

Thrybergh School and Sports College

Arran Hill, Thrybergh, Rotherham, South Yorkshire , S65 4BJ

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students' achievement is good. It has been rising rapidly over time. The proportion of students making good progress is above average for English and rising rapidly in mathematics.
- Most of the teaching observed was good and some outstanding. Teachers have positive relationships with students and high expectations. They plan interesting activities that are challenging and drive forward learning well in lessons.
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive and they are involved well in lessons leading to good progress. They are rightly proud of their school where they feel safe and secure.
- Leaders and managers are committed to driving up standards through focusing on improving teaching and are relentless in their pursuit to do their best for the students in their care.
- Governors have strong local connections and good skills; they provide the appropriate mix of challenge and support to continue the improvement in teaching and achievement of students.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all students are being as successful in their learning as they might be.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding to make the impact needed to address the low standards with which students enter the school. Occasionally, the work set for some students is too hard and for others too easy.
- Teachers do not give students the opportunity to respond to marking nor always encourage fuller answers to questions.
- School improvement planning by governors and leaders is not detailed enough to identify measures by which the impact on teaching and achievement can be measured across the year.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 part lessons involving 31 teachers. Three lessons were jointly observed with the head teacher. An assembly and two tutor periods were observed.
- Inspectors spoke to three governors, a local authority representative, senior leaders, staff and students in the school.
- Inspectors looked closely at a range of documents including information on teachers' performance and minutes of the governing body meetings. They also examined the school's plans for improvement, their records of the observations of the quality of teaching and the progress of students. A range of students' exercise books and folders from the full range of subjects were evaluated.
- Inspectors considered the analysis of 412 parental responses to a survey carried out by the school this academic year. There were not enough responses on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to enable the responses to be analysed.

Inspection team

Pankaj Gulab, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Geraldine Hutchinson	Additional Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a significantly smaller than average size secondary school.
- The proportion of students entitled to the pupil premium (additional funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of families in the armed forces) is well above average.
- The proportion of students for whom English is not a first language is below national average, as is the proportion of students that come from minority ethnic families.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is above average and those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- The school uses alternative provision at the Bridge, Hutton Park and Get Sorted for the partial education of a handful of students.
- The school is part of a learning community involving six local primary schools and presently provides formal support to one primary school. The headteacher acts as the executive head for Dalton Foljambe Primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and more is outstanding in order to raise standards by:
 - ensuring that teachers use the information they have about students to plan activities that challenge students of all abilities so that they all make at least good progress
 - providing students with the opportunities to develop their speaking skills through discussion and expanding on answers more fully
 - making sure that students are given the time to reflect on and respond to teachers' marking.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that plans clearly identify the impact of actions in a measurable way so that progress can be monitored regularly across the academic year
 - ensuring that the pupil premium funding is more effectively used to close the gap between those entitled to it and their peers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students enter the school with marked weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematics. These are successfully addressed and standards in English and mathematics reached in 2013 by the time they leave the school are now close to the national average, demonstrating good progress.
- The progress students are making, given their starting points, is now good and has been rapidly improving from year to year. This is as a result of the high expectations teachers convey in the classroom and the good and outstanding teaching that most students' experience.
- The pupil premium students secure average point scores that are much higher than their peers nationally but below other students in school. Their progress has continued to improve in 2013 but not as fast as those who are not eligible for such funding, resulting in the gap widening between the two groups of students. Pupil premium students reached standards in 2012 that were about half a grade below their peers and while the gap will rise to a full grade according to results already received and expected in 2013. The school is aware of the need to address this gap further and are continuing to take appropriate actions.
- The progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs is improving significantly in both English and mathematics with results already confirmed in 2013. The gap between them and their peers is narrowing showing the positive impact of the work the school is doing to focus on their previous underachievement. Tracking of students' progress shows that they are on track to close the gap further. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work confirm this.
- Students are entered early for GCSE mathematics in order to give them an experience of examinations but this is not allowed to limit their progress, thus ensuring more-able students reach standards that are in line with their abilities.
- A small number of students who access education for part of the week through alternative provision are doing well. Careful monitoring and support for these students ensures that they all leave the school with qualifications that will help them with their next steps in their lives

The quality of teaching

is good

- Much of the teaching is good or outstanding, leading to at least good progress in lessons. Teachers' good subject knowledge and positive relationships with students allows them to drive forward with providing high expectations and challenge for students. The way that learning is encouraged in short manageable bursts means that students' learning is checked frequently and teachers ensure that students are helped to understand what they have done well and what they need to do next to make further progress in their learning. This was seen in a series of excellent physical education lessons, where the teachers built in literacy skills development by inviting students to 'tweet' 140-word text about their learning.
- All teachers know their students well and have detailed assessment information related to their students' previous learning. In the best lessons, this is used to plan activities that challenge the most able and support those who might struggle. However, this practice is inconsistent across the school and a minority of teachers do not use assessment information to make sure that the work set is carefully matched to the needs of all students.
- Relationships between teachers and students are strong and well developed. This has been used to encourage students' participation in lessons. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to the learning of individuals and groups they support in class. In most lessons, students are willing learners, asking and answering questions with enthusiasm. While teachers' questioning is good, in some lessons too many teachers do not encourage discussion or fuller answers to develop students' speaking skills further.
- Work in students' books show that in a range of subjects students are making good progress. Marking in books is done regularly, but opportunities for students to respond to teachers' comments and make corrections are not always built into lessons. In some cases, there is too

much tick marking of tests and not enough exploration of the depth of students' understanding.

- In a small number of lessons where teaching requires improvement, students carry out the same work. Students who manage to complete the work early wait for others and are not challenged further. Teachers take time to provide additional explanations to everyone when these are only needed by some students. All of this slows and reduces the progress students are capable of making.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' positive attitudes to learning are accompanied by loyalty and pride they feel in being part of the school. The eagerness of students to learn is regularly seen in their whole hearted involvement in lessons including, asking questions, contributing to discussions and helping other students when they face difficulties. This makes a good contribution to students' learning.
- Students are polite and courteous to visitors, adults and each other. They move about the school in an orderly and sensible manner being sensitive to the needs of others in narrow corridors and staircases.
- A school survey completed by 412 parents during this academic year agrees with the inspectors' judgments that behaviour at the school is good. There are few disruptions to learning and very few serious incidents of misbehaviour. Staff use praise and encouragement more than the behaviour warning systems to encourage participation in lessons.
- Students report that there is very little bullying in lessons and this is backed up by the records kept by the school. Students are fully aware of the different forms of bullying and what steps they need to take to keep safe. They feel safe and have every confidence that adults in the school will help them if they have difficulties.
- Effective and robust steps to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence are having the desired effect. Attendance overall is improving but still needs to be raised further. During the two days of the inspection attendance was 95%, reflecting the positive way in which students have taken to the school's changes to the academic year. Punctuality to school and lessons is good.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher clearly conveys her belief that students in the school deserve and need good and outstanding teaching to help them make up for the weaknesses in the skills they have in reading, writing and mathematics when they enter the school. This vision is shared by governors, staff and parents.
- In keeping with the high expectations seen in other aspects of the schools' work, the school sets progress targets for most students that are challenging and designed to help students make above average progress. Staff are very positive about leadership of the school and understand the need to do all they can to support students' learning. This clear commitment and determination is helping to secure good progress.
- The senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of the performance of the school and have devised a development plan which identifies appropriate areas for improvement. The plan indicates what it expects from actions but rarely do these include measureable indicators to allow them to check progress through the year.
- There are rigorous systems for checking on the quality of teaching, involving staff at all levels. Performance management targets are linked securely to students' outcomes and the quality of teaching. Support for teachers is carefully provided to address developmental needs identified through monitoring systems. Teachers are outward looking and willingly learn from the good practice of their peers or from skilled staff in other institutions. This focus on developing teaching and the improving outcomes for students demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.
- The curriculum provides many valuable opportunities for students to succeed in their learning.

There is an appropriate balance of GCSE and vocational courses for students at Key Stage 4. These lead to almost all students going on to further education, employment or training. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the curriculum, a wide range of opportunities to be involved in events, drama productions and musical shows, alongside trips and taking responsibility across the school and in lessons.

- Students' literacy and numeracy skills have been developed in a range of subjects. However, opportunities for students to develop their thinking and speaking skills are not always built in to lessons.
- Safeguarding procedures for students are thorough as are those for promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. The school takes sensible steps to ensure the behaviour and safety of students when attending off-site provision.
- Governors and the school's leaders are forward looking and have entered into local community partnership with primary schools in the local area to improve the opportunities for all students and pupils. They have started the next academic year four weeks early and brought Year 6 pupils into the school to settle into their secondary education. This has been well received by students who attend well during this period to make the most of their learning.
- The local authority provides good support for the school's leaders and been involved with initiatives in the school and across the learning community with positive effect.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have close links with the local community and are keen to ensure that effective partnerships are in place to support the progress of all students. They have a wide range of experience and expertise that allows them to support and challenge the school appropriately. Governors have a clear picture of the quality of teaching and of students' achievement and behaviour. Governors have been involved in evaluating the school development plan but have not identified measureable indicators to help them judge the impact of the actions taken by staff and school leaders. They carefully allocate expenditure on actions that are focused on having a positive impact on the progress of students entitled to the pupil premium and to monitor its impact. A balanced school budget has been achieved through effectively managing some difficult decisions involving redundancies. They have good understanding of the arrangements for performance management of staff and monitor the link between good and outstanding teaching and salary progression.

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	106956
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	412791

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	506
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Lakin
Headteacher	Beverly Clubley
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2009
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