



Vermuyden School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118064
LEA East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number 280229
Inspection dates 28 November 2005 to 29 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Brian Dower

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Centenary Road
School category	Community		Goole
Age range of pupils	11 to 19		DN14 6AN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01405 768621
Number on roll	1189	Fax number	01405 768277
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Trevor Langton
Date of previous inspection	1 January 2001	Headteacher	Miss Anne McErlane

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 19	28 November 2005 - 29 November 2005	280229

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Vermuyden is a mixed 11 to 19 comprehensive school which serves the town of Goole in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The school is situated in an area of social and economic deprivation and pupils' attainment when they enter Year 7 is below average. Students who enter the small sixth form also begin their courses with below average attainment. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Vermuyden is a satisfactory school. This judgement matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. Although overall standards are below average, pupils make satisfactory progress. The school provides particularly well for pupils with learning difficulties and these pupils make good progress. Most pupils behave well and enjoy their work. The school is fully committed to equality of opportunity; it looks after its pupils well and the teachers do much to raise pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Teaching is satisfactory overall but inconsistent. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation of its performance is accurate and planning for improvement focuses on raising standards. However, the senior staff do not monitor the implementation of some of the school's policies well enough to ensure consistency of implementation; for example, in marking pupils' work and setting homework. The school's status as a mathematics and computing college has contributed to a rise in standards in these subjects. The school has made considerable improvement recently, particularly in raising standards and pupils' behaviour and shows that it has the capacity to make further improvement. It gives satisfactory value for money.

not applicable

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although overall standards are below average, students make satisfactory progress over the two years of their courses, given their starting points when they enter the sixth form. Students feel that their opinions are respected and that they are well cared for and guided. In particular, they appreciate the help given by their learning mentor, which enables them to organise their work efficiently. Students have a good choice of academic subjects but the school recognises the need to offer more vocational courses which will better meet the needs of the students. Leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory. The school ensures that the sixth form is cost effective through an effective partnership with a neighbouring school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in each subject to equal those achieved in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages.
- Ensure that the school's policies and plans are implemented consistently by all teachers, for example, in the marking of pupils' work and the setting of homework.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils begin Year 7 with below average standards but make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The results of the Year 9 national tests are generally below average, as they were in 2004, but represent a satisfactory achievement for the pupils concerned, given the weaknesses in their attainment on entry to the school. The results improved in 2005, particularly in mathematics and science, though they were still below average. The GCSE results prior to 2004 were below average but indicated satisfactory progress. In 2004, standards were well below average in terms of the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades. Achievement was unsatisfactory, with girls' results lower than the boys. After this set of results, the school took action to raise standards, concentrating on improving the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy. This action was effective; consequently, the GCSE results improved substantially in 2005. In particular, the English and mathematics results were much higher than they were the previous year and nearly twice as many pupils gained A*-C grades in these subjects. Also, the 2005 results showed that lower ability pupils and those with learning difficulties did well at GCSE, as the proportion achieving the lower A*-G grades indicates. The GCSE results in French and German are above average and pupils achieve well in these subjects. The school recognises the need to raise standards in other subjects to match what is being achieved in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and history.

Although overall standards in the sixth form are below average the students make satisfactory progress given that they begin their courses from a below average baseline. Students took a wide range of A-levels in 2004. One of the most popular subjects was mathematics, which was taken by seven students. This contrasted with other subjects which each attracted only three or four students, except for Media Studies, which was studied by 11 students. The mathematics results were in line with the national average and represented a good achievement for the students concerned. The results in other individual subjects cannot be compared reliably with national averages because the numbers involved are too small. The 2005 results were similar to those of the previous year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and most of them want to learn and to succeed. The school has taken action to deal with concerns about behaviour expressed by some parents and behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is below the national average but the school is doing all it can to monitor and improve it. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' awareness of the needs of others is satisfactory and developed through many charity and fundraising events which are well supported. Pupils feel cared for and safe in school. They try to put into practice the good advice they receive about healthy lifestyles. They enjoy lunch-time and after-school activities. Pupils' views are heard through the school council and they have, for example, brought improvements to

school meals and the provision of additional activities during the lunch break. Good support from the learning mentor helps students in the sixth form to become mature and independent young people. Pupils in the main school are well-informed about opportunities for further study and the world beyond the classroom because of the good links with local business and industries.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. An established programme of lesson observation by senior and middle managers has identified how to improve teaching but, in the past, not enough attention has been given to pupils' learning. The senior staff are working to address this, for example, through increased rigour in the monitoring of marking and homework, both of which still need improvement. Teaching is improving, and the effects of better teaching are evident in the higher results achieved in 2005. In particular, improvements in the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are leading to higher standards, particularly in English and mathematics. In the majority of lessons, pupils are actively engaged in varied and challenging tasks, which have clear objectives and build on what pupils have done before. However, a small minority of lessons lack pace or challenge and fail to involve pupils. In these lessons, pupils lose concentration; their behaviour deteriorates and they do not make sufficient progress. The effectiveness of teachers' marking of pupils' written work is inconsistent. Consequently, pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not always understand how well they are doing or what they should do to improve their work. Homework is not set consistently and inconsistencies in the regularity and quality of homework reduce its value in the eyes of some pupils.

Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from the effective work of teaching assistants and learning mentors, who work hard and effectively to ensure that these pupils make good progress.

Teaching and learning in the sixth form are satisfactory. The school collaborates with another local school to share the teaching of sixth-form subjects. The teachers know their students well and plan lessons effectively to meet their individual needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Classes in Years 7 to 9 are organised by ability, which helps teachers to match the level of work effectively to the pupils' needs. The recently introduced vocational courses in Years 10 and 11 are enabling pupils to choose from an increased range of courses, which cater well for pupils' interests and respond to employment prospects locally, for example, in manufacturing and construction. Additional time provided to improve pupils' weak literacy skills is effective in helping to ensure that all pupils can achieve

some success at GCSE. In the sixth form, the school offers a good choice of A-level courses but acknowledges that more vocational options are necessary. The recently acquired status as a mathematics and computing college has enabled the school to strengthen these two areas, for example by introducing accredited courses for all pupils in ICT. The school's good provision of extra-curricular activities contributes to pupils' enjoyment and helps to encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school guides, supports and cares for all of its pupils well. Care for pupils with learning difficulties is good and teaching assistants work hard and effectively to support them. Proper attention is paid to health and safety measures, risk assessments and child protection procedures. Pupils are taught to look carefully at their own attitudes and to identify ways in which they can improve their behaviour, self-esteem, and their learning. Year 11 pupils are helped effectively by their learning mentors to achieve their potential. Although some of these features are new, they are already having a positive impact on standards and behaviour. Links with other schools and outside agencies help the school to promote the pupils' well-being.

Targets are set for all pupils. A well-developed and effective system for the tracking and monitoring of pupils' and sixth-form students' progress accurately identifies their weaknesses and how they could make better progress. Sixth-form students are well aware of their targets and are effectively supported by the work of the learning mentor in both their academic and their personal progress.

Students' views are taken into account, for example over the provision of additional activities during the lunch break.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent changes in the senior leadership team have strengthened the drive for raising standards. Leadership and management of the sixth form are also satisfactory and the sixth form is cost effective.

The school's self-evaluation accurately identifies areas for improvement which are included in the school's development plan. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy were identified as key to raising standards and their improvement was given prominence. The efforts of all teaching staff to raise standards of basic skills have proved successful, as reflected in the strong improvement in test and examination results, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils' behaviour has also been given priority and has improved considerably in consequence. The leadership team has monitored teaching to ensure the success of its plans to raise standards and behaviour; however, they do not yet monitor the implementation of some important policies to ensure consistency of practice. For example, the school's policies for marking and for setting homework are not followed consistently by the teachers.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors discharge their responsibilities and the school's finances are managed efficiently. Although the governors know the school well and hold the headteacher and staff to account, fulfilling their role as critical friends, they could play a greater part in planning for improvement. Satisfactory arrangements have been made for continuity of teaching and learning to cover for the small number of teachers on long-term sick leave. Some of the school buildings are poor and do not provide a good learning environment although the school has plans for their replacement.

The school has made a satisfactory overall improvement since the last inspection, for example, by raising standards. These improvements show that the school has the capacity to continue to improve further.

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?	3	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
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?	3	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
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	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
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?	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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

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Vermuyden School
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DN14 6AN

30 November 2005

Dear pupils and students

Thank you for the courtesy and welcome you extended to us during our recent visit to your school. We appreciated the time several of you gave to talk to us about your work and about the many activities available to you outside of lessons.

We found that you are making satisfactory progress and that your school does many things well.

The school is successful in getting you to accept that you have talents and personal qualities which will enable you to succeed in life.

Standards are rising and your teachers are working to make sure those improvements continue.

You are well cared for and feel safe and secure in school.

Most of you work hard and show respect for each other and for adults.

You appreciate the clubs, activities and trips which are organised for you outside of lesson time.

Your teachers and the inspectors found two things to work on to make your education even better.

The school should continue to work on improving standards and so speed up the rate of progress you are making.

The senior teachers should make sure that you are set homework regularly and that your work is marked in a way that helps you to understand how to improve your work.

We would like to wish you and your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower

Inspector