

# Kettlethorpe High School, A Specialist Maths and Computing College

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108271
<b>Local authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	377727
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	James Kidd

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>	Secondary
<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>	1,560
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Denis Barry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tudor Griffiths
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2008
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by six additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 43 lessons, taught by 43 teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, four members of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including internal and external pupil progress data, school development planning, policies relating to child protection and safeguarding and pupils' workbooks. Inspectors also analysed 205 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 130 completed by staff and 192 returned by pupils.

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

- Whether improvements in pupils' attainment, learning and progress, suggested by data, are being maintained.
- How and with what impact the leadership has attempted to improve the quality of teaching across the school.
- The quality and consistency of feedback pupils receive on their work and whether they are aware of what they need to do to reach their targets.
- The impact of specialist status across the school.

## Information about the school

This larger-than-average secondary school has held specialist status in mathematics and computing since 2003. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below that usually found. Most pupils are of White British heritages and there are very few pupils at early stages of speaking English as an additional language. Kettlethorpe High is a nationally-accredited Healthy School and holds the Sportsmark (gold) and Artsmark (gold) awards. It is a local authority 'Inclusion Now' school and works in partnership with six schools across Europe through the British Council's Comenius project.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good and rapidly improving school. Excellent leadership ensures that staff at all levels of experience and responsibility feel both valued and valuable. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils believe they are exceptionally safe in school. Quality assurance and ongoing improvement in all areas of school life are emphasised strongly and, as a result, the school knows itself well and rejects any complacency about its performance. For example, the school is justifiably proud of its increasingly good academic record, but is ever focused on accelerating pupils' progress even further. Better teaching, increased pupils' learning and progress and higher standards since the previous inspection demonstrate that the school has good capacity to sustain improvement.

All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well to reach above average standards by the end of Year 11. Pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection. However, it still lags behind English and the school recognises that more consistency in developing pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum is of the essence if the improvement is to be maintained.

Pupils are very proud of Kettlethorpe High and value its attempts to recognise their hard work and successes in all areas of its life. As a result, pupils behave well, believe their views are listened to and are always willing to support their younger counterparts and, through their extensive charity appeals, people less fortunate than themselves. In the words of pupils in all years, 'We are a family here and we look after each other'. Attendance is consistently above average.

Teaching is good and its quality is more consistent than at the time of the previous inspection. Marking is a strength and pupils benefit from detailed feedback on how they can improve their work and reach their targets. Use of assessment data, too, has improved markedly but some inconsistency remains. In a minority of lessons it is not used effectively to provide activities to meet the learning needs of individuals closely enough.

The curriculum meets the needs, interests and aspirations of pupils well and there is a good range of academic and vocational courses on offer. Specialist status in computing continues to have a positive impact on the provision and use of new technology and on pupils' learning as a consequence. The impact of specialist status in mathematics is not as evident.

Kettlethorpe High is an inclusive community in which pupils come first and in which adults and young people are treated with dignity and respect. Indeed, pupils believe that the adults who work with them have their well-being uppermost in their minds. Parents and carers agree and comment, 'Our children are known as individuals; staff are caring, encouraging and sensitive to their needs'.

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

- Continue to accelerate learning and progress by:
  - raising standards in mathematics further through securing greater consistency in developing pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum
  - sharing good practice in assessment to ensure that all staff use data effectively to provide activities which meet the needs of learners even more closely.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are strong and pupils enter classrooms eagerly, looking forward to their lessons. They are generally fully engaged in the activities and enjoy the opportunities they have to work collaboratively with their peers and to act as extra resources for their learning. They enjoy challenge and their perseverance in learning is fostered by the positive referral system which identifies the successes, and rewards the hard work of pupils of all levels of ability.

Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment and make good progress across the school to reach above average standards by the time they leave. As a result of comprehensive guidance and support, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, make the same good progress as their peers. Standards have risen year-on-year since the previous inspection and students now invariably reach, and in some cases exceed, their challenging targets. Results in English are particularly impressive and there are several other subjects with large examination entry in which results are much higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The percentage of pupils reaching grades A\* and A continues to increase across the school. Attainment in mathematics has risen each year since 2008, but it is still not where the school would like it to be, as a result of inconsistencies in the development of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards school and behave well in lessons and around the site. They are welcoming and courteous to visitors and are more than willing to show them around and to talk about just why they enjoy school. They feel utterly secure in school and have a keen understanding of what can make an unsafe situation. Most pupils are concerned to live a healthy lifestyle and the extensive range of extra-curricular sports activities is well attended. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities as prefects and members of the school council and they put forward their ideas to improve the school with

confidence. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and mutual respect abounds.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<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]/[skills] that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good overall and there are examples of outstanding practice in both key stages. Relationships are positive and pupils’ behaviour is managed well in a climate of justified praise and reward. In the best lessons, an excellent Year 11 English session, for example, there are engaging starters, a range of stimulating activities to meet the learning needs of all, rapid pace and high levels of challenge throughout. In such lessons, students are highly motivated, enthusiastic and keen to learn. The impact of the school’s specialist status is seen in the judicious use of modern technology, including the electronic whiteboard, and pupils have many opportunities to pursue their own research using computers and the internet. Where teaching is satisfactory, some teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to improve their learning through discussion or active self-evaluation and teacher talk dominates the lesson. Activities sometimes lack challenge and inconsistencies in the use of pupil progress data mean that activities are not tailored closely enough to pupils’ individual learning needs. Nonetheless, the use of assessment is good overall and recognised as such by pupils, who say that they know their targets and how they can reach them. Indeed, the quality of marking is a strength across the school; it celebrates pupils’ industry, progress and attainment and gives them detailed advice on how they can improve their work further.

The curriculum makes an important contribution to improvements in the quality of pupils’ learning and also to their personal development. It is well managed and responsive to pupils’ aspirations and interests. There is clear emphasis on providing a good range of academic and vocational courses in Key Stage 4 which provide pupils with the foundation for progression into further education or employment. The positive outcomes of provision in this key stage are clearly evident in steadily

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<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

improving standards, positive pupils’ attitudes and low figures for leavers not involved in employment, education or training. The curriculum in Key Stage 3 is developing well, comprises opportunities for early examination entry in Year 9 and a more thematic approach which enables students to see how different subjects relate to each other. The curriculum is complemented by a wide variety of enrichment activities which are well supported and which include educational visits, residential opportunities, sports and performing arts programmes. As pupils themselves say, ‘There is always something going on after school.’

Pupils, parents and carers are united in their appreciation for the outstanding care, guidance and support and also for the consideration which staff afford their families. Indeed, there is excellent ongoing support, specialised and tailored for those pupils who are going through difficult times. The gifted and committed pastoral team places maximum emphasis on developing pupils’ emotional well-being and this also has a positive impact on their learning in class, as does the close support from well-qualified teaching assistants. Induction arrangements for pupils new to the school are meticulous in their attention to detail. For example, liaison with feeder primary schools is comprehensive and focuses on the needs of individual pupils. In addition, the school has exemplary strategies to support pupils moving to their next stage of education or to employment. Careers advice and guidance are strengths.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<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>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The inspirational headteacher, fully supported by an outstanding senior team, leads by example and encourages staff, both pastoral and academic, to be proactive in their work to facilitate ongoing improvement. Staff speak with one voice about how the school is to move forward and are both honest and accurate about its strengths and areas for development. They accept, without reservation, the school’s maxim, ‘The first role of leadership is that it is shared’.

Improvements in the quality of teaching have come about by a determined focus on the impact that teaching has upon learning and by improving the use of assessment. Leaders have an accurate understanding of what makes good teaching and information from monitoring is used well to determine training for teachers on how to improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved markedly since the previous inspection and is now good.

Members of the governing body are well informed about school performance and support both staff and pupils well. They are never afraid to challenge the leadership when they feel it is necessary to do so.

The school engages effectively with parents and carers and is always looking for new ways in which to elicit their views on how the school can improve further. There are good links with a range of outside institutions, with a school in York as part of the 'Gaining Ground' initiative, for example. In addition, the positive impact of specialist status in computing is seen in the partnership work with two schools, to develop learning opportunities using new technology.

Equality of opportunity is promoted well and the school challenges discrimination, in all its forms, whenever it occurs. Child protection policies and practice are exemplary, meet national requirements and are always under review. Safeguarding overall, however, is good because some records are not fully up to date. The school takes its work on community cohesion seriously and links with the school in Belarus are becoming increasingly strong, enabling pupils to gain information about a culture which is different to their own.

Finances are managed well and decisions are taken after careful consideration about their impact on school priorities. Value for money is good.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</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>2</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>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are entirely happy with their children's experience at Kettlethorpe and believe that the school keeps them safe. A very large majority express the view that teaching is good in the school and that pupils make good progress. Similarly, most parents and carers who responded are sure that the school meets their children's particular needs, that it prepares them well for the future and that it deals effectively with any inappropriate behaviour. A very small minority do not believe that the school helps their children to lead a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors examined this concern and found that the school teaches its pupils well about the importance of a balanced diet and of physical fitness and emotional well-being. Inspectors believe, however, that not all pupils follow the school's advice about healthy eating!



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kettlethorpe High School, A Specialist Maths and Computing College 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 205 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,560 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	109	53	87	42	5	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	97	47	102	50	3	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	122	60	76	37	4	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	110	54	83	40	6	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	93	45	101	49	5	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	91	44	95	46	11	5	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	66	32	113	55	18	9	1	0
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)	90	44	102	50	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	97	47	97	47	5	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	105	51	87	42	5	2	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	77	38	104	51	11	5	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	101	49	97	47	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	117	57	81	40	4	2	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.**



28 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Kettlethorpe High School, A Specialist Maths and Computing College, Wakefield, WF2 7EL**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We are particularly grateful to those of you who spoke with us on Monday lunchtime and Tuesday morning. You were very keen to find out how the inspection was going. I would now like to answer your questions!

Kettlethorpe is a good school. You make good progress and you are now reaching standards which are higher than in many other schools. Your attainment in English is much higher than it used to be but, although it has improved too, your attainment in mathematics is not quite as good. We have asked your teachers, therefore, to help you to develop your skills in numeracy in all your lessons. You are very proud of your school and you behave well. You told us you feel very safe because the adults who work with you are always there when you need them. We agree with you and think that the care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. You look after each other too and, as mentors, prefects and members of the school council, you do a lot to help the school run so smoothly.

The quality of teaching in Kettlethorpe is good and the detailed way in which teachers mark your work is a real strength and helps you understand how you can improve. Although assessment is good overall, we have asked your teachers to make sure that they all use the information they have on how well you are doing more effectively to give you activities to meet your needs even more closely.

Your school is led and managed exceptionally well and makes sure that Kettlethorpe High is a close-knit community. Some of you told us that it is 'One big family'. Thanks again for your kindness to us and for your contribution to the inspection.

Yours sincerely

James Kidd  
Lead inspector

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