

St Hugh's Communication and Interaction College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118146
Local Authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358272
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Pauline Hilling-Smith

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	127
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	10
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tim Cavill
Headteacher	Mrs Tracy Millard
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2007
School address	Bushfield Road Scunthorpe DN16 1NB
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 17 lessons given by 15 teachers and one specialist support assistant. Meetings were held with parents and carers, students, partners, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at the school's evaluation of its performance, the current development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body and documentation to ensure that students are safe. The responses to 54 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the rate of progress of all groups of students towards their targets, especially in mathematics, and those students with complex need.
- how well the curriculum and teaching matches the learning and behaviour needs of the students, especially girls
- how effectively leaders are bringing about school improvement and how the school is helped by its partners.

Information about the school

St Hugh's is an average-size specialist college for communication and interaction. Students have a wide range of complex learning, physical, sensory and communication difficulties. The majority of students in the school are boys and most are White British. All of the students have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school has achieved Healthy School status, Sportsmark Arts Mark and ICT Mark.

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: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Arrangements for care, guidance and support are outstanding and this enables students to be very successful in their learning. The way in which partnerships contribute to the outstanding curriculum is exemplary. As a result, the students' achievement is outstanding overall although it is not yet as strong in mathematics as in other subjects.

Progress since the last inspection is outstanding overall and has accelerated further over the last two terms due to the restructured leadership team. The leadership has a clear vision for the development of the school and has established strong teams with high morale who share these ambitions. Accurate self-evaluation gives school leaders a clear view of strengths and areas for improvement. This process takes account of the views of others. The headteacher and senior staff have a very clear understanding about how teaching can be improved and actions already taken have shown outstanding impact. All this demonstrates that there is outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

Everyone involved with St Hugh's shows a deep understanding and respect for individual differences. Meeting individual needs and equality of opportunity for all are at the heart of everything that the school does. Its entire ethos is underpinned by the belief that any obstacles to progress can be removed. Close partnership with other agencies, parents and carers have contributed to some striking impacts on student well-being. Students' behaviour is outstanding. This is because students are very clear about what constitutes good behaviour and they respond well to additional guidance from individual members of staff about how to modify their behaviour if necessary. Students say they feel safe and protected in school and are confident in the staff to deal with any issues they may have. This is based on the outstanding attention paid to safeguarding procedures, particularly risk assessments for residential and other trips.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of students making good and outstanding progress in mathematics to the level of other subjects by:
 - increasing teachers' subject knowledge
 - ensuring that moderation procedures in mathematics are robust.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

All groups of students make outstanding progress overall. In the vast majority of lessons, work is so well matched to the students needs that they are able to make the most of the

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learning opportunities the school offers. For example, in one lesson, some pupils enjoyed making a pizza based on their previous design, another group constructed a presentation on the computer about how to make a pizza, while another group designed what they wanted on each face of their pizza box on a two dimensional outline on the computer. In another lesson, students learned to distinguish between staring and looking and how it felt to be stared at.

Procedures to establish where the students are in their learning when they start at St Hugh's are robust and show that most students arrive with standards of attainment well-below average. This is usually because their physical or communication and cognitive difficulties have not allowed them to learn as easily as other students. During their time at St Hugh's, students make rapid progress because staff plot students' progress carefully and targets are reviewed and adjusted frequently. This means that some students reach nationally expected levels before they leave. Students with other special educational needs and/or disabilities also make outstanding progress towards the targets set for them. Parents and carers agree with students when they say they feel safe and secure, which helps them to learn. Students' behaviour is outstanding and contributes to outstanding learning in lessons for all groups of students.

Students are able to consider moral and social issues, both in classrooms and in a variety of contexts where they come into contact with a wide-range of adults. They think carefully about their own and others' experiences and how this affects what they do. Students have a strong voice in school through the student council. They know they are listened to as they can see decisions made by the council put into practice. For example, their commitment to leading a healthy lifestyle led to a decision by the council to limit the amount of chocolate allowable in lunchboxes. Students' attendance is high because they enjoy coming to school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment ¹	
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is outstanding overall. Exemplary lesson planning identifies work that is very closely matched to individual students' needs. Teaching assistants and teachers work seamlessly together building up the skills of all students in a way that ensures their very effective learning. A range of communication systems with well-established use of symbols and signing and communication aids enables all pupils to access learning. Consistency of high expectations and lesson structure provide a very secure framework for learning. All adults are skilled at ensuring students understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Exemplary use of assessment underpins learning in all parts of lessons. However, this is not yet as robust in mathematics as it is in other subjects due to long-term absence of specialist mathematics staff. This situation has been addressed and a teacher new to the post is specialising in mathematics teaching and assessment in order to moderate assessment in mathematics more robustly and pass this on to other staff.

The outstanding curriculum is carefully planned and regularly reviewed to meet the learning, life and leisure needs of all groups of pupils. The 'CALL' curriculum, which has been written collaboratively by the school and North Lincolnshire's Speech and Language Therapy services, is to be available commercially soon. It meets the emotional and social needs of the pupils exceptionally well and can be used by all staff because it is clear and

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underpinned by an outstanding training framework. There is a wide range of extended activities, day visits, visitors and residential experiences which ensure that students' interest is maintained and they are fully engaged. At Key Stage 4 the curriculum is very successfully broadened by vocational opportunities provided through outstanding partnerships. Courses offer clear progression and lead to most students securing a placement opportunity after leaving the school.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding because staff know the students very well and target their efforts carefully to great effect. The tenacity of staff in working to find solutions, changes and improvement to provision is exemplary. Students, including those with very significant needs, have great confidence in the adults around them and consequently are able to make great progress. Work with other agencies is used very effectively to support students through outstanding teamwork.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is highly effective in building very successful leadership teams. A striking degree of consistency has been achieved across the school's work because staff appreciate and share her high expectations. She is ably supported by the deputy and assistant headteachers. Monitoring arrangements are exceptionally thorough and rigorous. For example, observations of teaching lead to full evaluations which celebrate strengths but unequivocally point out aspects in need of further development. Procedures for identifying what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve are robust and accurate. This ensures that improvement is maintained. The composition of the governing body reflects the needs of the school well and this enables members to support and challenge the work of the school well. The governing body also plays a part in strategic direction and development. for example, in identifying the impact staff absence has on the budget. Training for all staff is seen as a priority and this has impacted well on improvement; for example, many specialist teaching assistants complement the teaching particularly well.

Processes for tracking students' progress are carefully designed and enable clear identification of progress. Students' targets, reviewed and adjusted frequently, are communicated to parents and carers. Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding overall. Procedures for safeguarding and health and safety are outstanding and assess safety carefully in the wide range of locations in which students may learn. Highly developed partnerships play a very effective part in improving learning for all students and contributing substantially to their well-being. Many projects contribute to community

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cohesion both at home and overseas. The commitment of leaders to ensure that the school is active in placing equality and diversity at the heart of its work is outstanding and seen in the inclusive arrangements and atmosphere felt throughout the building.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Sixth form

The sixth form caters for students with the most complex needs. Very few students progress into the sixth form as most students move to local colleges at the end of Key Stage 4. Students who remain at school benefit from excellent provision which meets their individual needs exceptionally well. Staff know the students extremely well and are highly committed to supporting the students to achieve their potential. Students make outstanding progress in the sixth form because resources to enable each student to communicate their needs and wishes are highly individualised and staff understand the responses made by the students by carefully watching eye movements and facial expressions. Partnership with parents and carers and other agencies is exemplary and contributes well to the well-being of the students. The annual residential visit enables some students to stay away from home for the first time and to experience leisure activities. Safety and welfare arrangements are carefully attended to, enabling this to be a very enjoyable and memorable experience.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

Approximately forty per cent of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority were positive. A very few expressed some concerns and these were followed up by inspectors. The inspection endorses positive views expressed by the majority of the parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Hugh's Communication and Interaction College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 127 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	67	16	30	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	80	10	19	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	56	21	39	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	44	24	44	3	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	59	19	35	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	54	22	41	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	56	23	43	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	54	18	33	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	61	18	33	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	57	21	39	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	59	20	37	0	0	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	35	65	15	28	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	80	9	17	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



15 December 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of St Hugh's Communication and Interaction College, Scunthorpe
DN16 1NB**

Thank you for being welcoming when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking with you and visiting lessons. We were impressed by how attractive and well cared for the inside of the school was with brilliant examples of your work on the walls. Thank you for taking the time to give us your views of the school. It was clear from talking together and the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers that you feel safe at school and are confident that the staff would help you if needed.

We found out that St Hugh's is an outstanding school, particularly in the way it cares for you. You are making outstanding progress because your lessons are excellent and you enjoy coming and attend very well.

We have asked the teachers to do one thing to make St Hugh's even better. It is to:

- make sure that you do as well in mathematics as you do in every other subject.

We know you will do all you can to help your teachers and we wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Pauline Hilling-Smith

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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