

Colonel Frank Seely Comprehensive School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 122867 |
| Local Authority | Nottinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 359321 |
| Inspection dates | 22–23 September 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Martin Cragg HMI |

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

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|--|--|
| 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 | 1054 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 126 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Nigel Slater |
| Headteacher | Vondra Mays |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 May 2008 |
| School address | Flatts Lane Calverton, Nottingham NG14 6JZ |
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Inspection number 359321

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 41 lessons involving 41 teachers. They held meetings with groups of students, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, governors' policies and minutes, current assessment information and provisional examination results for 2010. They reviewed 243 parent and carer, 225 student and 45 staff questionnaires.

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

- The learning and progress of different groups of students, especially in English.
- The effectiveness of teaching and assessment in engaging students' interest and raising their achievement.
- The impact of senior and middle leaders in monitoring performance, evaluating progress and bringing about improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average secondary school nationally. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are relatively few students from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. However, fewer than average have a statement of special educational needs. The most common areas of need are behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and autistic spectrum disorder. The school has had specialist status in mathematics and computing since 2004. It has achieved Gold Healthy Schools status and the Green Flag Eco-school award. The headteacher joined the school in April 2010.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school is satisfactory and improving under the strong leadership of the new headteacher. It has many good and some outstanding features. The care, guidance and support provided for students are outstanding and, as a result, students feel very safe and their attendance is high. Staff know students well and respond very effectively to their needs. Recent provisional examination results in Year 11 and the sixth form have improved and no groups of students do less well than others. Attainment is broadly average and students make satisfactory progress from their various starting points. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory and improving rapidly because achievement is improving and weaknesses in other areas, such as outcomes in English and the breadth of the curriculum, have been successfully tackled. The school's self-evaluation is accurate.

Teaching is improving and there are examples of outstanding practice, especially in engaging students in thinking through problems and resolving them practically. However, teaching remains satisfactory overall because students are not routinely challenged to work independently. Some aspects of teachers' use of assessment vary too much across the school. Although most students are aware of their targets, they do not always understand what they need to do to reach them and teachers' marking does not consistently explain what their next steps should be. Teachers' planning often reflects expectations at different levels for groups within the class, but in practice the work set does not always match the needs of all groups. The curriculum has expanded since the last inspection and meets students' differing needs well. There are good opportunities for students to follow vocational and practical courses and these routes increasingly now continue into the sixth form. Students mix well and their behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. They participate enthusiastically in a range of activities and take on responsibilities within the school and the local community. They work together well and cooperate effectively.

The headteacher, with senior leaders, has rapidly appraised the strengths and areas for development in the school and this has led to a relevant and clear improvement plan. Many systems have been revised recently and routines refreshed. These are at an early stage but the school has a purposeful climate and staff morale is high. The process for monitoring students' performance against their targets has been expanded and the school plans to ensure that students, parents and carers are informed of progress more regularly, an issue raised by parents and carers. Middle leaders are committed and ready to implement the new systems for reviewing provision in their areas of responsibility. However, these systems are not yet fully established.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve students' progress further by:
 - ensuring that all students know how to achieve their targets and receive regular information on their progress against the targets
 - ensuring that parents and carers are informed of their children's progress regularly
 - developing students' confidence to use their initiative and work increasingly independently.
- Develop the quality of teachers' use of assessment by:
 - consolidating the systems for recording and tracking students' progress
 - ensuring that teachers' marking always helps students to understand clearly how they should improve their work
 - matching the work in lessons specifically to students' knowledge and understanding, to challenge the most-able and better support those for whom learning is more difficult.
- Embed new systems for assuring the quality of provision and outcomes, further developing the skills of middle leaders and ensuring that the most effective practice is shared.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The attainment of students in Year 11 has been broadly in line with the national average for the last three years. There is an improving trend. Provisional results for 2010 indicate a marked improvement to 85% in the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C. The proportion of A*-C grades in English rose by 10% and is now in line with the average. The school exceeded its targets for attainment in its specialist subjects. Boys in 2010 performed generally as well as girls or closed the gap compared to that seen nationally. Students' progress is broadly satisfactory. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least similar progress to their peers. Those from other specific groups, such as minority ethnic backgrounds, also perform at least as well as their peers. Effective changes to the curriculum and intervention to support students with a range of needs led to provisional results of 97% of Year 11 achieving at least five GCSE passes in 2010. In lessons, students show positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively, enthusiastically take opportunities to work collaboratively and are eager to share their views. They settle to work promptly and most try hard to achieve their best. In a small number of lessons, a few students lose concentration when expected to listen for too long or when not sufficiently challenged. Students often made good progress seen.

Students get on well together and are confident that any problems that they have will be swiftly resolved by staff. They say that bullying and racist incidents are rare. Relationships in the school are good and students respond positively to staff guidance. Parent, carers

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and student questionnaires confirmed that the school is a very safe environment. The rate of exclusion has reduced substantially. Students have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and participate regularly in sport and recreational activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. The school has achieved Gold Healthy Schools status and students' choices of food are constantly reviewed. Extensive charity work and events to support the local community demonstrate students' social and moral development. Students take on a range of responsibilities, including helping with reading, leading sports activities and running a youth club for younger students. They are aware of global and cultural issues through regular themed days and have just achieved the Eco-School award. They have effective skills in using computers and understand the associated safety issues.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 3 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 3 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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?

Inspectors observed four outstanding lessons and none that were inadequate. Just under two thirds of lessons were good. Consistent strengths in lessons were teachers' subject knowledge, the very good relationships with students and effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) to engage students' interest and structure learning. Most lessons had sufficient pace and clear objectives. There were some very good examples of teachers using assessment to aid learning, including getting students to assess their own work but the use of assessment lacked consistency and was not yet having sufficient

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overall impact on students' achievement. This was also the case in teachers' marking and comments to students.

The curriculum has broadened considerably since the last inspection and is now well balanced. In particular, there is a good range of vocational and practical courses and opportunities for early entry in some subjects such as food technology and modern foreign languages. This has contributed to the improving trend in students' achievement. There are many extra-curricular activities, events and trips and participation rates are good. The school's specialist status has helped to raise standards and outcomes in ICT have improved. The specialism has also contributed to the increasing vocational opportunities and work with local primary schools.

This is an inclusive school where all pupils receive the highest standards of care, guidance and support. Staff know the needs of all learners, following a range of assessments. Additional learning needs, ranging from physical to emotional needs, are identified early by skilled and experienced staff, who produce well-focused individual plans with targets. These identify supervision, support and intervention, and have monitoring and evaluation processes built in. Learning mentors successfully support those students with a range of needs. The school has developed strong pastoral organisation, supplemented by very effective multi-agency working, encompassing teachers, support staff and therapists. Case studies on students with specific difficulties show how effectively the school cares for all, with all making progress whatever their issues. One featured a timetable built around the student's needs, interests, aspirations and level of capability, with national accreditation at an appropriate level. Students leaving school are prepared well for the demands of the next stage of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 3 |
| 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?

The headteacher has rapidly assessed the key areas for the school to improve and, with senior leaders, is tackling these systematically. There is a clear sense of direction shared by senior and middle leaders, staff and governors. The revised school improvement plan contains relevant priorities and appropriate action. The school has already begun to respond to these aspects for development and is building on the improving outcomes for students but the systems for regular and consistent monitoring of performance, although well founded, are relatively new and yet to provide sufficient high-quality evaluation to help drive improvement. Targets are challenging and middle leaders have willingly taken on accountability for performance in their areas of responsibility. There is a solid foundation for further improvement. The effectiveness of the governing body is

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satisfactory. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses, have an efficient structure to conduct their business, and fulfil their statutory duties. They receive regular briefing on the school's performance and are currently reviewing the role and activities of link governors. However, systems for them to gather evidence directly are less well established.

Safeguarding is at the heart of all that the school does. The school has excellent risk assessment systems. There is a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues among governors and staff, all of whom receive regular training on safeguarding and, in particular, child protection. As a result, a realistic and proportionate approach to safety and safeguarding permeates all aspects of the school's life. The school articulates and pursues effective strategies for its particular groups of students who may be subject to discrimination. Concerted action to promote equality of opportunity has resulted in sustained improvement in the performance and participation of these groups. Gaps between different groups, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are closing.

The school has a generally positive relationship with parents and carers, providing them with adequate information on how well their children are achieving. The school has analysed its context and has an action plan to promote community cohesion. There are already improvements in its work with the local community and engaging students in understanding communities across the world. There has also been careful review of units within the curriculum and themed days to broaden students' understanding of how others live.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 3 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

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Sixth form

Outcomes for sixth form students are satisfactory. Their attainment is broadly average and provisional results for 2010 show improvement, especially in the proportion of higher grades. Students are set challenging targets and most make the progress expected from their starting points. Students are mature and increasingly independent. They make a very good contribution to the life of the school through a range of roles, including as reading helpers, prefects, sports and community volunteers and mentors. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a good range of approaches and increasingly assist students in developing the study skills necessary for the more independent learning required in the sixth form. The curriculum has been expanded to offer more practical and vocational options. These are still in their early stages and have not yet had a full impact on achievement, but students report greater interest and retention rates are good. Students appreciate the support and guidance they receive. Tutors are now meeting students regularly to review their progress and to identify the areas where they need support. There is a detailed action plan and processes for monitoring outcomes and provision are newly in place. Students are generally pleased with their experience in the sixth form. The recent introduction of specific entry requirements for subjects has improved the matching of students' needs and interests to relevant courses.

These are the grades for the sixth form

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the sixth form | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for students in the sixth form | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the sixth form | 3 |
| Leadership and management of the sixth form | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children enjoyed school and were kept safe. They were generally happy with the school. A few were unhappy with the amount and the frequency of information they received on their children's progress and how to help them with learning. The school had already included this in their development plan and inspectors confirmed its importance as part of one of the recommendations for improvement. A very small minority of parents and carers did not feel that the school dealt effectively with behaviour. During the inspection, inspectors observed generally good behaviour in the 41 lessons seen, and around the school between lessons and at breaks. Recorded incidents and exclusions have reduced significantly in the last year.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Colonel Frank Seely Comprehensive School 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 243 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1054 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 70 | 29 | 156 | 64 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 90 | 37 | 139 | 57 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 49 | 20 | 146 | 60 | 28 | 12 | 5 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 58 | 24 | 143 | 59 | 22 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 45 | 19 | 169 | 70 | 13 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 43 | 18 | 150 | 62 | 33 | 14 | 4 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 35 | 14 | 165 | 68 | 30 | 12 | 2 | 1 |
| 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) | 52 | 21 | 159 | 65 | 17 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 47 | 19 | 160 | 66 | 17 | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 48 | 20 | 147 | 60 | 26 | 11 | 4 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 26 | 11 | 162 | 67 | 23 | 9 | 5 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 40 | 16 | 164 | 67 | 13 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 71 | 29 | 146 | 60 | 16 | 7 | 2 | 1 |

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.



24 September 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Colonel Frank Seely Comprehensive School, Nottingham, NG14 6JZ

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, meetings and at breaks. Thanks also to those of you who filled in a questionnaire. Your views helped us to find out about the school. This letter is to tell you what we found out on our inspection.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and it is improving. You told us that you feel very safe in school and that any problems are dealt with effectively by staff, who care for and support you very well. Results for Year 11 students and those in the sixth form are improving. This is particularly the case in English. Students made satisfactory progress last year. You behave well around the school and in lessons. Your attendance has improved and is now well above average. You try hard and learn best when you are challenged to work out answers for yourselves, often practically. You benefit from a wide range of choices in courses, including vocational subjects. Increasingly, some of you take GCSEs early in some subjects. Your teachers build good relationships in lessons, give you clear objectives and know their subjects well. They use information and communication technology effectively to gain your interest and structure lessons.

We asked the school to improve in some areas. We recommended that the school helps you to make even better progress by ensuring you know how to reach your targets and keeping you and your parents and carers informed of how well you are doing. We also asked teachers to set work which is better matched to your current levels, either challenging you more or supporting you more as necessary. We asked all teachers to ensure that their marking and comments help you to know what to do to improve your work. We are aware that many systems are changing as your new headteacher takes the school forward and we suggested that staff become skilled in reviewing progress and performance in their areas and share good approaches and ideas.

I am confident that your school will continue to improve. I wish you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg

Her Majesty's Inspector

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