

Nunthorpe School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111740
Local Authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	356974
Inspection dates	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Farrow HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	1548
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Ian Click
Headteacher	Miss Debbie Clinton
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
School address	Guisborough Road Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough North Yorkshire TS7 0LA
Telephone number	01642 310561
Fax number	01642 325672
Email address	lbuckell@nunthorpe.co.uk

Age group	11–18
Inspection dates	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
Inspection number	356974

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. Thirty seven lessons were observed and 40 teachers seen. Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation including procedures for safeguarding students and a range of policies. There were 239 parents and carers' Ofsted questionnaires returned and their responses were analysed. Inspectors also considered responses from 61 staff and 188 student questionnaires.

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

- The impact of teaching on students' progress in lessons.
- The impact of the school's work on students' health, safety and personal development and well-being.
- The impact of the work of leaders and managers, including middle managers and the governing body.

Information about the school

Nunthorpe is a much larger than average-sized secondary school and the number of students on roll is increasing year-on-year. A below average proportion of students is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students from minority ethnic communities is well below that found nationally, although it has risen from the time of the last inspection. The proportion of students deemed to have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also well-below average as is the proportion of these students with a statement of special educational needs, although it has risen from the time of the last inspection. The school has developed an Effective Learning Centre, a base for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They spend some lesson time there as well as in the main school. The school also has a small inclusion unit called DANS Centre, which supports students facing temporary challenges in their lives. It also supports students at risk of exclusion.

A higher-than-average proportion of students remain at Nunthorpe for their full five years of statutory secondary schooling. The school has recently been re-designated as a specialist science, business and enterprise college. It holds a great number of nationally recognised awards including Investors in People and the Healthy Schools standard. The school has undergone significant change since the last inspection, including major changes in teaching staff. A new sixth form was set up in collaboration with two local secondary schools in September 2008. It joined the 'gaining ground programme' in September 2009, part of the previous government's strategy to hasten student achievement, and has also become a foundation school.

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

Nunthorpe provides a satisfactory quality of education for its students. It has a number of strengths including the actions taken to secure students' safety, healthy lifestyles and the impact of the school's work, including the science, business and enterprise specialism, in preparing them well for their future lives. The care, guidance and support provided are also good. Students speak highly of the vertical tutor groups and house systems which make a positive contribution to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their personal development, self-confidence and well-being. Students' behaviour is good and they are friendly, caring and supportive of one another.

Attainment is above average overall but has varied in recent years. The school's period of turbulence contributed to a dip in students' attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2008 and 2009. During that period not enough students made the progress they should have, overall, given their above average starting points in Year 7; in part this was due to weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics. Rigorous systems to get back on track have been developed and in 2010 attainment improved significantly. Provisional 2010 results for Year 11 are now closer to the school's challenging targets. Actions taken to improve the progress of students identified as underachieving are bearing fruit and all groups now make similarly satisfactory progress given their starting points in Year 7. This is supported by the school's detailed analysis of examination data. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities who attend the Effective Learning Centre make good progress there, due to focused attention to meeting their individual needs. However, although all teachers identify students' special educational needs and/or disabilities in their planning, strategies developed in the Centre are not always capitalised on when students are back in class and, in satisfactory lessons, their progress is also satisfactory.

The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good and students make generally good gains in their learning. Teaching in the main school is satisfactory. Some is good and occasionally outstanding, but it is not consistently good enough to ensure that all students make the best possible progress. In satisfactory lessons, the good and detailed assessment information teachers hold about students' progress is not always used well enough to match teaching to students' current levels of ability. Consequently, some students, particularly the more able and those of lower ability, make only satisfactory progress. In some lessons, teaching is not always sufficiently challenging, there is too much teacher talk and this limits students' opportunities to take responsibility for their learning or develop collaborative or independence skills. All students know their targets and, when marking is good, it helps them to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to meet them. However, the school's good marking policy is not consistently applied.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a strong vision for Nunthorpe to be outstanding in every sense. Senior staff, teachers and the governing body share this commitment to improvement. For example, they have quickly overcome the hurdles of developing a collaborative sixth form from scratch, and its overall effectiveness is good. All staff and the governing body have a detailed understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve through a meticulous self-evaluation, performance management and review process. Senior leaders' robust monitoring and evaluation cycle with regular 'performance assessment fortnights', area improvement reviews and assessments of students' progress, are helping to hold heads of department to account for the areas they lead effectively. As yet, the heads of department do not ensure that all staff are using assessment information about students' progress to inform their individual learning needs in lessons. Given the improvements in students' attainment, students' at least satisfactory progress in lessons and the determined focus on continued improvement, the school has satisfactory capacity to sustain its improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure students make at least good progress in all lessons by:
 - providing greater consistency in teachers' use of assessment information to plan challenging and interesting tasks and activities which are well matched to students' different abilities
 - making sure heads of department check that teachers are using the regular assessment information to inform lessons
 - widening opportunities for students to work with each other and to develop collaborative and independent learning skills
 - making sure the school's marking policy is consistently applied.
- About 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

Inspection evidence indicates that most students make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their lessons. For example, in a good, exciting physical education lesson, careful planning of activities against students' individual starting points and skill level on the trampoline ensured that all students could make rapid progress against their own challenging targets. This was not the case in a number of lessons observed and in such lessons, progress was only satisfactory. The school's detailed analysis of summer 2010 examination results shows that students overall progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 was as expected, which represents an improvement on the previous two years.

Students' achievement is satisfactory. They say they enjoy school and this is evidenced in their above average attendance, good behaviour, positive attitudes and in their promptness to lessons. Their behaviour is exemplary when moving around the narrow corridors and open spaces around the school. This is, in part, due to the impact of the school's behaviour-for-learning strategy which is well understood and adhered to by staff and students. Students say they feel very safe in school and every effort is made to

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

ensure this. They say that incidents of bullying are very rare and any are tackled tenaciously. Every effort is taken by the school to promote students' understanding of, and adoption of, healthy lifestyles. For example, all students undertake a life programme that promotes their physical and emotional health well, and the number of students regularly eating healthy school meals and taking part in sport is much higher than that found nationally. Despite this, around a fifth of students and parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaires were less positive about this aspect of the school's work. Nunthorpe is a harmonious school and students' contributions to it and the wider community are good. Students are respectful and value each others' views and opinions. They demonstrate their commitment to supporting others successfully through, for example, their fair trade work and their noteworthy charitable work. Students greatly enjoy opportunities to take responsibility and to represent their school and appreciate that their opinions are listened to, and responded to, particularly through the pastoral system and the active school council.

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	2
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	2
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	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?

Senior leaders have successfully integrated a significant number of new staff into the school since the last inspection. Leaders have ensured that professional development of teachers is an ongoing part of their focus on improvement. This has provided a consistent approach to lesson planning, good relationships between teachers and students and

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

teachers' secure subject knowledge. When teaching is good, the pace in lessons is brisk. Teachers use their knowledge of students' starting points to move their learning on quickly. Good use of resources interest and excite students and keep them motivated. However, in more satisfactory lessons, this is not always the case and while students remain well behaved, some become more passive and make only satisfactory progress.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and has been developed effectively to tackle the decline in attainment and to better meet the needs of individuals and different groups. It contributes well to the good care, guidance and support, for example, through the life programme, which successfully integrates curriculum areas such as personal, social, health and citizenship education. Year 9 'taster sessions' and the extension of the school's good science, business and enterprise specialism into Key Stage 3, are helping students to make good course choices that will help them in their future lives. As a result virtually all go on to further education, employment or training when they leave statutory schooling in Year 11; an increasing proportion attends the collaborative sixth form. The curriculum is enhanced successfully by extensive and varied enrichment and extra-curricular activities, in which a high proportion of students take part and say they enjoy.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Great efforts are taken to safeguard students, to secure the extensive school site and grounds and to promote students' welfare, health and safety. Safeguarding procedures are robust, fully meet statutory requirements and are reviewed regularly by the governing body. Senior leaders take strong action to ensure every student can access all the school has to offer, both within and outside the school day. The use of the inclusion unit is helping to reduce the number of students excluded from school temporarily and numbers are low. However, because some students could make better progress in their lessons, the effectiveness of the school's promotion of equality is judged satisfactory.

The overall effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It carries out its statutory duties effectively and ensures there are rigorous financial management procedures in place. It has taken robust action to increase the challenge, as well as the support, provided to senior leaders, following the dip in attainment in 2008 and 2009 and this has contributed to the improvements seen in 2010. Partnerships with parents and other agencies to promote students' learning, personal development and well-being are good. These include strong links with local primary schools, that aid transitions, and collaboration with partner secondary schools, that has ensured the successful development of the sixth form. Partnerships are also used well to support the most

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

vulnerable students, particularly in times of need. Good community cohesion extends beyond school, the local and national community into the global community, for example, through the Uganda project where students take the lead in developing successful links.

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	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	3
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	3

Sixth form

The first group of students to complete post-16 study at Nunthorpe in 2010 attained highly with no significant variations in the attainment of differing groups. Teachers are generally diligent in preparing interesting and challenging lessons, using a wide range of activities appropriate to subject specialisms; consequently, students often make good progress. Students are enthusiastic and display confidence and maturity. They say they feel very safe and well informed, taking responsibility for their own health and well-being. They value the many opportunities to develop their own potential through a rich and varied enrichment programme. This places volunteering and making a contribution to their community central elements in their learning. They benefit from focused and helpful feedback from their teachers, both during lessons and in their written work. As the sixth form grows, the curriculum is being rapidly broadened to better meet the needs of all students, including those who would like to follow more vocational options. A wide range of events and activities support students, their parents and carers in preparation for their next steps; in 2010 virtually all students progressed from the sixth form to their chosen destination. Leaders have clarity of vision for the ongoing development of this new provision. They have shown great determination in working with all staff, developing systems and good practice that are succeeding in improving outcomes for students. They are proactive in addressing any areas of weakness and future plans are rightly focused on further development and monitoring of the provision.

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

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

A small proportion, around 16%, of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire; two parents telephoned the lead inspector. The vast majority were very positive about their children's enjoyment of school, actions to keep their children safe and the work undertaken to prepare them for their future lives; inspectors endorse these views. Approximately 20% made additional comments, and around a third of these were positive with two thirds being more negative. There were few common themes. A small number related to issues regarding the school uniform. A few others had concerns about homework, suggesting that either too much or not enough is given. The school has recently developed an internet portal to support parents and carers in helping their children's studies and develop a more consistent approach. Student behaviour was a concern of a small number of parents and carers. During the inspection students' behaviour was good overall and exemplary as they moved around school. Students were much more positive about behaviour in their own questionnaire responses. The headteacher was made aware of these concerns and other individual concerns where it would not breach the confidentiality of the respondents. She is taking steps to tackle any issues arising.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nunthorpe 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 239 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1548 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	28	145	61	23	10	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	72	30	162	68	1	0	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	68	28	131	55	27	11	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	25	145	61	16	7	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	59	25	143	60	12	5	6	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	17	138	58	45	19	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	14	152	64	34	14	10	4
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)	60	25	144	60	17	7	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	23	148	62	16	7	7	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	68	28	133	56	13	5	9	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	15	136	57	31	13	10	4
The school is led and managed effectively	48	20	134	56	32	13	9	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	28	140	59	16	7	5	2

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.



5 October 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Nunthorpe School, Middlesbrough TS7 0LA

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we inspected your school. We were impressed with your good behaviour, attitudes and helpfulness when we spoke to you in lessons, around the school, or in the meetings we had with some of you. We judge the school's overall effectiveness to be satisfactory, mainly because although the standards you attain in Year 11 have improved and are high again, following a dip, some of you could make better progress in lessons. There are a number of strengths, including the way the school works to ensure your safety, improve your health (although some of you do not think this is the case), and prepare you for your future lives. The care, support and guidance provided are also good. You say you value the vertical tutor groups that are helping to build relationships, and the way that the school boosts your confidence, self-esteem and supports your good personal development.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a thorough system to track and monitor the work of the school to make sure improvements continue. This includes detailed, regular assessment of your work. However, this good information is not always used well enough by teachers to make sure lessons always take account of your individual starting points. Consequently, we have asked your headteacher to make sure that all teachers are using this information to provide lessons that always meet your different needs. We have asked them to ensure that you have more opportunities to work in groups, and be more involved in your learning. We have also asked them to make sure all teachers use the school's good marking policy so you always know how well you are doing and what you need to do to achieve your best.

Thank you once again, and on behalf of the team, I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Margaret Farrow

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.