

# Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114310
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	378841
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Paul Hancock 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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,199
<b>Of which number on roll in the sixth form</b>	942
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dennis Southwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Arthur Raymond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Bradford Crescent Gilesgate Durham DH1 1HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3847505
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Paul Hancock  
Clare Coburn  
David Selby  
Mark Patton  
Mark Simpson

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Additional Inspector  
Ofsted Secondee  
Additional Inspector  
Additional Inspector

The inspection was carried out with two days' notice by five inspectors who observed 50 teachers teaching 51 lessons. Two were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy head. The inspectors met with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and vice-chair, and discussed the work of the school with students. Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school self-evaluation and improvement plan, the safeguarding and equality policies, and minutes of the governing body meetings. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and 41 parental and carers' questionnaires were analysed and others completed by students and staff.

## Information about the school

Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre is on two sites close to Durham city centre. The number of students aged between 11 and 16 is small compared to the larger-than-average sixth form which has over 40 feeder schools and is fully inclusive. Nearly all students are White British and more girls than boys attend the school. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. A below average proportion of students in the main school has a disability or is supported by School Action Plus and a statement of special educational needs. A very small number of students comes from minority ethnic groups or speaks English as an additional language. The number entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is below average. A new headteacher and deputy have been appointed in the last two years and new appointments have been made to the governing body such as four new parent governors. The school reached and exceeded the current floor standards, which the government sets for the minimum expectations for attainment and 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

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- Durham Gillesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre is a good school. Students' achievement is good and all groups make good progress including those with disabilities and special educational needs. Sixty-three per cent of Year 11 last year gained five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics, which is above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that current achievement in the sixth form is good and attainment is improving. The school is not outstanding because the proportion of good or better teaching is not yet high enough to sustain outstanding achievement; also work for students, particularly the most able, is sometimes not as challenging as it should be. The sixth form is good overall and attainment is quickly improving because of recent changes to the way it is led and managed.
- Most teaching is good and sometimes outstanding where students are fully challenged all of the time and they frequently learn through independent study. The quality of teaching is not as high when precision of lesson planning does not fully meet different learning needs. Assessment information is used to good effect when planning lessons and students are clear about how well they are doing.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students feel safe and show positive attitudes to their learning. Relationships with staff are strong and mutual respect between students and staff is common. Students, parents and carers have a positive view of the school and links with partners are good.
- Leadership, management and governance of the school and the sixth form are good. The capacity exists to improve this good school further. Changes made by senior leaders and the governing body in the last two years have made a significant impact in the main school and effective action driven at a good pace is now having a marked effect on the sixth form. Performance management is used well to support teachers in developing their practice and the leadership of teaching is good.

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

- Further raise achievement and make students' progress more rapid by:
  - continuing to make sure that students of all abilities are fully stretched and challenged in every lesson, including the most able
  - ensuring that work is always matched to individual needs and starting points.
- Ensure that all teaching is good or better by:
  - building on the good professional development practice in the school
  - making sure that all teachers are familiar with outstanding teaching strategies and how to use them.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Students mostly start at the school with standards that are below those found nationally. They generally make good progress and reach above average standards at GCSE. Standards in English and mathematics are above average, although some students with high prior attainment do not progress as rapidly as they could. In lessons seen during the inspection students made good progress, including the high proportion eligible for free school meals, disabled students and those with special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the sixth form for the majority of groups of students are at least in line with national levels. Achievement in the sixth form is improving as a result of successful intervention and development strategies.

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say they are happy with the progress their children make in the school. The school knows that raising attainment further and speeding up progress, particularly for the most-able students, is a high priority. Progress is slower where the pace of the lesson drops and students are expected to listen for long periods of time before engaging in their own work and learning. Achievement and attainment in sports which is the specialist subject met targets in 2011.

### Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good and improving. The best teaching is characterised by a fast pace that engages the students quickly and is sharply focused on independent learning driven by clear and shared objectives. Activities are very effectively matched to students' needs and the most recent assessment information is taken into account. For example, in a Year 7 mathematics lesson, students valued the choice and independence to progress across different levels of work. Gains in their understanding were checked by the teacher at the end of the lesson and were used to plan future learning. Where the quality of teaching is not as high, students are not given enough opportunities to ask their own questions and be more directly involved in their learning. Teachers' planning for these lessons does not always meet the needs of all students in the class with a range of different abilities, particularly the most-able students and there is room to provide more time for independent study.

Relationships between teachers and their students are strong and characterised by mutual respect and high expectations. The teaching makes a good impact on spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, for example through the extensive range of activities available in addition to the curriculum. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agreed that their children are taught well at this school. Assessment information is used well to ensure that all students are making good progress. Work is regularly marked and progress is routinely reviewed by teachers and support staff so that they and the students know how well they are doing. Adjustments are made to ensure that students remain on track and good support helps those students who have special educational needs to make good progress. Evidence from listening to students read in Year 7 confirms that the teaching of reading is good.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school because senior leaders took the right action to ensure that a new behaviour management policy is followed and students know what is expected of them. The inspection found little evidence to support the concerns about behaviour in lessons raised by some students, parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaires. Students occasionally become restless when their lessons do not engage them quickly enough. Students make a good contribution to their own learning. They respond maturely when asked to work independently and collaborate well on group tasks.

Attendance has improved and persistent absence has reduced significantly in the last two years. The number of exclusions is low and the school works exceptionally hard to support those students who may struggle with their behaviour. Students are aware of the different types of bullying and say the school deals with any rare incidents very well. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school closely monitors any concerns regarding students' health and safety and involves parents, carers and external agencies at all levels. All of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that the school ensured that their children were looked after well.

## **Leadership and management**

Leadership, management and governance are good and the school has good capacity to make improvements. A rigorous approach to monitoring achievement and the quality of teaching gives the senior leadership team an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. Areas for improvement are well known and the right action is driven at a good pace. This is ensuring that the school and the sixth form are continuing to improve and the strategic vision to be an outstanding school is realised. The governing body has been significantly strengthened. It is effective in holding the school to account and challenging the senior leadership team about students' achievement. The performance management of teachers is closely linked to their professional development and is making a good impact on improving the quality of teaching. Leaders realise that there is greater potential for the best teachers to share successful strategies with all staff.

Robust procedures are in place to ensure students' safety and all current safeguarding requirements are met. Students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are exceptionally well supported and their needs are fully understood by the school. The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and a broad range of visits, such as a classics visit to Greece and an art visit to Italy, make a strong

impact on social and cultural development. The good curriculum is enriched with a wide range of activities which include sporting and musical events. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good and all forms of discrimination are tackled. The engagement of parents and carers has significantly improved, for example through feedback from routine questionnaires and the recent appointment of parent governors.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



14 May 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre,  
Durham, DH1 1HN**

Thank you for all your help when I inspected the school. Please would you pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires and say we took all their views into account. I thought you might like to know what I found about your school.

- Gilesgate is a good and improving school and sixth form centre.
- Your achievement is good, you make good progress and GCSE standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching is good or better and it is continuing to improve.
- Your behaviour is good, you feel safe and are cared for well.
- Senior leaders and members of the governing body are making the right improvements to help you achieve even higher levels.

To help them do this, I have asked them to:

- continue raising your achievement and making your progress even more rapid
- ensure that all teaching is good or better.

I know the staff would appreciate your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Hancock  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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