



Framwellgate School Durham

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114309
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279360
Inspection dates 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005
Reporting inspector Sandra Tweedie

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Newton Drive
School category	Community		Durham
Age range of pupils	11 to 19		DH1 5BQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 3866628
Number on roll	1250	Fax number	0191 3741318
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs K Cromarty
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs J Sjovoll

Age group 11 to 19	Inspection dates 12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	Inspection number 279360
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors. The school was last inspected in February 2000.

Description of the school

Framwellgate School Durham is an 11 to 18 mixed secondary school. There are approximately 1,220 pupils including 200 in the sixth form. The majority have above average attainment on entry in Year 7. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average as is the number identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Framwellgate School Durham has held specialist Science College status since 2003 and is a Leading Edge school. Through partnership with Durham University, the new Science Learning Centre North East has been established and is located at the school. Since 2004, the school has had Training School status. Other accreditations include Sportsmark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Framwellgate School Durham is a highly effective school with outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher's dynamic vision and leadership, together with a very strong senior team, has led to a substantial rise in standards since the previous inspection and most pupils make excellent progress. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are outstanding. The school's self-evaluation is accurate in identifying where provision is outstanding and where improvements are needed. At the time of inspection, many of these were being addressed; for example, more effective target setting in Year 8 and Year 9 is being introduced. Issues raised at the previous inspection have largely been addressed. The school has a number of distinct features, including specialist Science College status, Training School status, Leading Edge partnerships, and the Achievement Centre. These have a direct and beneficial impact on pupils' learning. The Science Learning Centre, established in partnership with Durham University, is an exceptional resource bringing outstanding accommodation and innovation to the science curriculum, and enhancing the quality of teaching.

The capacity of the leadership and management to make further improvements is outstanding.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The quality of the school sixth form is good. The school has an accurate view of the provision and the quality of teaching and learning, which is good overall. Achievement is good and standards are above average. Pass rates at advanced level have fluctuated; however, results improved considerably in 2005. The progress that students make compared to their attainment at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) has a positive trend in 2005 but is, over time, in line with expectations. Most sixth form students attended the lower school. The student council is vibrant and a strength of the sixth form; they organise many excellent charitable events with younger students' involvement. Students enjoy their studies and their views are taken account of. Students feel their chosen courses offer a challenge, they receive good support and have a good dialogue with their teachers. Good management of the sixth form has led to strengthening tutorial provision and, recently, closer monitoring of students' progress, targets and attendance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop the system for setting targets in Year 8 and Year 9.
- Improve the progress that students make in the sixth form in meeting challenging individual targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

In the main school, achievement is outstanding. Standards have improved rapidly in recent years and are now well above average. In 1999, pupils entered the school in Year 7 with above average standards. They maintained and improved on these standards over the five years to 2004 when their GCSE results were well above average. Pupils achieve outstandingly well compared to pupils in similar schools. In 2005, 77% of pupils obtained at least five GCSE passes at grades A* to C, and for five GCSE passes including English and mathematics it was 67%. This represents excellent achievement. In 2004, in English, English literature, science, French, art and design, business studies, history and geography, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher A* and A grades was twice the national average. However, in information and communication technology (ICT) the proportion of pupils reaching the higher grades was behind that nationally. There have been significant improvements in Year 9 national test results in English and mathematics as well as in science, where results in 2004 showed a dramatic improvement, partly as a result of achieving Science College status. Pupils of differing abilities and backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve equally well, but higher attaining girls do better in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3.

Inspectors and the school agree that in the sixth form achievement is good. Results fluctuate from year to year but, in 2004, 13 of the 18 subjects offered at general certificate of education (GCE) A2 level had a 100% pass rate and results overall, though slightly below in 2003, were at the national average. The progress that students make compared to their attainment at GCSE is, over time, in line with expectations. Although national comparisons for 2005 are not yet available, results overall improved substantially with almost every subject achieving a 100% pass rate and a higher proportion of students receiving high grades. Subject performance varies from year to year. In the last two years, students have achieved consistently well in French, art and design, history, ICT and business studies.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and their well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and feel positive about their lessons. They take part in the many extra-curricular activities. Attendance is above average. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good; they show respect for each other. Pupils generally feel safe in school and feel that they can turn to an adult for help or advice if they need it. There is a strong pastoral care system, which includes older students and younger pupils being grouped together. The school council has been effective in bringing about changes, for example, with the purchase of picnic benches. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are well prepared for later life through careers guidance and work experience and they make a positive contribution to the community through

interesting charity work and links with local organisations. The development of their economic well-being is outstanding. The school promotes healthy living well, for example, by providing healthy food and encouraging pupils to participate in sports. The sex and drugs education programmes are comprehensive and provide advice that is valued by pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is exceptional overall. It is excellent in the main school and good in the sixth form. The school is continuously self-critical in its pursuit of very strong rates of progress for all its pupils. The excellent work undertaken as a consequence of being a training school and the school's development programme for teachers have a discernable impact on teaching and learning and the school rightly has an excellent local reputation for its classroom practice.

A very strong feature of teaching is the quality of the planning and preparation of lessons. Class management and relationships are excellent so pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, can enjoy their education in an atmosphere of calm and industry. Variety of approach and strong pace mean that lessons are interesting for pupils and learning is rapid. Teachers are particularly adept at questioning pupils to ensure that they fully understand what they are learning. Pupils value their lessons and think that they are getting a good deal. This is especially true in Year 10 and Year 11 where they are encouraged to take control of their own rates of learning through the use of assessment data and by setting challenging personal and academic targets. The school acknowledges that its next task is to replicate the high quality of the target setting that exists in Year 10 and Year 11 in Year 8 and Year 9.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school provides an outstanding curriculum for its pupils. Excellent links with primary schools produce a wealth of information used to place pupils in suitable teaching groups in Year 7. This ensures a very secure start. Careful further groupings in Years 8 and 9 maintain momentum and challenge for all. In Years 10 and 11, the school's three pathways provide a multitude of options, academic and vocational, enabling pupils to follow bespoke courses to suit their interests and aspirations. Recently acquired Science College status has enhanced the range of GCSE courses on offer to include three sciences and statistics without causing significant reduction in the number of other subjects. The sixth form caters well for students of very varying prior attainment by providing a very good range of general certificate of education

advanced level (GCE A-level) subjects, and general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) courses at two levels. Pupils benefit from the very wide range of enrichment activities, particularly relating to sport and music. These are instrumental in helping them to adopt healthy lifestyles and to enjoy school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Health and safety procedures and risk assessments are given appropriate priority and implemented. Staff have received appropriate in-service training for child protection. The personal development of each pupil is monitored closely through the pastoral system; there is good support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Achievement Centre is a strength of the school. Pupils feel that they can turn to an adult for help or advice on personal or academic matters and there is an effective peer mentoring system. Pupils say that they feel safe in school; on the rare occasions that bullying occurs, it is quickly dealt with. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress through regular reports and consultation evenings. In Years 10 and 11, pupils receive careful guidance to enable them to make informed choices and over half continue their studies in the school sixth form.

Sixth form students receive good individual guidance when making applications for higher education. Their progress is regularly monitored through tutorials. Overall attendance is very good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The headteacher and leaders at all levels provide outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher's dynamic vision and successful development of the school, through initiatives such as Science College status, the Science Learning Centre, Leading Edge partnerships and the Achievement Centre, have an outstanding and beneficial impact for pupils. Governors are very effective in their role as a critical friend; they are knowledgeable, well informed and are committed to a process of self-review. They have a clear and accurate view of the school's key strengths, its exemplary practice and its areas for development, which aligns closely with the inspection findings. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is used effectively to promote improvement. The professional development opportunities for staff are a strength; there is a strategic structure to this process, which continually improves teachers' skills. A particularly successful aspect is the creation of 'learning focus groups' which encourage a professional dialogue and help distribute leadership responsibility.

Pupils' performance is monitored very effectively and challenging targets are set and reviewed in a number of year groups. Where this is established, achievement is greatest, and significantly so in Year 10 and Year 11. Rightly, this excellent practice is to be extended into all age groups.

The Science and Achievement Centres are spacious and provide excellent and innovative areas for learning. However, many of the school classrooms are too small, lacking in ventilation and are too few in number for the demands placed upon them.

Since the previous inspection, improvement has been excellent, especially in relation to the progress that pupils make. The very high quality of leadership and management contributes greatly to the school's capacity to improve, which is outstanding. Value for money is good.

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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?	1	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

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?	1	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

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

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
T 0207 421 6800
F 0207 421 6707

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Framwellgate School Durham
Newton Drive
Durham
DH1 5BQ

14 October 2005

Dear Students

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we came to carry out the inspection of your school earlier this week. The team's special thanks go to those of you we interviewed and spoke to about your work and aspects of school life.

Framwellgate School Durham is an outstanding school. Academic standards are very good indeed and you all have every opportunity to do very well at this school if you work hard and aim as high as possible. We were particularly impressed by both your good behaviour and your very positive attitude in lessons. These are the particular strengths of your school.

Achievement and standards are outstanding in the main school and good in the sixth form; they have improved substantially since the previous inspection.

Students have made exceptional progress, especially by the time they sit GCSE examinations, and these results are outstanding.

The quality of teaching is high and teachers receive good opportunities to keep up to date through the Training School.

The Achievement Centre is excellent.

The care and guidance you receive are good. You said that you feel that the school is a safe place to be, you get on well with each other and your teachers and your opinions are important.

Members of the student council are working hard on your behalf – charity and fundraising work are excellent.

The school's senior managers have a clear idea of how the school is doing, where things are working well and where they can make improvements to make good areas even better. We agree that some classrooms are too small or get too hot.

Outstanding schools don't just happen. They result from excellent leadership and management at all levels. This is particularly true at Framwellgate School Durham where the headteacher and staff have secured and are developing exciting opportunities in the curriculum. The new Science Learning Centre is an impressive development. Staff at the school are working hard to secure your future. We believe

that your education at the school is of very high quality overall.

Yours sincerely
Sandra Tweedie
Her Majesty's Inspector