

St Hugh's Communication and Interaction College

Bushfield Road, Scunthorpe, DN16 1NB

Inspection dates

17–18 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Over time, students make exceptional progress in their academic achievement and personal development. In literacy, numeracy and communication, almost all students make the progress expected from their individual starting points and, of these, a high proportion makes more progress than expected.
- Whatever their special educational needs, students are very effective learners and make rapid progress from the outset. This is as a result of expert teaching and the staff's high quality care, support and guidance. By the end of Key Stage 4, and for those who stay at the college longer, students' achievements ensure they are very well prepared for the future.
- Teachers and their assistants are very dedicated and highly skilled in promoting students' learning and progress. They are continually improving their expertise.
- Teaching throughout the college is very well matched to students' individual needs so that the work they are given is challenging and builds well on what they already have achieved. As a result, students enjoy their work and develop very effectively into confident, independent learners. Just occasionally, at the end of lessons, teachers do not make best use of their summing up of what students have learnt to help them see what they have achieved.
- Students' behaviour around the college and in lessons is exemplary. Relationships with each other and staff are very warm and friendly.
- The headteacher is a talented leader, whose very high expectations ensure that the whole of the college's leadership is extremely effective at promoting high achievement, excellent teaching and a substantial capacity for further improvement. Governors are very effective in ensuring the college maintains its high standards and its drive on improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 10 lessons given by 10 of the college's 17 teachers.
- Meetings were held with college leaders, students, representatives of the governing body and representatives of the local authority.
- A sample of students' work was evaluated and wide range of college documents scrutinised including records relating to the safeguarding of students, data on students' progress, checks on the quality of teaching, the college's evaluation of its work and its improvement plans.
- The inspectors took account of the views of the 37 parents who replied to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Yates

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The college is a special school for students of secondary school age with a statement of special educational needs. The college also provides for a small number of post-16 students.
- Students have a wide range of special educational needs. Since its last inspection, the college has accepted an increasing number of students with complex needs combining learning difficulties, physical disabilities and medical conditions. Students can be divided roughly into several main groups of special educational needs which are: moderate learning difficulties; severe learning difficulties; profound and multiple learning difficulties. For a significant proportion of students, their learning difficulties are combined with autism spectrum conditions.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To improve teaching further ensure that:
 - every teacher plans appropriate time at the end of a lesson to check students' work and assess what they achieved in relation to what was expected
 - students have good opportunities in this part of the lesson to show their work and what they have learnt, and to assess for themselves how well they have learnt what was intended.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics has increased as a result of leaders' close scrutiny of students' performance and the college's constant drive to improve teaching and learning. The very close check kept on every student's progress ensures all, whatever their barriers to learning, are given an excellent opportunity to achieve as much as they can.
- The college's data on students' progress and the progress seen in lessons demonstrate that, in relation to English and mathematics, the outcomes for the large proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is at least as good as that of the other students. There is no significant difference in the performance of different groups of pupils.
- Many students read, write, count and solve problems skilfully and confidently, which is reinforced well by the frequent opportunities in different lessons throughout the day for students to use these skills. From Year 7 onwards, students improve their basic skills systematically. Those starting out on learning to hold a pencil, to control its movement to form letters and numerals do not take long before they are writing words clearly and methodically setting out their additions on paper.
- In a mathematics lesson, Year 10 and 11 students with severe learning difficulties remembered very clearly what they had learnt before the summer holiday about time. They recalled how many days there are in a week and a fortnight, recited the months of the year and linked special occasions to particular months.
- In another lesson for Year 10 and 11, the more able students, those with moderate learning difficulties, wrote about the different ways published information is presented, thinking carefully about writing their views, using interesting language to raise the quality of their sentences.
- Students staying at the college after the age of 16 are predominantly those with the most complex needs and, from low starting points, they continue their fast progress in preparing for the future. Relevant, well-planned work and activities based at the college and in the community ensure they learn very effectively to be as independent as possible, such as in shopping and cooking. They develop and pursue interests in sports and music and learn work skills through gardening, animal care and work experience with local employers.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The significant amount of progress students make and the improvement in their rate of progress over several years are the result of teaching over time having been consistently outstanding. The high quality of teaching comes from the huge investment that leaders have made in the improvement of teaching.
- Teachers and their assistants across the college are very knowledgeable and skilled at promoting the learning and progress of students. Their expertise is developed thoroughly, giving teachers and their assistants a substantial capacity to meet the demands of a changing, and more complex, student population. They know individual students very well and keep a very close track on their progress.
- Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties are supported extremely well and are effectively engaged in learning by an expert team of staff. Thorough assessments of individual students lead to very well-planned lessons. These are very effective at helping students improve their communication. The wide range of experiences and activities that teaching provides improves students' physical skills and develops their general awareness and enjoyment to a considerable extent.
- An excellent feature of most lessons is the sharp focus on opportunities for students to speak, read and write so that, continuously, they are improving their literacy and communication skills. In the thorough planning of lessons there is careful consideration of new words and plenty of

time for students to use these and develop their vocabulary. Year 7 and 8 students, who had severe learning difficulties and were learning the properties of two-dimensional shapes, understood and described these using 'corner', 'sides' and 'angles'. They counted sides and said which was a circle, square or triangle.

- Students are well accustomed to settling quickly, and teachers get lessons off to a lively start. The pace of work is brisk and the more able students enjoy the challenge of having to think rapidly and respond to questions.
- Where outstanding teaching was seen, teachers were particularly good at keeping students' minds on what they had to learn and provided frequent opportunities throughout the lesson for students to check their progress. Teachers adapted their plans if students had not made the progress expected. At the end of the lesson, a thorough summing-up of what had been achieved left students clear about how well they had done.
- In a very few lessons, despite their liveliness, pace and challenge, summing up at the end was not planned and approached well enough to ensure that students understood clearly what they had learnt and if they had succeeded in achieving their targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students feel safe in the college as routines are very clear and staff ensure that students adhere to them. This creates order and calm which students appreciate and which makes them feel confident and secure.
- Staff encourage students to say how they feel and to share their experiences of college life. A group of students who undertook a learning walk around school pointed out that rules for the orderly movement along corridors were not being followed well and this was tightened up. They have very good opportunities to consider the importance of behaving well and staying safe, which enables them to maintain excellent behaviour personally and encourage others to do so.
- Together, the college's high expectations around good behaviour, the very good relationships students have with each other and with staff, and the high quality of care and support all add significantly to students' sense of wellbeing.
- Students thoroughly enjoy the college and their work and activities. Compared with similar schools, their attendance is well above average. Attitudes to learning are extremely positive across the school and in every lesson. Students are very positive in cooperating with staff and being independent in managing their own learning. They are always prepared to work hard, sustain effort and do their utmost to meet teachers' expectations.
- Parents who have made their views known all think the college makes sure students are well behaved and deals effectively with any bullying. While a few students point to there being some bullying, they say it is not serious and they are reassured because any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's extraordinary leadership ensures the college thrives on her very clear vision of its mission. Growth is driven by her ambition and high expectations for what can be achieved. All of the college's outstanding qualities have been maintained since the last inspection and improvement has been relentless.
- Leadership across the college embodies the headteacher's qualities and strengths. The large and cohesive team of leaders work energetically and extremely effectively at managing their roles and responsibilities. The college works and improves with a very clear sense of its direction and its key priorities. Well-developed partnerships with schools, colleges and community organisations add strength and scope to the college's work, sharing good practice in particular. The local authority provides a robust external evaluation of teaching, students' outcomes and the curriculum.

- Leaders manage the college meticulously and are exceptionally thorough at ensuring policies and procedures work to great effect and achieve outstanding outcomes. The steps taken to safeguard students are extremely robust, and provision for their care, support and guidance is outstanding.
- The improvement of teaching and the curriculum is continuous. It keeps these at the leading edge in promoting excellent outcomes for all students in terms of their personal independence, academic achievement, preparation for the future and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The wide range of checks on the college's work and the thorough manner in which they are carried out by leaders are extremely rigorous. What works well and not so well is very clearly understood and leads to sharply focused and well-wrought improvement plans.
- Improvement of teaching follows clear priorities. These are firmly linked to comprehensive, ongoing training for teachers and their assistants, which broadens and deepens their expertise in meeting students' needs. The impact on the quality of teaching is fully reflected in the formal assessment of teachers' performance and their professional progression.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors give the college very effective support and are well equipped to challenge leaders and hold them to account. Governors are kept extremely well informed about the quality of teaching and students' outcomes, including a full audit of pupil premium funding spending and its impact on the progress of students known to be eligible for free school meals. They receive a wealth of clear, detailed reports from leaders regarding the management of staff and college resources as well as the progress in improvement plans. Governors take this information into the college on their frequent visits and check for themselves. They maintain a sharply focused involvement with staff and students.

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	118146
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	425971

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	145
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	11
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Kearsley
Headteacher	Tracy Millard
Date of previous school inspection	14 December 2010
Telephone number	01724 842960
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