

Humberston Maths and Computing College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118101
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	360968
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Marianne Young HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	725
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Bagnall
Headteacher	Mr Brian Sarahan
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2008
School address	Humberston Avenue Humberston, Grimsby Lincolnshire DN36 4TF
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Twenty-nine part lessons and two assemblies were observed. Visits were made to five mixed-age tutor groups. Meetings were held with selected students, the headteacher, staff and members of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with an adviser from the local authority children's services. Inspectors observed the college's work, looked at a range of information including safeguarding and other policy documents, students' targets and tracking data, college and faculty improvement plans and the minutes of recent governing body meetings.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the college's work. It looked in detail at the areas for improvement, from the previous inspection and also at the following areas.

- The attainment, learning and progress of all students especially their performance in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and learning and whether teachers are using assessment data effectively in order to drive improvements and raise attainment.
- Whether the curriculum, external provision and specialist status contribute effectively to meeting the needs of all students.
- The effectiveness of college leaders, at all levels, in monitoring and evaluating provision, together with their capacity to drive improvement.

Information about the school

Humberston Maths and Computing College is a smaller than average secondary school. Healthy School status together with Gold Information and Guidance (IAG) and International Schools are among the awards gained by the college. At its previous inspection in December 2008, the college was judged to require special measures. Few students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. However the proportion of students with special education needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special education needs is much higher than that found nationally. The college has recently gained foundation status and acquired a trust with Franklin Sixth Form College; this will commence on 1 January 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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Humberston Maths and Computing College has improved very significantly since its previous inspection and now provides a good standard of education for its students. The quality of leadership and management, at all levels, has been strengthened considerably since the last inspection and the improvement in provision and outcomes for students is remarkable. Developments in the quality of teaching and how leaders track the progress students make in all subjects have been key factors in ensuring the college's rapid improvement.

The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and provides a vision for the college which is clearly focused on equipping students with the skills and the aspiration to succeed in adult life. He is ably supported by a team of very effective senior leaders. As a consequence, students feel safe, valued, cared for and optimistic about their future.

Students achieve well and attainment is rising noticeably. In 2010, the proportion of students in Year 11 attaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C level, including English and mathematics, increased significantly. Results in mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT), the college's two specialist subjects, also improved considerably. Results in ICT showing the most marked improvement, especially at A* and A grade. Similar improving attainment is apparent in other subjects; however, leaders recognise that students do not attain the highest grades in a few subjects and driving improvements in these remains a challenge. Comprehensive tracking data and inspectors' observations confirm that the improved progress is being maintained, or in some cases exceeded, by the current students.

Students have very positive attitudes to learning and to their college. As a result, attendance is above average and students arrive at lessons ready to learn. Many of the students spoken to by inspectors are proud of their college and enjoy the different opportunities provided for them. Students are exceptionally well cared for and supported; regular monitoring of individuals' progress enables the college to provide both academic and personal support. The college recognises students' individual abilities and accordingly, in 2010, all students attained a qualification which helped to secure their future education or training.

Teaching has improved significantly and is good overall. Teachers benefit from the college's continuing emphasis on providing appropriate and focused professional development, individual support and sharing of good ideas and practice, especially through the popular 'tip of the week'. However, leaders recognise the need to strengthen this area further in order to secure consistently high quality teaching.

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Leaders systematically monitor and evaluate the quality of provision and governors challenge the college's performance very effectively. Ensuring that all teachers take responsibility for improving students' basic skills and that students have a greater understanding of the international and national dimension of community cohesion have already been identified, by leaders, as areas to improve. This, together with measurable improvements in all areas highlighted at the previous inspection, shows that the college has good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the focus on teaching and learning to increase the proportion of outstanding lessons by:
 - making more effective use of other adults in the classroom
 - making consistent use of assessment information when teachers plan lessons especially for students in Years 7 to 9.
- Make certain that all teachers share responsibility for developing students' basic skills in all lessons.
- Enable students to develop a greater understanding of community cohesion by providing more links and awareness of national and international communities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Students enter the college with broadly average levels of attainment. As a result of very effective intervention work for some students together with stimulating teaching in many lessons, students make good progress by the time they complete their compulsory education. Results for 2010 show that the majority of Key Stage 4 attainment indicators are significantly above average. Girls continue to outperform boys and results in ICT are particularly impressive. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make often very good progress due in part to the exceptional support and additional help they receive.

Learning is good when teaching is creative, activities are imaginative and students are actively involved. Mostly students work productively in lessons and respond well to lively, enthusiastic teaching. They report, both to inspectors and leaders, when this quality of education falls below the standards they expect. Where inspectors noted outstanding learning, demands and challenge were the norm in these lessons due to the teachers' exceptional knowledge of students' capabilities.

Students behave in a polite and courteous manner to each other, adults and visitors. They are responsible for themselves and polite to others, respecting differences appropriately so that the college community runs smoothly and any slight disruption is the exception. Attitudes towards healthy living, the need for regular exercise and how to keep safe are outstanding. The school council is effective in representing the student voice and works collaboratively with senior leaders and members of the governing body to bring about improvements in the college. Senior students were pleased to report: 'If there is a problem it actually gets dealt with and improvements happen'.

Students engage in a variety of external activities, some of which are organised successfully as a result of the college's specialist subjects. Students' workplace programme

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is embedded fully, monitored and supported well through the tutorial programme. Consequently, students are well prepared for the entrepreneurial and cooperative skills they will require in the workplace. Attendance is improving and last years figures indicate that older students' attendance is higher than that of the younger ones. Despite most students coming from a White British heritage, students have a good understanding of the diversity of culture in society and appreciate the richness this brings to their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Students make good progress in those lessons where teachers' expectations are high and the level of challenge allows them to deepen their thinking and understanding; well-considered tasks and targeted questioning are also notable features. Since the last inspection, teachers have become confident to take risks and vary their style of delivery. Consequently, in these lessons, students engage well and welcome the opportunity to be involved in their learning. However, inspectors saw some lessons where students' potential and previous learning was not considered thoroughly when teachers were planning lessons. This was most noticeable in Years 7 to 9. Inspectors also noted that the support given, in some lessons, by additional adults was limited and their contribution to students' learning was underdeveloped.

Leaders recognise that there have been many significant, thoughtful and well-planned changes to the curriculum. As a result, the divide between Key Stages 3 and 4 is becoming

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blurred as students begin studying accredited courses before the normal starting point in Year 10. Accordingly, the curriculum is more responsive to students' needs and interests and as a result, is contributing significantly to raising their attainment and their personal aspirations. Progress in improving students' basic skills in different subjects, is uneven, as shown by the variation and worth given to this in teachers' lesson planning. Successful links have been forged with external agencies to help provide courses which the college alone could not provide.

The outstanding care, guidance and support provided to students are testimony to the college's inclusive ethos. Assemblies and tutor periods are used successfully to provide information, advice and guidance for all students, together with the opportunity to discuss pertinent issues. The college provides a welcoming learning environment. Students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and those with particular needs have access to common rooms at social times, here, they can meet friends and enjoy using the games equipment. Thoughtful induction processes help new students to settle in quickly. High quality guidance informs students of their future options and prepares them very well for employment, training or future education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

A vision of continuous improvement is clearly articulated by the headteacher and shared by staff. As a result, morale is high. Staff and students contribute to, and feel part of, the process of improving the college. The process of self-evaluation involves management at all levels and results in an accurate picture of the college's strengths and weaknesses. Middle leaders are granted a high level of autonomy, are very ambitious and are highly accountable for raising attainment. Tracking systems to identify students' progress are highly sophisticated and are understood by staff and students. The rigorous monitoring of teaching together with the improvement in results underlines the effectiveness of the teaching and learning group. The quality and result of their work is evident and leaders identify clearly where more work is needed.

Governors no longer accept information presented to them. Support and challenge are their key roles and they have developed productive links with faculties. Together with senior leaders, they are ambitious for the college. Since the last inspection members of the governing body have made highly effective appointments to promote and support improvements throughout the college. There are good arrangements in place for safeguarding. A careful account of the views of students, parents and carers is taken via regular surveys and leaders are responsive to their comments and suggestions. As a

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result, leaders have an incisive understanding of the society they serve and how the national and international dimensions of community cohesion should be developed.

Equality of opportunity is good, evidenced by the college's highly inclusive ethos, the exceptional support the most disaffected and vulnerable learners receive and the impressive way that the college can identify where particular groups are doing less well than others. Resources and finances are managed astutely; as a result, the college provides exceptional value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires for parents and carers are not distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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.



26 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Humberston Maths and Computing College, Humberston, DN34 4TF

Thank you for the welcome you gave me and the inspection team when we inspected your college recently. You told us that things have got so much better recently. You are proud of your college; enjoy the house system and the mixed-age tutor groups which give you a chance to get to know people other than your peers. Older students are attaining good results in their examinations and fulfilling their capabilities. We agree that things have got better. The college no longer requires any further monitoring visits because we are pleased to tell you that Humberston Maths and Computing College is now providing you with a good standard of education.

We know that everyone has played their part in improving everything. We noticed that many of you are enjoying using the computers in the Learning Resource Centre, especially when the weather is chilly outside! You told us that you welcome seeing your headteacher and other leaders around at social times. Also, you are confident that your ideas will be taken seriously and changes will happen as a result.

Your headteacher is determined that the college will not stand still but will continue to improve. He has worked with us to identify the ways that this should happen. We decided that all lessons, especially for those of you in Key Stage 3 should be planned carefully so that you are given work that is sufficiently challenging. Also, teachers are going to make more use of extra adults when they are in lessons. Everyone is going to share responsibility for helping you to improve your literacy, mathematics and computing skills in different subjects. Finally, college leaders are looking for more links to help you understand about events in the United Kingdom and abroad.

I hope you will continue to benefit fully from the opportunities provided and I wish you every future success.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector

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