

Danetre School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122065
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	359162
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	
Number of pupils on the school roll	1010
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debby Clayton
Headteacher	David Howell
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
School address	Hawke Road Daventry NN11 4LJ
Telephone number	01327 313400
Fax number	01327 313416
Email address	Head@danetre.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Age group	11–18
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2010
Inspection number	359162

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 two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors, including one who focused for half a day on the school's provision for safeguarding students. In total, 32 observations were made of 32 different teachers across the school, some of which were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors held meetings with groups of students, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including development plans, school and national data on students' performance, and the school's evaluation of its effectiveness. Responses to questionnaires from 103 parents and carers, 77 members of staff and 250 students also provided additional evidence.

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

- Is attainment rising strongly, especially in mathematics and science and are students' learning and progress improving because of the quality of teaching?
- How secure is the achievement of girls and of students identified as having special educational needs?
- How effective is the quality of leadership and management at all levels in tackling underperformance and sustaining improvement over time?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized secondary school. Students come from a range of backgrounds, but almost all are White British. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average. The school became a specialist engineering college in 2005. Among the awards achieved by the school are Healthy School Status, Investors in People and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

From September 2008, Danetre has been designated as an 11-18 school. Currently, no sixth form students are on the roll of the school. Sixth form provision is shared with the Daventry Learning Partnership and sixth form students currently leave Year 11 to join the roll of Northampton College or Moulton College. Danetre School contributes staffing to the Daventry Learning Partnership but no sixth form teaching takes place at the school. It is expected that from September 2011 sixth form students will be taught at Danetre School. The school will remain part of the Daventry Learning Partnership.

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

This satisfactory school is improving because of senior leaders' drive and determination. Results in GCSE examinations are rising, with significant improvement over recent years in the proportion of students who gain five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics. On this measure, the 2010 results are at the national average. The impact of the school's engineering specialism is reflected in students attaining significantly above average standards in this subject. Current tracking data shows that students are making satisfactory progress, including in mathematics and science, where there has been a legacy of previous underachievement. However, there is still some work to be done in these subjects to raise students' achievement from satisfactory to good and to enable them to attain higher standards and reach their potential. Challenging targets for 2011 have been set across all subjects and senior leaders are confident that they will be met in the light of students' current gains and the school's robust tracking of progress.

Students' behaviour is good. Most enjoy lessons, are punctual and work well with each other or independently in the classroom. Outside of lessons, students are calm and orderly and show consideration to each other and to adults. Incidents of poor behaviour are well managed, making good use of external support to help those students who have particular difficulties. Every effort is made to help remove barriers to learning. Consequently, students' care, guidance and support are good. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Students form good relationships with each other and with adults and they feel safe. They have ample opportunities to engage in artistic and cultural activities and harmony between different social and ethnic groups is very evident. Participation in health promoting activities is good, especially those provided through sports and performing arts activities which are enjoyed by both boys and girls. They readily respond to surveys which help improve the quality of provision and their life in the school. Attendance is average and the school has had significant success in reducing the rate of persistent absenteeism, so that this too is broadly average. The good curriculum is effective in meeting students' needs and aspirations, underpinned by a good use of partnerships to give access to a wide range of courses. The school's specialism makes a positive impact on provision because it has maximised students' opportunities to gain relevant qualifications and increased their motivation and enjoyment. Students' participation in enrichment activities is good, successfully promoting their well-being.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although there is much good practice across the school, teaching is inconsistent within and across subjects. This results in satisfactory rather than good progress in lessons which lack challenge because teachers' expectations of work are not high enough. There is inconsistency in the marking of students' work. Students do not always receive detailed comments, apart from work which is formally assessed, and advice given in exercise books is not routinely followed up by teachers 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

check it has been followed. This limits the impact made on students' learning and progress and their motivation to respond to teachers' advice.

The headteacher's calm and inclusive manner sets a good example to students and staff alike. Ably supported by senior leaders and the governing body, he successfully communicates an ambition for higher achievement. A measure of senior leaders' drive to secure improvement is evident in students' raised attainment by the end of Year 11 in terms of five good passes at GCSE. Equal opportunities are promoted well, for example through the rigorous analysis of the performance of different groups of students and the removal of barriers to learning. The school has wide-ranging and effective self-evaluation processes. Where particular groups of students have been found to be underachieving, for instance middle-ability girls and some students identified as have specific learning difficulties, leaders have taken decisive action to ensure that that this is reversed. The gap between boys' and girls' achievement is closing. This improvement, along with successes in tackling weaknesses in subject leadership and eradicating inadequate teaching, reflects the school's good capacity for continuing improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement by increasing the proportion of good or better teaching so that progress becomes good by:
 - raising teachers' expectations about what students can achieve
 - ensuring that the good practice already being demonstrated within successful subjects is delivered in all lessons
 - ensuring that there is consistency in the marking of students' work so that they all know how to improve their work.
- Embed recent improvements in mathematics and science by:
 - maximising opportunities that are given to students of all abilities to attain higher standards overall.
- 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

From their average starting points on entry to the school, students' achievement is satisfactory. Their attainment in mathematics and science has been below the national average and progress was slow. While some inconsistencies remain, these trends have now reversed, reflecting the positive impact of interventions made by the senior leadership team. Observations of teaching and learning during the inspection confirmed that standards are rising in mathematics and science. Improved leadership in these key subjects, rigorous monitoring of progress at whole-school and subject level and some better teaching means that students' overall attainment is now average and they make satisfactory progress. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by staff. As a result, these students also make satisfactory progress, with individuals who make good progress.

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

Students' behaviour is good and they feel safe. They follow instructions in lessons promptly and the great majority have positive attitudes to learning. They are very clear about expectations because the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently. Students of all ages and backgrounds mix well together and speak positively of the recently introduced mixed-age tutor groups. Students understand how to adopt healthy lifestyles and enthusiastically take part in a wide range of physical activities that are on offer. They cooperate well in groups and enjoy showing responsibility and leadership. Students' good contribution to the school and the wider community is shown, for example, through their participation in the work of the school council and acting as mentors. They have shown initiative in taking responsibility for recycling and participate willingly in developing links with schools in Uganda and Sweden. Students' understanding of the world of work is promoted by the school's community engineering day and enrichment activities supported by local businesses. Improvements in basic skills in mathematics and the use of information and communication technology mean students' development of skills needed for their futures and the workplace is satisfactory.

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	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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

There are many strengths in the quality of teaching. However, there is too much variation so that not all students make good progress. The features of the more successful lessons include teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, questioning skills to help

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

students to develop their understanding and the deployment of a range of strategies to successfully engage students in learning. For example, in one lesson, the teacher's enthusiastic approach and the students' active involvement in a variety of tasks helped to consolidate their understanding of probability. Where teaching is less strong, the pace of learning is slowed by teachers talking for too long and there is not enough focus on what students need to learn to make good progress. Some teachers' expectations are not high enough. There is similar variation in the quality of feedback given to students and in the written marking of their work. When feedback is sharply focused on what students need to do better there is a direct link with improved achievement. However, on too many occasions students' work is not monitored effectively or insufficient advice is given to help them improve and comments requiring action are not followed up.

The curriculum, including the contribution made by the school's engineering specialism, provides students with access to a wide range of courses in Key Stage 4. This enables them to succeed, particularly in vocational courses. Access to courses is augmented by effective work with the Daventry Learning Partnership and other schools. A range of Diploma courses have good participation, for example, new courses in motor vehicle engineering and creative media, about which students speak very enthusiastically. Students joining in Year 7 also enjoy a joint English and humanities programme of study which additionally helps to improve their literacy skills. A good number of popular enrichment activities, including sports, creative arts and study support, make a positive impact on students' well-being and enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support are notable strengths of the school's provision. Danetre's pride in being an inclusive school is justified because it works hard to meet individual students' needs. The school can point to many examples of its significant impact on improving the welfare and achievement of its potentially vulnerable students. Transition arrangements are good and there is a strong sense of school community. The potential to improve this further by linking pastoral and academic support through the recently introduced tutor system is well understood by senior leaders. Increasingly, it is enabling more staff to bring a range of data together in order to impact further on raising students' attainment.

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?

The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, is effective in driving improvement and is ambitious for raising standards further. Rigorous monitoring has strengthened provision and outcomes in weaker areas. Decisive action, where it was needed, has led 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

improved subject leadership and teaching. Strong systems for accountability between senior and middle leaders concentrate on students' performance. A wider evaluation of each department's performance draws on a good range of evidence and results in suitable action plans. The school's evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate, although occasionally there is a lack of sharpness in evaluating the quality of students' learning, resulting in some generous grading of teaching. Governors involve themselves fully in the life of the school and have systematic approaches to evaluation. Consequently, they provide good direction, based on an informed view about students' outcomes, and hold the school to account. Good action is taken to engage parents and carers through a wide range of communications and mechanisms, including electronically through secure routes. There is a fair understanding of the needs of the local community and sound links with school communities more widely contribute to students' understanding of social and cultural diversity in Britain and beyond. The school has not yet formulated a set of planned actions based on a clear audit of community needs, but a broad range of work is done to ensure the school community is cohesive. Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Some minor omissions in record keeping raised during the inspection resulted in rapid remedial action.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

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

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt the school is doing a good job overall. They agree that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. The great majority are happy about how the school keeps them informed about their children's progress. Some parents 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 concluded that the school operates a firm but fair system to ensure that students' learning is not disrupted. Some of the parents and carers also indicate that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors concluded that, on balance, the school provides a broad range of opportunities for consultation, for instance through the Parents Forum and surveys, and that wherever feasible, parents' views are sought and are influential in the drive to bring about improvements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Danetre 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 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1010 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	30	59	57	6	6	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	25	24	65	63	8	8	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	27	62	60	6	6	4	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	28	61	59	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	25	24	63	61	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	26	60	58	10	10	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	16	63	61	15	15	3	3
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)	26	25	58	56	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	30	58	56	9	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	17	54	52	19	18	6	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	17	60	58	9	9	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	29	28	59	57	7	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	30	57	55	9	9	1	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.



10 December 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Danetre School, Daventry, NN11 4LJ

Thank you for the positive contribution that you made to our recent inspection. Your views, alongside the questionnaire responses from your parents, were helpful in confirming our first-hand observations and the school's own evaluation. I should like to share our conclusions with you.

Yours is a satisfactory school. Some aspects are good, particularly your personal development. You have positive attitudes to learning, and your behaviour in classes and around the school is good. You make a good contribution to school and the wider community, and you participate well in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Staff take good care of you and you told us that you feel safe, a view endorsed by the great majority of parents and carers.

The headteacher and other leaders are effective in driving improvement. This is evident in the most recent GCSE results which reflect a continuing, rising trend. Results in mathematics and science have been below average but are rising and we have asked senior leaders to ensure that this improvement continues. From your starting points on joining the school, your achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 11. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but we also observed good teaching. To improve further, we have asked senior leaders to ensure that the proportion of good or better teaching increases across all subjects so that you make better than satisfactory progress in your learning. We have also asked that the quality of marking is more consistent so that you know how to improve your work. You can play a part by rising to the challenge provided by teachers and responding to their advice on how to improve your work.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala

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.