

Cottingham High School and Sixth Form College

Harland Way, Cottingham, HU16 5PX,

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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

- Teaching does not always meet the needs of all students, particularly boys, because tasks do not interest them enough.
- The rates of progress made by different groups of students are uneven. Boys, students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, disabled students and those with special educational needs do not make as much progress as other groups of students.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Students' achievement varies from subject to subject and for a significant minority attendance is below that of other students.
- Leaders are not making the best use of the information they gather about students' progress to speed up improvements.
- Teachers' performance is not linked closely enough to their pay and career progression.
- Attendance of students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, disabled students and those who have extra help in class is not as good as other groups of students.
- Recent actions to develop students' writing and reading skills have not had enough impact.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have battled valiantly through difficult times. They have kept students and staff focused on learning and teaching is improving. As a result, increasing numbers of students are making good progress.
- Good quality additional small group support is helping students to catch up or improve their work.
- Behaviour around the academy is calm and well ordered. Students feel safe. They are polite and move around the campus sensibly.
- Governors are candid and realistic about the quality of the academy's work. They have high expectations and keep a close check on improvements.
- Students from vulnerable circumstances are nurtured and supported very well so that they stay interested in learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 43 parts of lessons. Four were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and one inspector had telephone conversations with two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke to students in lessons, at break and during lunchtimes. They also spoke formally to four groups of students, including some sixth form students, on the first day of the inspection.
- One inspector heard a small group of students read.
- The inspection team observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the academy's plans for the future and on-going reviews of those plans, and the academy's records of their observations of teaching. They also looked at behaviour logs, racist incidents and the academy's safeguarding arrangements.
- Three inspectors toured the academy with students.
- The inspectors took account of 53 responses to the on line questionnaire (Parent View) and 55 responses to the staff inspection survey.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the academy's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Joan Hewitt, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Eeva	Additional Inspector
Sally Lane	Additional Inspector
Tudor Griffiths	Additional Inspector
Keith Massett	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is much larger than the average secondary school.
- It has a sixth form which is part of a consortium of three schools.
- The proportions of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well below the national figures. There are a few students of Romany and Traveller backgrounds.
- The percentage of students who are known to be eligible for pupil premium (which provides additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after) is just below the national average.
- The proportion of students registered as disabled or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average, as is the number of students supported at school action plus. The proportion of students supported at school action is also below the national average.
- The academy has alternative provision arrangements with Hull College, The Manor House Alternative Learning Centre and Local Works.
- Cottingham High School converted to become an academy in July 2011. The predecessor school was inspected in March 2011 and was judged to be satisfactory.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the last full inspection the headteacher has resigned. A new headteacher has been appointed and he is due to take up his post in June 2013
- Most members of the governing body have been appointed in the last two years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure teachers use questions to extend students' thinking and check their understanding
 - providing students with frequent opportunities to develop their ability to work independently and solve problems for themselves
 - ensuring all teachers' marking is of high quality so that students always know how to improve their work.
- Increase the rates of progress made by all groups of students by:
 - ensuring teachers plan tasks that closely meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils, especially boys, students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, disabled students and those who need extra help in class
 - making sure teachers develop students' reading and writing skills across all subjects
 - sharpening the analysis of students' progress in Key Stage 3 and the sixth form
 - improving the attendance of some sixth form students, those known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, disabled students and those who have extra help in class.
- Accelerate the rate at which leaders and managers improve the school by:
 - making sure teachers and support staff know what is expected of them following training and coaching and the timescales for improvements
 - making better use of the information leaders gather about the quality of teaching and students' work to plan for swift improvements

- ensuring the way teachers are rewarded is closely linked to their performance and the progress made by students they teach.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students come to the academy with broadly average standards. Since the inspection of the predecessor school, their attainment has improved and the number of students gaining five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, is above the national average. The academy's reliable internal checks show this is set to improve again this year. The numbers of students who make good progress is also improving.
- This improving picture is not the same for all groups of students. Boys, in particular, do not make as much progress as girls. Students who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding also lag behind other groups by a whole grade at GCSE. Leaders have been successful in reducing these gaps but it remains an uneven picture, especially in Key Stage 3. The few students from Romany and Traveller backgrounds settle into the academy quickly and they are making the same progress as their peers nationally.
- Disabled students and those who have extra help in class make steady progress. Specialist teachers plan carefully to meet their needs. The academy runs small group sessions to help students catch up or improve their skills and these are effective. For example, a group of students in Year 9 improved their reading skills rapidly when they attended extra sessions.
- Students' reading and writing skills are not always developing quickly enough. In some lessons, such as in geography and English, students have rich opportunities to enjoy reading and to write extended pieces. However, this is not the same in all subjects nor is it consistent within the same subject.
- Students in the sixth form often make good progress, particularly in French, geography and English literature but this is uneven and varies from subject to subject.
- The academy enters some students, mainly those of average to low ability, early for mathematics examinations and they have achieved the grades expected of them. This has helped to motivate students and keep them interested in their learning.
- Students who are educated at alternative provisions are making the progress expected of them. The academy keeps a close eye on how they are doing and takes action quickly if there are problems.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over half the teaching in the academy is good and better. There is no inadequate teaching. There are examples of teachers expecting students to work hard and providing them with opportunities to work things out for themselves. For example, Year 10 students made good progress in analysing their choice of vocabulary because the teacher asked them difficult questions and gave them time to think about the answer with a partner. This level of skill is not the same in every lesson.
- There is an element of teaching which is not good because teachers do not take enough account of students' needs when they are planning lessons. For example, boys lose interest and do not complete enough work when they have to sit still and listen for too long. Students respond well when work is planned to offer the right amount of challenge but there are too many occasions when everybody does the same work at the same time.
- Students want to do well and they have good relationships with their teachers. They make better progress when they are given the responsibility of solving problems for themselves in small groups or pairs. The opportunities for them to do this are not a regular feature of all lessons and sometimes students rely too heavily on teachers to help them.
- There are some excellent examples of teachers' marking that highlights what students have done well and gives detailed feedback about what students can do to achieve the next level or grade. In these examples, students have the chance to respond to what the teacher has said. However, some marking is neither regular nor helpful.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Students behave well around the campus between lessons and during breaks and lunchtimes. They are confident and enjoy chatting with each other and with adults. Students say they feel safe and happy. They talk knowledgeably about different forms of bullying. They are confident teachers and other adults will listen to them if they have worries or concerns.
- Attendance is above the national average for most students. However, students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium do not attend as well as other groups. The same is true for disabled students and those who have extra help in class. More worrying, is the below par attendance of a minority of students in the sixth form. The attendance of students from Romany or Traveller backgrounds is above that of their peers nationally..
- Fixed-term exclusions are low and the academy has supported students at risk of exclusions by making sure they have the right kind of help. The academy has arranged specialist courses for several students to make sure they stay interested in learning and achieve valuable qualifications to support them in their next steps in education, employment or training.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally passive because teachers do not always exploit students' natural curiosity and allow them to explore ideas and problems. When tasks are mundane or when teachers dominate discussions, students tend to 'switch off' and stop listening properly.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have pulled together and steered the academy through a period of significant turbulence at senior leadership level. They have secured improvements in students' standards in Key Stage 4 and reduced exclusions. Teaching and support staff are keen to play their part in making rapid improvements.
- Senior and middle leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and students' work. The information from these checks is not analysed well enough to help leaders to plan for rapid improvement. For example, leaders look for common features which need to improve in lessons they have observed. However, they do not link the information with the checks they have done on the quality of students' work. This makes it harder for them to plan improvements for particular groups of students.
- Subject leaders have concentrated on improving learning in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. This has been effective in raising students' attainment. Leaders check on individual students' progress regularly and take swift action to help students catch up if they fall behind. In Key Stage 4, they also keep a watchful eye on the progress made by different groups of students. This is not as strong in Key Stage 3 and the sixth form.
- The information leaders have about the quality of teaching is used to plan training for teachers. For example, following lesson observations, leaders identified boys did not always have good attitudes to learning and put in place a training session on how to involve boys. However, this has not been followed up with further support for teachers who are finding it difficult to use the strategies they learned during the training.
- Leaders are committed to improving teaching but sometimes they are not explicit enough about what they expect teachers and support staff to do differently or when they expect changes to take place.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through some subjects. For example, performing arts subjects offer a wide range of well-attended clubs and activities. Staff do not routinely analyse attendance at extra-curricular activities so it is not clear if all groups of students benefit from these rich opportunities.
- The local authority has offered governors effective help when they were dealing with complex staffing issues. The academy has not sought detailed support from the local authority about academic matters.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are committed to improving the academy. They ensure statutory duties, including safeguarding, are fulfilled. They regularly visit the academy to see for themselves how well students are doing. For, example two governors recently reviewed how well the academy is meeting the needs of disabled students and those who need extra help in class. As a result, governors decided to ask for regular information about the progress of these students. The majority of the academy’s pupil premium funding has been spent on funding extra staffing for small group sessions to help students catch up if they have fallen behind. Governors are reviewing how they check on the impact this has on narrowing the gaps in the progress made by students. Governors know how many teachers are on the upper pay scales or hold posts of responsibility. They are aware that the way in which teachers are rewarded does not take enough account of the progress of students they teach. They have sound plans to review this with the new headteacher when he takes up his post in June.

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	136921
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	406651

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
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	1,277
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Greenman
Acting Headteacher	Gary Barber
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01482 847498
Fax number	01482 841053
Email address	office@cottinghamhigh.net

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