress, at all key stages, is adversely affected. There is strong practice within the school. Here, inspectors observed well-planned lessons where students' capabilities were well known, questioning and feedback was helpful and rigorous. In addition, activities were well chosen and thus students' progress was rapid and their earlier learning was revisited and consolidated. This was particularly evident in a textiles lesson in the sixth form where students' enjoyment and understanding were palpable. However, across a range of subjects and within key stages, these features were not present. Students were set tasks to complete, which, for the most part, they did although these did not always suit their particular abilities. On occasions, either because students were not challenged, particularly the more-able, or because their disruptive behaviour was insufficiently and consistently challenged, their progress suffered. Students, from different year groups, reportedly candidly that in some lessons a lack of appropriate challenge means that reaching an average grade is seen as acceptable. A small number of parents and carers who responded to their questionnaire also felt that their children's learning was at times adversely affected by inappropriate behaviour and lack of challenge in lessons. Group work is a regular feature of many lessons. Where this is undertaken well, students'

social and moral skills are developed well. However, inspectors observed several missed opportunities in lessons to enable students to reflect, discuss and consider their view of cultural and world issues.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students were spoken to at both sites. Their comments, together with the responses to the student questionnaire, indicated that students' safety is a high priority and they felt confident that any incidences of bullying are dealt with rigorously. Similar confirmation was evident in the responses from parents and carers. However, parents and carers and a few students were concerned about the quality of behaviour in the school. Inspectors found that throughout the school there were incidences of thoughtful and helpful behaviour between students and to other adults and visitors. Some boisterous behaviour was observed and, especially in the sixth form, thoughtless disposing of litter occurred, but generally, students behaved satisfactorily. Despite the movement time allowed between some lessons, a very few students arrive late to lessons which was not always dealt with effectively. Leaders presented compelling evidence to show that exclusions have decreased since the previous inspection. Safety for students who have to travel to lessons at different venues is well-considered. Together with appropriate curriculum choices for different groups of students, including the large number who receive some of their education off-site, are all strong contributory factors for students' above average attendance. Irregularities in the way attendance data are collected for sixth form students have now been rectified so that they have to register at the normal time and not when they arrive for lessons.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders undertake regular and comprehensive monitoring of student progress and hold frequent meetings with curriculum area leaders. A thorough review was held following the results in 2011, particularly in English and mathematics, for all groups of students. A comprehensive programme of training to ensure a consistent approach to lesson planning and managing any inappropriate behaviour by students, an issue at the previous inspection, has been undertaken. Many teachers spoke enthusiastically about the support they have been given and how their confidence has improved. During discussions and lesson observations, leaders agreed with inspectors that more work needs to be done as not all teachers are making best use of the training and information provided. This work, together with leaders' accurate view of the positive aspects of teaching and how this impacts on student progress, provides secure evidence of leaders' commitment to make further improvements.

Students are very active in the life of the school and play an important part, through the Senate, in decision making. They enjoy and participate well in the wealth of additional activities provided for them out of lesson time, which widens their understanding of literature, music and drama particularly. Additional trips to supplement learning in the classroom for different subjects are also popular. These events, combined with a curriculum that is adaptable and able, through the well-established consortium and other partnerships, allow students to follow courses that best suit their interests and abilities. Careful consideration has been given to ensure

that the courses taught in Key Stage 4 prepare students properly for the sixth form. Where this has been found not to be the case, for example in modern languages and science, changes have been made. These changes, together with improvements this year in student progress noted by inspectors, support leaders' view of a firm commitment to equal opportunities. Another strong feature is that very few students leave the school and do not go into further education, employment or training.

Members of the governing body are now providing more challenge to senior leaders about the achievement of all students. At the time of the inspection, current requirements for safeguarding were being met and given a high priority. Senior leaders recognise that some curriculum area leaders are more adept at monitoring and evaluating their subject than others. This inconsistency is manifest particularly in the departmental self-evaluation documents which are often overoptimistic in terms of identifying the progress made by students and whether planned interventions, for example in English and mathematics, are having the desired impact. Evaluating provision in the sixth form is underdeveloped and senior leaders recognise that this area is a key priority for the school.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Wolfreton School, Kirk Ella, Hull, HU10 7LU

Thank you for talking with me and my colleagues when we inspected your school recently. We took careful note of your opinions and behaviour both in lessons and at social times. Your attendance has improved and is now above the national average. However, occasionally some of you are late arriving to lessons which means you miss the start and important information. Sometimes some of you can be a little thoughtless and careless with your litter which makes the buildings untidy. Generally though, you get on well together and are polite to visitors.

We observed in lessons that at times you are given work that matches your abilities, teachers ask helpful questions and everyone does their best. You told us, and your parents and carers agreed that in these lessons you make good progress. However, again some of you do not concentrate and can misbehave, usually when you have to sit and listen for too long or the work is too easy. Those of you in Year 7 are enjoying different books and getting better at reading. We noticed that you are given, in some lessons, opportunities to discuss and give your opinions. Again, this approach helps you to think deeply about different topics. We agree that you are provided in the sixth form with a wide choice of subjects and are able to follow your individual interests. A large number of you take part in additional activities in school and beyond which complements learning in different subjects.

Mr McCready and other senior leaders know that it is important for Wolfreton School to move forward and we have agreed that improvements, particularly in teaching, need to be made. Additionally, closer checks will be made to see how well you are doing in different subjects. You all need to help by working hard and behaving well in all lessons so that you can all make the progress of which you are all capable.

I wish you well in the future

Yours sincerely
Marianne Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

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