

# Heritage High School A Mathematics and Computing Specialist College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112964
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	357238
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	946
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Wigglesworth (Acting chair)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Donovan Spencer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 November 2009
<b>School address</b>	Boughton Lane Clowne, Chesterfield S43 4QG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 810259
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. In total, 42 observations were made of 41 different teachers across the school, some of which were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors held meetings with groups of students and members of the governing body. Meetings were also held with nominated staff and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including development plans, school and national data, and the school's evaluation of its effectiveness. Responses to questionnaires from 169 parents and carers, 29 members of staff and 150 students also provided additional evidence.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How strongly is attainment rising in English, science and the school's specialist subjects of mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT)?
- How good is the progress made by previously underachieving groups such as girls and students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- To what degree do the curriculum and care, guidance and support reflect the school's judgement that they are good or better?
- How effective are leadership and management at all levels, including those of the governing body, in tackling underperformance and improving students' behaviour and achievement?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized secondary school. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds with very few from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, but the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school gained specialist status in 2006 and is a member of the Institute for Mathematics and its Application. Among the awards achieved by the school are National Healthy School Status, Sport England and the Diana Memorial Award. When the school was inspected in November 2009 it was found to require significant improvement in relation to students' behaviour, their standards and rates of progress, and the use of assessment to improve the quality of teaching. The school was given a notice to improve.

**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****2**

## Main findings

The school has improved markedly in the last year. Its effectiveness is now satisfactory and improving rapidly because of its leaders' drive and determination. The headteacher's good leadership promotes high ambition for staff and students. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Students' achievement is satisfactory. This is a significant improvement from previous years, when students' progress was unsatisfactory. GCSE results are rising but have been significantly below average over recent years. In 2010, the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics improved significantly, although it was still below the national average. Standards in the specialist subject of ICT are average. Students' attainment and progress in English remain a priority for improvement. Senior leaders' determination to tackle this weakness is already making a difference. Challenging targets have been set for 2011 and senior leaders are confident that they will be met in the light of students' current gains.

The good curriculum and enrichment activities help to ensure that students enjoy learning. Effective collaboration with other providers enhances accreditation opportunities, including vocational choices, in Key Stage 4. The school's specialism makes a good impact on developing students' computing and technological skills. Students' confidence is demonstrated in their achievement of targets set for the specialist subjects of mathematics and ICT. Other aspects of students' personal development are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is good. The implementation of the 'ready to learn' policy is helping to reduce exclusions significantly. The great majority of students form good relationships with each other and adults. Students are unanimous in their view that they feel safe, and are confident that they can turn to adults if they experience problems. Attendance is average. A concerted effort to improve attendance levels is increasingly successful, enabling students to appreciate the link between attendance and attainment. Structures for support are well embedded at all levels and because of their acute awareness of students' personal needs, staff are able to provide good care, guidance and support to students. Very rigorous safeguarding procedures ensure that students' safety in school is outstanding.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but improving rapidly. Although there is much good and occasionally outstanding teaching, it is inconsistent. This results in satisfactory rather than good progress when lessons lack enough challenge and tasks are insufficiently well matched to students' different abilities. Progress in lessons is also sometimes limited when students passively receive information and follow directions, rather than thinking for themselves.

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Senior leaders are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses and the governing body plays an instrumental role in self-evaluation. From this informed position, the governing body provides good support and challenge. Senior leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate but this is not matched by all subject leaders. In a minority of cases, subject leaders' evaluations and action plans are not sufficiently robust to make a speedy impact on raising standards. The success of senior leaders' drive for improvement is evident in the significant rise in GCSE passes, students' achievement and their personal development. This reflects the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

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.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching, particularly in English by:
  - closely matching work to students' individual needs and abilities in all lessons, so that they are consistently challenged to aim for higher standards in their work
  - providing more opportunities for students to be actively engaged in learning and to demonstrate independent learning.
- Improve the quality of middle leadership by:
  - ensuring that leaders are consistently effective in contributing to raised standards of attainment.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

From their average starting points on entry to the school, students' achievement is satisfactory. Examination results already obtained for the current Year 11 students show that attainment is continuing to rise. Lesson observations across a range of subjects and year groups, including in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, indicate that students' learning and progress are improving rapidly and securely. For example, in a Year 11 science lesson, carefully structured tasks enabled all students to participate fully, support each other and assess their learning with good insight. The teacher's probing questions promoted a good level of understanding about the impact of the human population on the environment. Similarly, in a Year 11 English lesson, the teacher's effective use of expert subject knowledge resulted in the students developing a good understanding of complex ideas and being able to use their analytical skills well. Good support helps students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to progress as well as other students. The previous underachievement of less-able girls is now resolved because the system for monitoring all students' progress is robust. Effective intervention programmes, including literacy support, help students to get back on track towards their challenging targets.

Students have positive attitudes to learning. The overwhelming majority of students say they feel safe because this is given a high priority by the school, working very effectively with other agencies, such as the welfare services and the local police. In the lessons observed, students behaved well and cooperated willingly in groups and acted responsibly. Occasional bullying and the very rare racist incidents are dealt with promptly and suitably.

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Students' good contribution to the school and the wider community is shown, for example, in their contribution to the Clowne Gala day and acting as sports leaders in partner primary schools. Many volunteer to help older people with their shopping and gardening. Strong extra-curricular and sports provision helps students to lead healthy lifestyles. Students of all ages and backgrounds mix well together. A variety of religious and cultural riches are celebrated and students recognise the importance of understanding how others live and their beliefs. Students have a clear sense of right and wrong and play their part in recognising risks and minimising them. Strengths in students' numeracy and ICT skills are not matched by their literacy skills, which are relatively weak. Although this is being addressed across the curriculum, it has not yet had a significant impact on standards in English. Consequently, students' development of skills needed for their future lives and the workplace is satisfactory rather than good.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

There are strengths in the quality of teaching, but it is also too variable. In the best lessons teaching is challenging. For example, in a Year 11 physical education lesson, students were eager to learn because of the high level of questioning used by the teacher to probe understanding and ensure that students built successfully on their prior learning. In a Year 7 German lesson, highly effective use of resources, including interactive technology and inspirational fun activities, captured students' enthusiasm and promoted

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very secure learning. Students also learn at a faster rate when they are actively involved in the lessons and have work that meets their individual needs, using support assistants purposefully. In the less-effective lessons, teachers talk for too long and work is not always suitably matched to the full range of students' needs and capabilities. Students stay passive because there is insufficient use of a wide range of methods to learn. The drive to improve the use of assessment in learning is making a satisfactory impact. In the best examples, mini-plenary sessions during the course of the lesson help to refocus learning and deal with misconceptions effectively. Marking of work identifies clearly how students can improve their work. Students have a clear grasp of their targets. Some weaknesses in academic guidance and the use of self- and peer-assessment limit students' chances of making faster progress.

The curriculum flexibility in Years 10 and 11 is contributing to students' improving achievement. A wider range of vocational and diploma courses enables students to access learning more widely and is successful in enabling students to gain accreditation. Students who have additional language needs are provided with suitable programmes and individual interventions so that they are brought up to speed. There is a broad range of extra-curricular activities and clubs which are popular with students. Collaboration with partner schools and the use of additional transport enable students to access these activities and enhance their enjoyment of school.

The school measures and tracks in considerable detail a whole range of indicators showing the impact of its care, guidance and support provision on students' well-being. It can demonstrate that well-targeted support enables students, particularly those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, to make the best use of opportunities to succeed. Work with families to remove barriers to learning is good because of coordinated action which involves a wide range of agencies. Strong links with local schools and other providers facilitate transition into school, as well as ensuring that students are well informed about their future choices.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, provides determined leadership and ambition for raising standards further. There is a sense of common purpose among staff. The drive for improvement shows clear signs of success and is being increasingly well embedded. Leaders observe teachers' work regularly, and give good opportunities for less experienced staff to learn from others. Leaders fully accept their responsibility for students' achievement and tackle weaknesses

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in teaching robustly. Strong systems for accountability between senior and middle leaders concentrate on students' performance. Some variability in the quality of middle leadership is being addressed through coaching and setting challenging targets for performance management. Governance is good. The governing body holds leaders to account through its rigorous challenge for the school's performance. Equal opportunities are promoted well, for example through the rigorous analysis of the performance of different groups of students, so that gaps in attainment are narrowing. In contrast to the situation seen nationally, the achievement of students known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that of most other students in the school, indicating that potential discrimination is tackled securely. Good action is taken to engage parents and carers through a wide range of communications, meetings and opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. Effective partnerships offer many activities that students benefit from, and which the school could not provide by itself. For example, health professionals work closely with students with additional learning needs. Good community cohesion promotes links locally and these extend more widely through work with schools in Uganda and Sri Lanka. Safeguarding is outstanding because all aspects of it are very well managed by highly qualified staff. Consequently the approach to safety and safeguarding is at the forefront in every aspect of school life. The single central record is exemplary; policies are up to date, of high quality and used effectively across the school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Views of parents and carers**

A very large majority of parents and carers view the school as doing a good job overall. They agree greatly that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. Most agree that their children are making enough progress in school. Some parents and carers feel that the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour effectively. Inspectors asked students, observed behaviour during break times and in lessons, reviewed records and



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concluded that the school operates a firm but fair system to ensure that students' learning is not disrupted. It balances this with a desire to ensure that the few who students who present challenging behaviour are supported with help from external agencies, as well as through curricular opportunities that increase their chances of gaining suitable accreditation. Some of the parents and carers also indicate that the school does not help them to support their child's learning. Inspectors concluded that, on balance, the school provides a broad range of opportunities to engage parents and carers. Senior leaders recognise that the staff could do more in this regard.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heritage Mathematics and Computing Specialist 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 169 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 946 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	28	111	66	11	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	33	103	61	9	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	32	93	55	19	11	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	30	95	56	20	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	22	108	64	16	9	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	20	100	59	32	19	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	19	116	69	16	9	1	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)	49	29	105	62	9	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	27	109	64	12	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	20	98	58	19	11	14	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	15	105	62	22	13	8	5
The school is led and managed effectively	50	30	100	59	14	8	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	34	92	54	17	10	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



4 February 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Heritage Mathematics and Computing Specialist School,  
Chesterfield, S43 4QG**

I would like to thank you all for your cooperation and the help you gave us when we inspected your school recently. When the school was inspected just over a year ago, it was given a notice to improve. I am happy to say that the school has improved and it no longer needs this notice.

Your school is now satisfactory and improving. Your achievement is satisfactory. This is the result of a lot of hard work by the staff, and particularly by the headteacher and his senior team. We have judged the leadership and management of the school to be good, including that of the governing body. The school now has good systems to check on your progress, to support you when you need help and to chase you up when you are falling behind. Attendance is average and improving and the great majority of you behave well. We observed a calm atmosphere for learning in all the lessons we visited. You have access to a good curriculum and other enrichment activities which you enjoy, especially the sporting activities which enable you to adopt good, healthy lifestyles. Staff take good care of you and you told us that you feel very safe in school. We judged the school's safeguarding procedures to be excellent.

The quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory. We also observed some good and outstanding teaching. The school needs to keep on getting better. Although GCSE results are rising, the proportion of A\* to C grades including English and mathematics is below average. Standards in English have not risen as quickly as they have in mathematics. We have asked senior leaders to improve your achievement further by ensuring that more of your lessons are as good as the best we saw. We have suggested that more teachers set work that is better suited to your different abilities and include activities where you have to think more for yourselves. You can play a part in this by rising to the challenge provided by your teachers.

We wish you every success in your new school.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala

Her Majesty's Inspector

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