

South Holderness Technology College

Station Road, Preston, Hull, HU12 8UZ

Inspection dates

14–15 May 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		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Measures of students' progress over time are below national expectations. Although rapidly improving, progress is not good as improvements are not sustained. Progress made in science is weaker than in other subjects.
- Although there is some good and outstanding teaching, there is still too much which requires improvement. In less effective teaching, work is not challenging enough, particularly for high-ability students and opportunities are missed to develop students' independence.
- There has been a steady improvement in students' attendance over recent years, but overall attendance and persistent absence rates remain below the national average.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that all departments in the college are led effectively.
- The sixth form requires improvement because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and this leads to variability in achievement, particularly at AS level.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the college's strengths and areas for improvement. Their actions have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievement.
- There are strong relationships between students and staff and this has a positive effect on students' learning.
- The college's inclusion centre is making a significant difference to students' ability to remain engaged in their learning and, consequently, incidents of exclusions are much reduced.
- This is an inclusive school which values individuals and focuses on meeting their needs.
- There is a welcoming atmosphere in the college. Students are polite, friendly and feel safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 50 lessons taught by 50 different teachers, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Five groups of students met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior and middle leaders and newly qualified teachers. A meeting was held with the two vice-chairs of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 137 questionnaires completed by staff, and 125 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors read a range of documents. These included information on the school's self-evaluation, school development plans, data relating to students' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Anne Seneviratne, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sophie Gillies	Additional Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector
Graeme Clarke	Additional Inspector
Lyn Field	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- South Holderness Technology College is an 11 to 18 specialist technology college. It is a much larger than average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is below the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is below the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A number of Key Stage 4 students are taking off-site courses at Hull College and Bishop Burton College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure all teachers:
 - plan a range of lesson activities to meet the needs of students of different abilities, especially the most able
 - challenge students more and have higher expectations of what they can achieve
 - plan activities that encourage students to think for themselves and take more responsibility for their own learning
 - explain clearly, when marking students' work, what they need to do to improve, and give time for them to reflect and act upon this advice during lessons.
- Improve students' achievement further by:
 - ensuring all students make at least good progress in all subjects relative to their starting points
 - building on the improvements secured so far to ensure that gaps in achievement for students supported by the pupil premium, and those with special educational needs, are closed quickly
 - raising the attainment and progress of all students in science
 - raising the attainment and progress of the most-able students.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the college's leadership further by:
 - making sure that all development plans identify the impact of actions in a measurable way so their progress can be regularly checked through the year
 - ensuring that the English and science departments are led effectively
 - prioritising improvements in teaching and learning, ensuring that the good and outstanding practice that exists in the college is shared with all staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students enter the college with standards which are broadly in line with others nationally. Over recent years, the rate of progress that students make in English, mathematics and science has been below national expectations. However, a range of inspection evidence shows that current students are progressing at a much faster rate in English and mathematics, and they are now making expected progress.
- Following a decline in the percentage of students attaining five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics in 2012, leaders have acted swiftly, and a range of inspection evidence shows that this measure is set to be at least in line with the national average at the end of this year. High-ability students are not being sufficiently challenged and in several subjects, the proportion of students attaining A/A* grades is significantly lower than the national average.
- The school's robust student achievement data, confirmed by inspection evidence, show that the attainment and progress of the current Year 11 in English and mathematics are set to rise significantly.
- There is long-term staff absence within the science department, including at leadership level, and this is having a detrimental effect on student achievement in this subject. Senior leaders have not been successful in tackling this issue and it is preventing students from making good progress in science.
- In 2012, students who are supported by the pupil premium funding achieved approximately a grade below their peers in the college in English and mathematics. The gap between these groups in the number of students attaining five A* to C grades with English and mathematics widened from 2011 to 2012. In response to this, senior leaders are focusing more sharply on meeting these students' needs. As a result of effective allocation of pupil premium funding to appoint key staff, reduce class sizes and provide one-to-one support, gaps between the attainment and progress of these students and their peers are closing rapidly in both English and mathematics.
- The progress of students with special educational needs is improving as a result of more effective targeting of resources. A number of Key Stage 4 students in this cohort are working successfully on a range of foundation learning courses, linked to their career aspirations at local colleges. Students feel safe and well-supported on these courses and that the experience is benefiting both their personal and academic development.
- College achievement data for students who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium show that the majority of these students are making good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills as a result of the effective support they receive.
- Some students are entered early for GCSE mathematics but continue with the subject until they achieve at least their target grade.
- In the sixth form, over the last two years, the number of A level entries graded A* to E has been 100%. The percentage of entries graded A* to B has been below the national average for the last three years. The progress that students make at A level is broadly in line with national average but is below national average at AS level. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching lead to variability of achievement across subjects.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are variations in the quality of teaching across the college in all subjects and key stages.
- Often, where teaching requires improvement, lessons lack the appropriate level of challenge. Teachers do not take enough account of individual students' targets and current achievement when planning lessons, especially those of the most able. This means that students are not given the opportunity to make good progress.
- In lessons where teaching is less than good, teachers do not plan activities to motivate students

and encourage them to think for themselves. Students are not given, nor do they take, enough responsibility for their own learning. Teachers miss too many opportunities to develop students' independence and resilience.

- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not use questioning to probe students' understanding which means they do not learn as much as they could. However, where teaching is good or better, effective questioning is used to develop students' confidence in expressing their ideas. Teachers in these lessons ask searching questions, challenging students to take their thinking to the next level.
- Where the quality of teaching is good or better, teachers use their passion for their subject and their knowledge of their students to engage, enthuse and involve them in the lesson. They provide interesting work for the students to undertake with many opportunities for them to learn actively and collaboratively. They use a range of assessment throughout the lesson to inform the learning and ensure all students are making good progress.
- The quality of marking is variable across subjects. At its best, marking celebrates success and gives specific guidance for improvement, but too often, it lacks detail and does not explain to students how to progress to the next level. Teachers do not give time in lessons for students to reflect on comments made and act upon the advice given.
- All staff have received training on how to improve students' literacy but it is too soon to see the impact of this across the college. Too many opportunities are missed in lessons to develop students' oral and written literacy skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The college's inclusion centre is having a significant impact, enabling more students to remain engaged in their learning. The provision and support which students receive here are tailored to meet their individual needs and help them to make progress.
- Exclusion figures have reduced significantly and poor behaviour around the college is rare.
- Behaviour is good in most lessons but students' attitudes to learning are variable. Where teaching and relationships are good, students are motivated to learn; they respond maturely and demonstrate initiative. Where students are not challenged sufficiently and the pace of learning is slow, their attention wavers and low-level disruption sometimes occurs. Students are frustrated that a high proportion of their lessons are taken by supply staff which they feel is affecting their learning and behaviour.
- Students feel safe and are confident about seeking help and support from staff in college. Students spoken to during the inspection believe that incidents of bullying are generally well-managed.
- Attendance in college is improving at a steady pace for all groups of students. However, this rate of improvement is not fast enough to match national averages. The college has employed its own educational welfare officer, using pupil premium funding, and there has been some success in driving up the attendance of those students who are supported by this funding.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the college's strengths and areas for improvement. Their actions have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievement. However, the plans to bring about further improvement, produced by both senior and middle leaders, do not effectively identify how the impact of these actions will be monitored and evaluated.
- The majority of middle leaders are developing their capacity and becoming increasingly accountable for their areas of responsibility. This is particularly evident in the mathematics department. However, senior leaders have failed to ensure that the English department benefits

from strong leadership. Senior leaders have failed to tackle effectively the issue of staff absence in the science department.

- Joint lesson observations with senior leaders and the college's own records show a correlation in the judgement about the quality of teaching across the school. However, observations of senior leaders giving feedback to teachers indicate that senior leaders do not always explain clearly enough to teachers what they need to do in order to improve their classroom practice.
 - All teachers in the college are on a development 'pathway'. This strategy is having a positive effect on improving the quality of teaching across the college. Modelling outstanding practice in teaching and learning has not been used to its full advantage to bring about more rapid improvements in this area.
 - The headteacher has introduced a more robust performance management system. Teachers' targets are now linked to the quality of their teaching and student achievement, as well as professional development. Performance management is now used effectively to determine teachers' salary progression.
 - The curriculum provides well for students' needs, abilities and interests. The college effectively personalises provision, including off-site opportunities, to help students to achieve. Students in the sixth form have a wide choice of both academic and vocational courses.
 - The local authority has been a driving force in the recent improvements in the college. Leaders, teachers and governors value the support and challenge which they receive from the local authority School Improvement Partner. She knows the college's strengths and areas for improvement well and has used this knowledge to good effect. Local authority representatives are key members of the college action plan group which meets fortnightly and they conduct thorough half-termly monitoring visits and produce a detailed follow-up report. They have brokered partnerships with national and specialist leaders of education as well as providing training for teachers, leaders and governors. The local authority is very much a part of the college's journey of improvement and the impact of their involvement is recognised by everyone.
 - Procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive of the headteacher and holds him and other leaders to account on all aspects of college life, including how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact this is having on students' achievement. Heads of department are required to present reports and action plans to the full governing body. Governors have a clear knowledge of the quality of teaching in the college and fully understand how salary progression is linked to performance management. They have carried out a skills audit of their members and have taken advantage of a range of training opportunities at both local and national level. They now feel they are better equipped to challenge leaders in the college.
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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	118080
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	401723

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	1759
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cliff Stott
Headteacher	Martin Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2009
Telephone number	01482 899315
Fax number	01482 890514
Email address	office@shtc.org.uk

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