

# Brinsworth Comprehensive School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	136301
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	395682
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Bernard Campbell 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>	Academy
<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>	1,391
<b>Of which number on roll in the sixth form</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	F Pickering
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Fone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Brinsworth Road Brinsworth Rotherham S60 5EJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 828383
<b>Fax number</b>	N/A
<b>Email address</b>	administration@brinsworth.rotherham.sch.uk

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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Bernard Campbell  
Mary Lanovy-Taylor  
Mark Shenton  
Mehar Brar  
Pamela Hemphill

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 48 lessons and observed 48 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, staff, members of the governing body and a headteacher consultant from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised the school's plans, records, analysis of data and self-evaluation. Inspectors analysed 750 inspection questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 192 staff questionnaires and 150 pupil questionnaires. Ninety responses were available from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which informed the planning of the inspection.

## Information about the school

Brinsworth is a larger-than-average secondary school with a sixth form of 210 students. It gained academy status in October 2010 and has a specialism in science. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of students from minority-ethnic groups is above average. The proportion of the students with special educational needs supported by school action is below average but the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' 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

- Brinsworth is a good school with a good sixth form. It is not outstanding because achievement is not as strong at Key Stage 3 as Key Stage 4, especially in English and mathematics, and not enough teaching across the school is outstanding. The good climate for learning promotes harmonious relationships between students from different ethnic communities.
- Achievement is good because current students make good progress. Achievement is good in the sixth form and in science. Attainment at GCSE has been in line with the national average. However, in 2012, GCSE results are on track to make a marked improvement. Progress in GCSE English and mathematics, which was satisfactory, is now good. However, higher-ability students make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Students lack sufficient opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills across different subjects.
- Teaching is good. A little is outstanding and none is inadequate. A small minority is satisfactory. On occasion, activities are not sufficiently well-matched to students' needs and abilities, and teachers do not always check how well students understand. Students do not always have enough opportunity to develop and express their ideas. Marking is variable in quality.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Effective strategies promote good relationships and behaviour in classrooms, around the school and between ethnic groups. Fixed-term exclusions have been reduced significantly. Attendance has improved from below to above average. Students feel safe and believe that bullying and racism are dealt with well.
- Leaders have improved achievement in English and mathematics and sustained good achievement in science and the sixth form. Attendance and behaviour have improved. This good track record combined with accurate self-evaluation and effective systems for the leadership of teaching and managing the performance of staff demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Ensure that progress is consistently good in English and mathematics, especially at Key Stage 3, by:
  - using assessment data accurately and rigorously to prompt earlier action to accelerate progress
  - further developing students' understanding and practical application of mathematics
  - increasing the progress made by higher-ability students in mathematics
  - developing the use of reading and writing skills across different subjects.
  
- Further increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
  - refining the match of tasks to the needs and abilities of students
  - improving the rigour and consistency of marking, the quality of written feedback and the checking of understanding in lessons.
  - increasing the opportunities for students to develop and express their own ideas
  - extending the programme of coaching for satisfactory teaching.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

The attainment of students on entry is below average in some years and average in others. Attainment by the end of Year 11 has been average but is better in the current year. The school predicts that a higher proportion will gain five GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, in 2012. This is reliably based on early GCSE results in mathematics and the externally marked GCSE exams in English. In addition, school predictions were accurate in 2011. GCSE results in science are consistently above average. Almost all students gain five GCSEs at A\* to G which contributes to the high proportion that stay in education and training at age 16, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs.

In recent years, students made satisfactory progress. The inspection provided convincing evidence that the progress made by current students is good. Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires said that their children are making good progress. Key Stage 4 assessment data show that, in both Years 10 and 11, students have made faster progress in English and mathematics than in previous years, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs. However, the progress made by higher-ability students in mathematics remains satisfactory. These improvements have been brought about by effective leadership and rigorous use of assessment to target learning. The school has identified that the progress made by students in English and mathematics is better at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3.

Learning in lessons is good. Students are keen and willing to learn. They collaborate well and show mutual respect for each other. They enjoy practical and creative activities in a good range of subjects. They are willing to explore their ideas in class discussion and to speculate about alternative explanations. Students develop a good understanding of religious and cultural diversity. The school has refined the use of student grouping which has helped to match the teaching more closely to students' learning needs. Students

sometimes lack guidance and feedback on the quality of their writing in different subjects. On occasion, activities do not sufficiently challenge higher-ability students. In weaker lessons, the teacher did not always identify and help students who did not understand, or who were not on task. On occasion, students were less engaged when there was too much talking by the teacher.

Achievement is good in the sixth form. Students make good progress in the majority of subjects, including science. In the past, all students were entered for general studies with below-average results. The school has adopted a more selective approach to entry for general studies. Students in the sixth form make good progress to the next stage of education, training or employment.

## **Quality of teaching**

Most parents and students say that teaching is good. Good relationships and routines in the classroom promote positive attitudes to learning. Seating plans are used effectively to promote social development and cultural interaction and to support the learning of students of different abilities. In good lessons, teachers have high expectations and teach energetically and enthusiastically. Good use of assessment criteria provides effective guidance on what students should achieve. Lessons are well planned and deploy a variety of well structured tasks and resources to methodically develop students' skills and knowledge. Teachers' expert commentary and dialogue extend students' understanding well. Open questions promote thoughtful reflection. Learning resources regularly promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by drawing on examples from a diversity of cultures. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are well supported in lessons, through good opportunities for practical work and through the additional support they receive. On occasion, opportunities are missed for teaching assistants to lead group work.

In satisfactory teaching, activities are not closely enough matched to students' needs and abilities. On occasion, the teacher talks too much, which restricts the opportunities for students to explore their own ideas through talk. Occasionally, teaching is focussed too much on getting through the sequence of tasks and opportunities are missed to check that all students have understood. Marking is variable in quality and does not consistently identify strengths and diagnose areas for improvement. Opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce standards and accuracy of presentation and the use of grammar in written work.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour and safety are good because of the effective actions taken to build positive relationships in a context where there are occasional racial tensions between young people in the wider community. Students enter the school from different ethnic communities and the school has implemented effective strategies for promoting good relationships, supported by staff training. The school is calm and orderly. Students are polite, welcoming and cooperative. The large majority of students, parents and carers say that behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Students arrive at school punctually and ready to learn. Well-established systems of adult supervision ensure good behaviour and safety around the site and punctuality between lessons. Staff set high expectations of behaviour in lessons which students adhere to. Their good behaviour makes a good contribution to teaching and learning. Poor behaviour occurs occasionally and is managed robustly. Bullying occurs on

occasion but is dealt with well. Behaviour has improved over time. The incidence of fixed-term exclusions has fallen significantly as a result of better provision for managing challenging behaviour. Racist incidents of name-calling persist but more serious incidents have been reduced to a very low level and only happen rarely and off-site. Attendance has risen significantly, from below to above average, as a result of sustained and concerted strategies at whole-school level and with individuals and their families. Most parents, carers and students who responded to the questionnaire said that students were safe.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher communicates his vision clearly, coherently and energetically. The good climate for learning is strengthened by the sustained promotion of harmonious race relations, which promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. The school is well-organised and runs smoothly. School priorities systematically inform the planning and review of improvement at all levels. Self-evaluation is systematic, makes good use of data, and leads to well planned actions for improvement. These have been implemented effectively and with the intended impact. This demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement. Governors regularly scrutinise academy finances and are developing their capacity to interrogate students' achievement. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.

Senior leaders have established a positive culture for professional development. This is reinforced by the effectiveness of middle leaders and the enthusiasm of staff who share a keen commitment to school improvement. Regular evaluation of the quality of teaching by individuals, and within subjects, accurately identifies strengths and weaknesses in teaching. The school has effective performance-management systems in place to deal with rare instances of weaker teaching or management. A new programme of coaching for the small minority of satisfactory teachers has had a positive impact on a few teachers and plans are in place to extend it.

The curriculum provides a good range of academic and work-related courses that meets students' needs and aspirations in the main school and the sixth form. It effectively promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The foundation learning curriculum engages potentially disaffected students well and promotes their achievement. New courses have been introduced in the sixth form that build on the success of courses at Key Stage 4 and enable students to progress further with their interests and aspirations. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and revised to improve achievement and meet students' changing needs. The promotion of literacy across the curriculum is under-developed.

At Key Stage 4 and the sixth form, the tracking of student progress is frequent and thorough and is used effectively to review progress and to make changes in teaching and the support for individual students. Weaknesses in target-setting and the tracking of student progress at Key Stage 3 have been rectified. Challenging targets have been set and an effective system of monitoring progress is in operation. Plans to improve the reports to parents about student progress at Key Stage 3 are about to be implemented. The school communicates well with parents and carers, including those who are harder-to-reach. The high parental response to the questionnaire demonstrates that most parents and carers are very satisfied with most aspects of the school.

## 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 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.**



15 June 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Brinsworth Comprehensive School, Rotherham S60 5EJ**

Thank you for being so welcoming when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. We came to the conclusion that the school provides you with a good education. In your questionnaires most were positive about teaching. A few were less positive about behaviour, bullying and the interest shown in your views. These were some of the main things we found in our inspection.

- Achievement is good. Attainment at GCSE has been average but is improving. Progress in GCSE English and mathematics, which were satisfactory, is now good. Achievement is good in science and in the sixth form.
- Teaching is good. You have good relationships with your teachers and positive attitudes to learning.
- Behaviour and relationships are good. Behaviour has improved and exclusions have been reduced. Your attendance has improved and is now above average. You feel safe and believe that bullying or racism is dealt with well.
- The school is well led and organised which has resulted in good improvement.

To help the school to improve further, we have asked that senior leaders should:

- ensure that progress is consistently good in English and mathematics, especially at Key Stage 3, by: more rigorous use of assessment data; improving your understanding in mathematics and the progress of higher ability students; and developing the use of reading and writing skills across different subjects
- further increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by: refining the match of tasks to your abilities; improving marking and feedback; and giving you more opportunities to develop and express your own ideas.

I hope you contribute to the school's improvement by doing as well as you can, especially in English and mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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