

Dinnington Comprehensive Specialising in Science and Engineering

Doe Quarry Lane, Dinnington, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S25 2NZ

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Some lessons are not planned carefully enough so that the work matches students' different needs and provides time for them to learn by themselves. Some teachers do not check sufficiently well on students' understanding during lessons.
- Although achievement is now improving strongly in school, the proportions of students making and exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics over time, have not compared favourably with national figures.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Achievement by Year 12 students is inconsistent. Overall progress made by sixth form students, by the end of Year 13, is no better than expected.

The school has the following strengths

- Students enjoy coming to school. They are safe and looked after well. Students behave well, attendance is rising and above average. There is little bullying and there are few exclusions.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive. A high proportion believe that teachers listen to their concerns, and say that they would recommend the school to others.
- The headteacher is an effective leader. He is well supported by a strong team of leaders and managers. Tough decisions have been taken, and fully supported by the governors, to address historically weak teaching, ineffective subject leadership and students' attitudes to learning. Whilst the impact of these measures has taken longer to realise than expected, students' outcomes are now improving strongly. There is expertise across the school to ensure that teaching and learning continue to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 57 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to tutor groups.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, governors and school staff, including senior and middle managers.
- Inspectors took account of the 49 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s own data on current students’ progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of governing body meetings, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Peckett	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector
Linda Magrath	Additional Inspector
Wendy Bradford	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, largely those known to be eligible for free school meals, is similar to that seen nationally.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is similar to the proportion seen nationally, but below for those at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- There are very few students from minority ethnic groups and for whom English is an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Approximately 30 students in Years 10 and 11 follow vocational courses in nearby off-site accommodation, managed by the school. Some students also attend courses at the Rotherham College of Arts and Technology.
- The school manages on-site specialist provision for a small number of students with autistic spectrum disorders.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teaching is at least consistently good, so that in all lessons it generates:
 - work and experiences that match individual students' aptitudes and provides opportunities for them to work by themselves and make good progress
 - frequent checking of all students' understanding in lessons so that they work at a good pace, know what to do next, and teachers adapt their work if necessary
 - regular marking that points out why students are doing well, and provides advice about the next steps in their learning.
- Sustain the current improving rates of progress by students across Years 7 to 11, especially in English and mathematics, so that a track record of good achievement has been established by the summer of 2014.
- Improve outcomes in the sixth form by:
 - using recently refined tracking arrangements to pinpoint any underperformance by students at an early stage
 - ensuring all teaching challenges students to think, reflect on and discuss their learning with each other
 - increasing the proportion of students attaining AS and A level results with A* to C grades so that it is close to the national picture by summer 2014.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The attainment of students on entry to the school varies, but is generally similar to most schools. Until recently, many students have not achieved in line with students elsewhere in the country, particularly in English and mathematics. As a consequence, the overall rates of progress which students have made over time are less than in most schools. At the end of Year 11 the proportions of students attaining five good GCSE results, and also when including English and mathematics, are average. Overall attainment in science and engineering, the school's specialisms, is above average.
- Changes in staffing, and teaching that requires improvement, have restricted students' historical rates of progress, especially in English and mathematics. In particular, students known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled students and those with special educational needs have not performed as well as expected. These shortcomings have now been addressed, and the achievement of these students is rapidly improving. In lessons they make good progress. As a result, gaps in attainment between these students and their peers are reducing. This is because tracking arrangements have been refined, enabling underperformance to be pinpointed earlier, and tackled more successfully. Specialist teaching and provision ensures that students with autistic spectrum disorders are progressively catered for well. The very small proportion of students from minority ethnic groups, and whose first language is not English, achieve in line with their peers. Well-conceived use of the pupil premium has also successfully enhanced small-group teaching opportunities; provided one-to-one mentoring to raise self-esteem and confidence and funded additional resources to enhance students' reading and writing skills.
- Across the school, an increasing number of students attain above average outcomes in lessons and in their work. Many communicate with growing confidence, both orally and in writing, and show good mathematical skills. The school's information shows that students following off-site vocational courses are also making good progress. Many of these outcomes are recent and, as yet, are not fully embedded and proven over time.
- A high number of parents who responded to Parent View believe that their children enjoy school and are now achieving well. Inspectors found this to be so in almost three-quarters of lessons seen. For example, in a Year 11 history lesson, students collaborated very well to piece together the chronological events of the battle of the Little Bighorn. Similarly, Year 8 students shared ideas about their favourite novels readily with each other, to deepen awareness of how writers involve readers, and maintain their interest.
- Some sixth form students do not make enough progress across Year 12, or reach standards of which they are capable by the end of Year 13. Whilst A-level standards are broadly average, not enough students attain the higher A* to C grades. Achievement in some subjects is, therefore, no better than expected.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of the teaching is improving, and almost three-quarters of lessons seen by inspectors were deemed to have good or better teaching. Teaching in the sixth form is also improving, and there is good practice to share. Some teaching still requires improvement and, as a result, teaching is not yet consistently strong enough to ensure all students make good or better progress.
- In lessons where students make most progress, teaching is motivating. Teachers plan interesting activities that are relevant, and engage students. For example, Year 13 students cooperated well in pairs to research the attributes and shortfalls in General MacArthur's personality during the Korean War; in geography, Year 9 students enjoyed sharing ideas about the severity of different crimes and their impact on different people.
- In such lessons, high expectations and a high level of challenge inspire students to persevere

and show resilience in their learning. The school's best teachers encourage students to think and deepen their understanding by working by themselves. They check students' learning continuously during the lesson and change their approach if necessary. Marking, notably in English, mathematics and some history and geography lessons, provides detailed feedback to students about their progress and specific advice about how to improve their work.

- Where teaching is less effective, it does not provide enough stimulus or challenge. Too little is expected of some students, and they are not given activities that stretch and excite them. Some teachers talk too much, giving too little time for students to work by themselves. They take too few opportunities to listen to students, observe or question them at length, to check their understanding.
- The quality of marking across the school is variable; in some cases it is not frequent enough, and does not indicate why students are doing well or provide detailed feedback on how to improve.
- The teaching of general communication and mathematical skills across most subjects is developing well. In particular, teaching assistants provide judicious and effective support to individual students. The promotion of key reading skills across the school is at an early stage.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Around the school students behave well and are polite and courteous to adults and visitors. Parents say how much their children are proud of their school, and enjoy their learning. Scrutiny of behavioural records shows that behaviour is good over time, and that there are few instances of bullying and racism.
- Students have a good understanding of unsafe situations and show confidence in dealing with them, should they occur. They are especially confident in talking about cyber bullying, and taking active steps to ensure that it does not happen in school. Some are less certain that all adults are consistent in promoting the seriousness of homophobic bullying. Nonetheless, the school is a harmonious community, where most groups of students relate very well to each other.
- Students say how they feel safe in school and are confident that they can get support if they have any concerns. They enjoy being members of mixed-year tutor groups. Sixth form students are especially active in supporting younger students. Pastoral staff secure very effectively the well-being of students whose circumstances may render them vulnerable. They have worked hard to increase attendance, which is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is ambitious for all students and has raised the morale of staff, and students' aspirations over time. Since the previous inspection, he has developed more robust checking arrangements that now provide an accurate picture of the quality of teaching. Ineffective teaching and weak subject leadership have been vigorously tackled. Refined tracking systems ensure reliable and accurate information about all students' progress is obtained. The impact of these actions has taken longer than expected to achieve the desired results, largely due to major changes in leadership across the school. The staff is now fully committed to raising achievement and improving provision faster.
- Senior leaders share the headteacher's plans for the future, communicate high expectations, and know what needs to be done next. They recognise that tracking arrangements in the sixth form to pinpoint students' underperformance early are not as advanced as in the rest of the school.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the school has a robust and accurate understanding of its own performance, and that major actions to bring about improvements are concerted. Performance management of staff is well organised, and new appraisal procedures identify

precisely individuals' development needs. Training opportunities are wide-ranging and increasingly imaginative, drawing on the experience and expertise of staff within school, as well as beyond. The impact of training is evaluated thoroughly, to determine their effect and any next steps needed. The headteacher makes the right decisions about teachers' movements up the salary scale on the basis of robust information about the quality of their teaching.

- The school's curriculum is well matched to students' needs. Disabled students and those with special educational needs, especially those with autistic spectrum disorders, are particularly well catered for in subjects. There is a good range of academic courses, underpinned by the school's science and engineering specialisms, and appropriate off-site vocational and work-related experiences. All precautions are taken to ensure that the small proportion of students entered early for GCSE examinations are ready, and that this action does not limit their potential. Extensive sporting, musical and performing opportunities, and a wealth of extra-curricular activities, make strong contributions to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The daily tutor programme helps to raise students' self-esteem and successfully promote their personal qualities. It supports effectively the school's drive to promote equality of opportunity, and to tackle immediately any discrimination that may arise.
 - Parents believe that the school communicates effectively with them about their children's progress. Good partnerships exist with local schools, colleges of further education, universities and community services. All have a positive impact on students' achievements. The local authority provides effective support through a school improvement consultant, and has been helpful in supporting general improvements in teaching and learning.
 - **The governance of the school :**
 - The governing body receives regular and up-to-date information about the performance of the school, including data about how well students are achieving. They have a good understanding about the quality of teaching, as a result of their links with subjects and their visits to lessons. Minutes of governing body meetings show that they are confident in challenging the headteacher and senior staff. They reveal perceptive discussions about the value of spending decisions, in particular the allocation of pupil premium funding. For example, governors have authorised small group teaching in Years 7 and 8, one-to-one mentoring to overcome specific barriers to learning, and the purchase of bespoke materials to boost students' reading and writing skills. The headteacher provides the governing body with detailed information about the salaries of all staff and decisions about individual teachers' applications for promotion. As a result, governors have a good understanding of the effectiveness of the management of teachers' performance throughout the school.
-

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106958
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	400876

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1237
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Carroll
Headteacher	Paul Blackwell
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2009
Telephone number	01909 550066
Fax number	01909 550170
Email address	info@dcsch.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', 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 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 123 4234, 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 information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

