



Wakefield Kettlethorpe High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108271
LEA Wakefield
Inspection number 277938
Inspection dates 7 November 2005 to 8 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Ralph Higgs CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Kettlethorpe Hall Drive
School category	Community		Standbridge Lane
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Sandal, Wakefield WF2 7EL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01924 303510
Number on roll	1627	Fax number	01924 303514
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Janet Hull
Date of previous inspection	21 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr Bill Cunningham

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of 5 additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Wakefield Kettlethorpe High School is a very large 11-16 mixed comprehensive school that gained Mathematics and Computing Specialist College status in 2003. It is a very popular school serving families from a wide range of social backgrounds across south-west Wakefield. Most students are White-British and about 5% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. Following the retirement of the former headteacher a new headteacher takes up the post in January 2006.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Inspectors agree with the school's view on its overall effectiveness. Staff are committed to securing the school's success, having responded strongly to recent changes that are bringing about higher standards and better overall progress. The school provides a good quality education and a safe and stimulating environment, recently enhanced following the award of Specialist Mathematics and Computing status. Good teaching and effective systems of guidance and support contribute to the school's good overall performance.

Students express confidence in the care and guidance given by the school. Whatever their backgrounds, they say they feel safe, are learning how to be healthy and enjoy school. The great majority of parents have confidence in the quality of education provided.

The school evaluates itself honestly, and there is a good understanding on the part of governors and the leadership team of what is needed to move the school forward including further improving the quality of teaching, the more uniform application of self-review procedures by subject leaders and a curriculum that better meets the needs of all groups of older students.

The school is well led and effectively managed to ensure it provides good value for money. Improvement since the last inspection has been good overall, gathering pace recently.

What the school should do to improve further

- Secure greater consistency in the quality of teaching in order to improve students' capacity to learn independently, including the fuller use of assessment to promote good progress.
- Ensure planned action reduces the variation in the effectiveness of subject leadership by sharing the exemplary practice which exists in the school.
- Provide a curriculum in Years 10 and 11 that meets the needs of all groups of students.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, standards are significantly above average and are rising year on year. The school exceeded the targets it set for attainment at the end of both Year 9 and Year 11, indicating a capacity to set even more challenging targets in future.

When students enter the school in Year 7 their standards are average overall as indicated by test scores at the end of Key Stage 2, although there is a higher proportion of higher attaining students than in other schools. Students build on this and make good progress in Key Stage 3, particularly in science, to reach consistently above average standards.

At the end of Key Stage 4, a high percentage of students get five or more higher general certificate of education (GCSE) grades and a very high percentage leaves with five or more graded results, reflecting the school's aim to be inclusive. The results in most subjects are above the national average. The overall progress of students is now good, reflecting an improving picture especially in English, which has successfully dealt with some underachievement evident in previous years. There is no significant difference in the progress made by students from minority ethnic groups or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, compared with others in schools around the country.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school says, and inspectors agree, that students' personal development is good. They enjoy being at school. This is borne out by their good attendance, and the positive attitudes they generally show in lessons. The great majority of students behave well and the small proportion who do not are given good support to improve. Through the school and year councils, students have readily involved themselves in decisions about issues such as how to improve healthy eating and the behaviour code. They also play a positive role in activities to support the wider community. They support each other effectively through a buddy system to help new students settle into Year 7, and to support younger students to improve their basic skills.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students show a clear understanding of other people's needs, and considerable empathy for those less fortunate than themselves. Students take good advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular activities, and many participate enthusiastically in sports. They show good awareness of the sort of decisions which will help them to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and are well prepared for the choices that they make as they progress through school and on to the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, and range from satisfactory to outstanding. As a result, students respond well and make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a variety of activities that engage students but opportunities are not always taken to encourage independent learning. Relationships are good. There is increasing use of information and communications technology (ICT) with teachers making effective use of the new interactive whiteboards and the good computer resources. Good progress has been made in implementing the National Strategy and in sharing the qualities of very effective teaching. This is raising the quality of teaching but is not fully or consistently evident in all lessons.

Assessment procedures have been strengthened considerably and are now good. Students' attainment is assessed regularly and criteria for performance are beginning to be shared with students and parents. Most marking gives students clear guidance on how to improve. Outstanding practice in design and technology has been disseminated throughout the school and is having a positive influence. Work is usually well matched to the needs of learners, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In satisfactory lessons, however, there is scope for greater challenge in terms of both the pace and level of work. Further consolidation of assessment procedures has the potential to further raise levels of achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets most students' needs. At Key Stage 4 the curriculum is primarily academic, though vocational courses are expanding both in school and off-site. However, inspectors agree with the school's view that there is not a sufficiently wide range of courses to meet the diverse career and personal aspirations of all students.

Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. A gifted and talented programme sets beneficial additional challenges for designated students. Booster and revision classes exist in many subjects to effect good achievement. Good enrichment activities enhance and add to learners' enjoyment and achievement. Sports, drama and musical productions extend opportunity to develop talents. Specialist College status affects the curriculum positively, particularly in the additional provision of computerised learning schemes. Keeping safe and healthy living are promoted well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support offered to students are good. Child protection arrangements are secure, and students are confident that any incidents of bullying

are dealt with effectively. Teachers ensure that the atmosphere in school is calm and students feel very safe. Form tutors know individual students well and liaise with mentors to give students the best possible chance of success. Good links with external specialists mean that students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who find it difficult to adapt to the demands of school are given beneficial additional support.

Thorough checks are made on progress at frequent intervals so that teachers can give accurate feedback to parents and the students themselves to celebrate success and give more help if needed. Consequently, almost all pupils gain at least five GCSE graded results. Good guidance, carefully planned work experience and well-established links with post-16 establishments, give students a good preparation for a successful life when they leave.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Senior staff and subject leaders share a vision for the school, which is successfully moving it forward. Self evaluation, drawing on parents' and students' views, together with analysis of results and the outcomes of regular monitoring, accurately identifies areas where improvement could be made. Senior leaders and governors are fully aware of strengths and weaknesses. Action to tackle these issues has been effective in, for example, restructuring senior leadership and empowering middle managers but it is too early to recognise the full impact of more recent action. Within subjects, the quality of leadership shown through evaluation, monitoring and planning varies from satisfactory to exemplary. This is an area where the impact of school action to share good practice and raise the overall quality has not yet had time to be fully realised.

The school is successful in its aim to promote the development of all students' individual abilities. Leadership ensures a safe environment through its robust procedures. Teachers' expertise meets the needs of the curriculum well. Induction procedures for students and newly qualified teachers are good. Governance is good with governors being actively involved in the work of the school. Good links with parents, the community and other agencies support students' learning and development well. Good financial management has eliminated the budget deficit and ensured good value for money. The successful recent developments show the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team into your school last week. We found your views very interesting and they were very useful to us in helping to understand your school.

These are the main things we found out during our visit:

Wakefield Kettlethorpe is a good school. Your school is well led by the headteacher, senior staff and governors and all staff are working hard to provide you with a good education.

Your behaviour is good. We noticed how hard most students worked in lessons and we were impressed with the orderly way you moved around the school and by how well you got on with one another.

Your attendance is good and we agree with you that school is enjoyable because staff try hard to provide you with interesting lessons and out of school activities. Teachers plan a good range of subjects for you to learn, which helps you make good progress and learn useful skills. Although older students are given good advice about which courses to take and preparing for further education and work, we think a greater range of vocational subjects would help you more.

You told us you are grateful for the support that teachers readily give you to do well, and that you are learning to stay healthy and keep safe. The school also cares well for you and you say that there is always someone you can turn to if there is a problem.

We asked your parents and carers for their views and most of them say they have great confidence in the work of the school in helping you to succeed.

Standards are high but we think that your school has the staff and resources to help you do even better. The staff and governors are going to be working very hard to achieve this. They will be looking more closely at how well you are doing in lessons and extending the methods already used in some subjects to help you learn better and understand how to improve your work.

Thank you once again for talking to us and being helpful during the inspection. There is much that you and your teachers can be proud of at Wakefield Kettlethorpe High School and we wish you every success for the future.