



Hetton School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108862
LEA Sunderland
Inspection number 278066
Inspection dates 21 September 2005 to 22 September 2005
Reporting inspector Paul Hancock

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	North Road
School category	Community		Hetton-le-Hole
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 5536756
Number on roll	1011	Fax number	0191 5536760
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Jack Steel
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr Richard Horn

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 21 September 2005 - 22 September 2005	Inspection number 278066
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three attached inspectors.

Description of the school

Hetton School in Sunderland is a specialist Technology College catering for learners from the age of eleven to sixteen. There are 1011 pupils at the school, 508 boys and 503 girls. Most pupils start at the school having achieved broadly average results in their primary schools. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language or from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils who have special educational needs is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hetton is a good school and a good Technology College. It provides learners with good chances to succeed in life when they leave the school. Teaching is consistently good and there is a very positive climate for learning in which students make good progress. These are considerable strengths of the school.

Achievement and standards have been good over time and the school takes the right actions to maintain and improve them when necessary. Care, guidance and support for learners are equally as good.

The senior management team have consistently implemented strategic plans which are focussed on making sure all learners achieve as well as they can. The headteacher, senior management team and a stable staff are not complacent. They routinely build on previous improvements and they have an accurate overall picture of the school. The school has demonstrated the capacity to improve for a long time and has successfully dealt with the key areas for improvement in the last inspection report. They know the areas to make further improvements in very well, such as achievement in modern foreign languages, but do not always securely monitor the impact of the changes that are made. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and standards in modern foreign languages.
- Monitor standards in subjects more sharply and how well new ideas and initiatives impact on achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards have been good over time. GCSE results were not as high in 2004 as they were between 2000 and 2005 and inspectors agree with the school they were satisfactory for that year. These results have improved significantly in 2005 as a direct result of actions taken by the school and are well above average.

Pupils make good progress in their learning and have performed particularly well in combined science, design and technology, English literature, information and communications technology (ICT) and mathematics. Technology College status has made a large impact on raising standards in design and technology and ICT. Learners have done less well in French and Spanish.

Achievement and standards at Key Stage 3 since the last inspection have been above those gained by similar schools in both English and science and well above in mathematics. The factors which caused lower English results in 2004 have been effectively addressed by the school and standards have risen in 2005.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and with English is an additional language, make good progress. Girls do better than boys but not significantly so. The

school has revised its monitoring programme and is becoming better at tracking the progress which pupils make.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school judges that the personal development and well-being of learners is good and they are right. Pupils behave well and are positive about learning. They enjoy school and actively participate in the many activities available outside the school day. Attendance is average and the school is working hard to improve this.

Working relationships between teachers and pupils are good and they show a lot of respect for each other. Pupils feel safe in school and know they can turn to an adult for help or advice if they need it. There is a strong care system. Learning mentors operate drop-in sessions and a peer mentoring system has recently been introduced. An effective school council has brought about change, for example in school uniform and in the provision of astro-turf for sports pitches.

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Learners are well prepared for later life in citizenship lessons, for example on human rights. Learners make a strong contribution to the community through musical concerts, technology courses, charity work, and by working with the elderly. Vocational courses, careers guidance and work experience help pupils prepare well for the world of work and develop the skills necessary for their future well-being. The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles through encouraging pupils to take part in sport and the provision of healthy food with, for example, points awarded for healthy eating in the dining area. The sex and drugs education programmes are comprehensive and provide valuable advice.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school accurately assesses the quality of teaching and learning to be good. Some teaching is outstanding, which reflects the school's strong commitment to developing and monitoring the skills of the workforce. The team agreed with the school's assessment of where teaching needs to be improved.

The school has a stable staff which remains innovative and makes improvement a central part of its work. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress have improved and are now very effective at identifying underachievement. Strategies to support pupils who are the GCSE grade C/D borderline, and those with special education needs, have been particularly successful. Most teaching is well informed and planned, up-to-date, and often passionately delivered. Where the quality of teaching is not as high as the rest, explanations are too long and questions are not focussed well enough to assess what pupils know before moving on.

The willingness to learn, hard work and good behaviour demonstrated by the great majority of pupils are major factors in their good progress. They particularly enjoy those lessons where computers and state of the art technology is used. Learners feel that they are set clear targets and are well informed about how well they are doing. They are given clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school rightly identifies the curriculum it provides as good. It fulfils its aim of providing a curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils and allows them to pursue their chosen path on leaving school. Pupils speak highly of the outstanding range and quality of additional activities and clubs offered out of school hours.

The school has recognised that within the local area, the prospects of some pupils will be enhanced by the acquisition of work-related skills. Consequently, an increasing number of applied GCSE and vocational courses are offered to pupils in Years 10 and 11.

The ASDAN basic skills course has sustained the motivation of a small number of pupils who might otherwise have become disaffected with school. Pupils recognise the value of a personal development programme which promotes healthy and safe lifestyles. A new course effectively develops study skills for pupils in years 7 and 8.

The development of basic writing, number and computer skills is a strong feature. This, together with work related learning activities such as careers education and work experience, makes a large contribution to assuring future economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school thinks the quality of care, guidance and support they provide is good and they are right. Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. Correct health and safety procedures and risk assessments are carried out. All the staff have received appropriate training and understand child protection procedures.

A strong pastoral system exists which monitors the personal development of each pupil and there is good support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils are comfortable seeking help or advice on personal or academic matters if they need to. Discussions with pupils revealed they feel safe in school. A very small number of parents and pupils expressed concerns about bullying. Pupils say that it is not a major problem. The school takes swift and effective action when it is reported.

Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress through regular reports, consultation evenings and the pupil planners which are used effectively as a means of communication between home and the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school judges leadership and management to be good. It is, and the work of the headteacher, senior management team and academic and pastoral leaders is raising achievement. Good systems are in place for evaluating the school's overall performance, and for identifying what needs to be done to improve and how this can be achieved. The views of parents and pupils are sought and often acted upon. However, procedures for monitoring the impact of new ideas and initiatives to raise standards are not being implemented consistently across departments and subjects and this is an area for development.

The issues identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. There is good capacity for further improvement because leaders and managers are self-critical.

Pupils make good progress because of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and the absence of any form of discrimination. Instances of bullying or harassment are dealt with promptly and effectively. The school has specialist teachers who are supported in their work by skilled ancillary staff.

They all ensure that pupils study in a secure and safe environment. The quality and range of learning resources are good and they are put to good use. Resources for specialist technology work are particularly good. Accommodation is satisfactory. Although the fabric of some teaching areas is jaded, many rooms are stimulating places for pupils to work in. The school provides good value for money.

Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met. The members of the governing body are very knowledgeable about the local and wider community as well as the school and its history. They have a secure vision for its future direction but are not involved to the extent they could be in monitoring the impact of changes and new initiatives on how well pupils learn.

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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	3	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?	2	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

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23 September 2005

Dear Students,

Thank you for all your help when we inspected your school on 21 and 22 September. We enjoyed discussing your school and the work you were doing. We hope you find the report interesting to read. I received a huge number of questionnaire replies from your parents and carers. I would be very grateful if you would pass on my thanks to them and say we took all their views into account.

I thought you might like to read a brief summary of the key findings from the inspection.

You go to a good school. You told us your headteacher and the staff do a particularly good job making sure you do as well you can, and you are right.

Standards at your school are good. You make good progress and get the right results.

Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers work very hard to provide interesting lessons and you respect this.

You behave well in classes and virtually all of you told us you enjoy school. I think you do some very interesting work, particularly as a Technology College.

The school has improved a lot since the last inspection. Staff are not complacent and they want to make it even better.

To help them do this, I highlighted two areas where improvements can be made. They are to:

ensure that standards in modern foreign languages improve;

check that new ideas and initiatives the school is introducing are helping to improve your chances of doing even better.

Thank you for being such a credit to yourselves, your parents and your school.

Paul Hancock HMI

(Lead Inspector)

Annex B