

Dinnington Comprehensive

Specialising in Science and Engineering

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

Inspection dates 9–10 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Achievement has risen quickly over the past three years and is now good.
- Students make good progress in all subjects and across all year groups. In English, the progress of some is outstanding.
- Teaching is good across the school. Students gain valuable skills, being able to read, write and use mathematics well across different subjects.
- Students' behaviour is good and their safety is given the highest priority. There are good relationships between students and teachers.
- The sixth form is good, having improved significantly as a result of far better checking of students' progress.
- The headteacher leads well. There is good practice across the school in celebrating success and evidence of mutual respect. Students are proud of their school.
- Governors challenge school leaders well on matters relating to teachers' pay, the quality of teaching and on raising standards further. They have their sights firmly set on the school becoming outstanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students in the sixth form following AS- and A-level courses could make better progress, particularly those in Year 12.
- School leaders do not use a wide enough range of evidence to make sure their judgements on the quality of teaching are as accurate as possible.
- The attendance of different groups of students is not checked as rigorously as it could be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 51 parts of lessons, of which three were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Additionally, students' work was looked at to check on the progress they had been making over time, and some were heard reading.
- Meetings were held with students, senior leaders, other staff, members of the governing body and an education consultant.
- Inspectors analysed the 33 responses that had been submitted to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including school improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Hayter	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector
Tudor Griffiths	Additional Inspector
Clive Hurren	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- An average proportion of students is eligible for the pupil premium. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs and supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school rents a unit in an industrial estate which is used for some construction courses and houses the school's behaviour inclusion unit for students who have been temporarily excluded from the main school site.
- Rother Valley College is used as an external provider for some courses in Key Stage 4.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further in the sixth form, particularly for those studying A-level courses in Year 12 by:
 - preparing students more adequately for the increased demands of studying A levels while they are in Year 11 and early in Year 12
 - improving the attendance of students in the sixth form.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, so they become outstanding by:
 - checking the attendance and persistent absence rates of different groups of students with more rigour so that any underlying weaknesses can be quickly tackled
 - using a wider range of evidence to check on the quality of teaching rather than relying just on formal lesson observations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students enter the school with attainment that is generally below average. Achievement has been rising over the past three years because teaching has improved and the methods the school uses to keep an eye on students' progress are simple, regular and effective. This has led to standards now being above average by the time students complete their GCSE courses.
- In 2011, there was a wide gap between the attainment of students known to be eligible for free school meals and others. While gaps remain, they have now narrowed significantly in both English and mathematics. In 2013, the average difference in GCSE grades attained by eligible students in Year 11 and others was one and a half grades behind in mathematics and one grade in English.
- The most able students are challenged well in lessons. The bar is set appropriately high for them and they make good progress in both English and mathematics.
- Those educated off the school site make good progress. All groups of students make good progress and are carefully tracked, which means that all have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The school is aware that a significant minority of students arrive in Year 7 with low reading abilities that may present barriers to their learning. Over the past two years it has worked hard to address these problems through intensive reading courses, some of which are funded by the Year 7 catch-up premium. These actions are now paying off well because disabled students and those who have special educational needs are making as much progress as their peers.
- Some students are entered early for GCSE examinations, although this does not disadvantage in relation to their overall progress and attainment.
- Over the past three years, while achievement has risen sharply in Years 7 to 11, it has not risen so quickly in the sixth form because, for some time, progress was not tracked well enough. However, inspection evidence indicates that things are quickly improving, particularly in Year 13 where students are making good progress in all subjects.
- The progress of Year 12 students is slower. This is because some students struggle with the much increased demands of essay writing and independent research work that is required at this level, which they find a huge step up from GCSE work. The school is aware that it needs to improve the attendance of sixth formers, particularly those in Year 12.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has been improving over the past few years and has now reached the point where it is good, because students are making good progress across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- Students are taught to use and apply their English skills well across many subjects. For example, in one science lesson, students had to think carefully what they were going to write about the functions of the heart and ensure they had complete sentences which were well punctuated. The quality of English teaching has improved and some is now outstanding.
- Similarly, mathematics is taught well. Teachers try to give students real-life problems and situations to work out mathematically rather than just repeating work. This engages and motivates students, which in turn means they make good progress.
- Teachers mark students' work well. Praise is given, but teachers ensure they are very clear what the praise is for so that students can see clearly what they have done well. The advice teachers give is concise and to the point so that students are left in no doubt what they should do to improve. Students then improve their work in response to their teachers' advice. This means that students do not generally repeat their errors and so progress is rapid.
- A particular strength in the learning in vocational courses in the sixth form is that students use their personal experiences of voluntary work in their coursework. Students spoke to inspectors

enthusiastically about how this 'made the work real' and served to motivate them.

- In the sixth form, some Year 12 students struggle with the demands of the more advanced work they have to do. Their early essays show weaker sentence structures and unconvincing points made, which do not answer the questions well enough. The school is aware that students could be more adequately prepared for sixth form work when they are in Year 11 and early on in Year 12. However, because of the good teaching, they soon understand what is expected, but this has meant that results in Year 12 have not been as good as those in Year 13.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. This is the case both indoors and outdoors. In lessons, students' attitudes to learning are good.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The school meets current government safeguarding requirements and training for child protection is up to date. The safety and welfare of those educated off the school site is carefully monitored.
- Most students wear their uniform with pride, are well turned out and do not drop litter around the site. Almost all students speak respectfully to adults and only on occasions did inspectors hear bad language being used when students thought they were not heard.
- On the whole inspectors observed lessons where behaviour was well managed and students related well to the teacher and to each other. The school's records of behaviour indicate that, over time, there have been fewer incidents of poor behaviour and that the rate of fixed-term exclusion is below the national average for all groups of students.
- Inspectors visited the off-site centre for students who had been excluded from the main school site on a temporary basis. This is now not often used, and only in the most extreme cases where students find it difficult to manage their behaviour. This facility is effective in ensuring students continue their studies without having to be sent home.
- Students are very positive about behaviour, saying that bullying of all kinds is a rarity but if they felt the need to do so, there is always a caring adult to turn to. They have a good understanding of bullying associated with social networking and text messaging.
- There are ample opportunities for students to be involved in charity events, such as a 'come dine with me' evening, which are organised by student house captains. Many students are involved in these as well as the many sporting and musical activities that are on offer. This develops students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour in the school.
- Attendance is below average but is improving for all groups of students. Students' punctuality to school has also improved. School leaders have been measuring attendance rates regularly but have not broken down these measurements by different student groups, so that it is clear if some groups, such as those eligible for free school meals, attend less regularly than others.

The leadership and management are good

- The outstanding systems that are in place to track students' progress and set targets are the linchpin behind the school's rapid improvement. Any students that underachieve are quickly identified and teachers are then able to intervene successfully to improve matters.
- Teachers' skills have improved significantly as a result of a good programme of training; particularly on how to use the much improved data available to make sure students are challenged and supported. Senior leaders have built in good opportunities for staff to share their expertise with each other. Inspectors were impressed with the commitment and enthusiasm of staff and their eagerness to improve their skills further.
- The sixth form is well led. Good plans are in place to ensure that the recent improvements will continue.
- The skills of middle leaders are improving well. They regularly check on the quality of teaching

and address any underperformance when it occurs, holding teachers to account for the progress their classes are making.

- The good curriculum is balanced. Reading is promoted well across the curriculum. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs have their needs expertly met by a range of special courses supported by well-trained teaching assistants. The curriculum in the sixth form is appropriate, with a growing range of academic and vocational courses on offer.
- While teaching has improved, school leaders rely too much on formal, pre-announced lesson observations to check on the quality of teaching. Teachers are, naturally, well prepared for these observations and put on a good performance. This approach has given school leaders a falsely optimistic view of teaching that goes on typically from day to day. However, inspectors found that some leaders were increasingly using other sources of information, such as assessment data and short, unannounced drop-ins to lessons to improve the accuracy of their judgements.
- The local authority has ensured the school receives support from local leaders in education and from external consultants. This support has been appropriate and has helped school leaders to focus their attention on improving teaching over time.
- Procedures for safeguarding meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, over the past two years, has improved the way it holds school leaders to account on matters relating to the quality of teaching, raising achievement, the performance of teachers and pay progression. Its members no longer just rely on the information given to them by school leaders. They make frequent visits to the school to check for themselves if this information is accurate and robust. Governors keep a close eye on how the pupil premium is having a positive effect in closing gaps in achievement between pupils. However, their checking of attendance could be more rigorous when holding the school to account for the attendance and persistent absence rates of different groups of students. As a governing body, its members have good, complementary skills that are valuable in helping the school with personnel management, finance and safeguarding. The governing body have their sights firmly set on becoming outstanding and most members have a clear and realistic idea of the steps the school now needs to take to achieve this goal.

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	442183

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	1,232
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Carroll
Headteacher	Paul Blackwell
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2013
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 2014

