



# Humberston Comprehensive School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118101  
**LEA** North East Lincolnshire  
**Inspection number** 280241  
**Inspection dates** 12 September 2005 to 13 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Honoree Gordon

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Humberston Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Humberston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Grimsby, DN36 4TF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01472 319990
<b>Number on roll</b>	706	<b>Fax number</b>	01472 319993
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Wendy Bagnall
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 May 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Carol Sanderson

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 September 2005 - 13 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280241
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Humberston Comprehensive School is a community school of average size for pupils aged 11 to 16. It is over subscribed. The majority of its pupils come from two relatively advantaged areas. The proportion receiving free school meals is low, and there are few minority ethnic pupils. The number of pupils with special educational needs is just below the average found in schools nationally, but more pupils than usual have a Statement of Special Educational Need. In the earlier years of the school, there are more boys than girls. Further up the school, the reverse is true. Pupils' attainment on entry has been a little above average, but is declining slightly and becoming closer to the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that it provides satisfactory education. It cares for its pupils and promotes their well-being effectively. To quote one parent: 'Pupils come to school with smiles on their faces and leave with smiles'. The school provides good support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils say they enjoy school, parents are very supportive and teachers and classroom assistants work well together. Pupils' results in tests and examinations are consistently above average and their personal development is good. Pupils learn the value of a safe and healthy lifestyle. Success in sport is a strength.

Although overall pupils make satisfactory progress, some groups of pupils do not progress as well as they could compared to other schools and to their own starting points. This is related to two factors: lessons are not always sufficiently stimulating or challenging; and systems for checking and reinforcing pupils' progress are not well enough developed.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school provides good value for money. It is all credit to the headteacher and staff that, despite severe budgetary difficulties and only adequate resources, standards have been maintained and continue to rise. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve, but self-evaluation is generally weak: managers cannot really demonstrate what difference the decisions they take make for pupils. The headteacher has good ideas for moving the school forward and a growing number of staff are keen to ensure this happens. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, though a number of points still need attention and the indoor accommodation for physical education remains poor. Physical education results suffer as a result. Too many parents take their children out of school for holidays in term time and attendance figures are slipping, though they are still in line with national figures.

### What the school should do to improve further

- implement systematic procedures for monitoring the quality of lessons to ensure they better meet the needs of all groups of pupils
- establish formal, regular means of checking how pupils are doing in all aspects of their education
- set out clear priorities and timescales for plans and how the school will know they have been successful
- ensure that the requirements for religious education (RE) in Key Stage 4 are met.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils consistently reach standards that are above average in public examinations and tests, with good performance in mathematics and a number of general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects. Recently, attainment in some subjects at GCSE,

for example modern foreign languages, art and geography, has improved noticeably. In assessment tests at the end of Year 9, English results are less good than in mathematics or science, but are improving. Able pupils go on to obtain high grades in English at GCSE and also in science. Pupils generally do well in mathematics. Results at GCSE in physical education give cause for concern. This represents satisfactory progress for most pupils and good progress for some. However, some groups of pupils make less progress than they should: for example, some girls and some pupils from less advantaged backgrounds. Where this is the case, it is sometimes related to less than stimulating teaching, or to ineffective use of assessment data to design and set challenging work. Basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are well developed.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are polite, courteous, cheerful and enthusiastic. They work hard and take pride in what they do. They have good relationships with each other and with their teachers. Those inspectors interviewed said they enjoyed school and valued the support and efforts of their teachers. They make good progress overall in their moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are able to trust each other and are confident that their belongings are safe. There are few incidents of anti-social behaviour; pupils behave well in and around school and they keep their recreational areas free from graffiti and litter. There are few incidents of bullying and, when these do occur, the school deals with them effectively. Opportunities to develop spiritual awareness are more limited. For example, pupils do not worship together and older pupils have insufficient time given to religious education lessons. Attendance, although satisfactory, has shown a steady decline in the last two years. Support from the local authority to follow up long-term absence is slow and far too many pupils are taking holidays in term time. Pupils are able to make mature and informed judgements about staying healthy and safe and are well prepared for adult life. Careers advice is very good and all pupils, at some stage, do work in the community. Pupils are consulted about school matters and through the school council are able to have some influence on decisions.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are thorough and teachers have good subject knowledge. The school has high-calibre support assistants; it has selected and trained them well and their work does much to promote effective learning. Some good lessons were seen during the visit, where teachers had acted on advice about how to improve the quality of their work. Because these lessons had pace and challenge, pupils clearly enjoyed taking an active part and made good progress. Some teachers took care to explain the objectives of lessons and to encourage pupils to think about what

they had learnt during the lesson. All of the good lessons were characterised by good planning, an interesting range of activities and skilled questioning which involved all learners. In the weaker lessons observed, teachers needed to give more thought to how the wide range of pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties, require different approaches to help them learn more effectively.

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Overall, most pupils make the progress expected of them. They are willing to learn and behave well in lessons. Pupils enjoy their lessons and they will listen attentively to the teacher, but in the less effective lessons they complain of dull activities such as copying notes, and slow pace.

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The headteacher has begun to observe lessons more closely, but is not yet doing this systematically enough for all subjects. Where such intervention has taken place to improve teaching quality, it has been effective and examination results have improved noticeably. This process, therefore, needs to move at a faster pace so that all subjects and teachers can benefit.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Curriculum provision is satisfactory and there are good extra-curricular opportunities, especially for sports. The school provides well for the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, but does not meet the regulations for religious education in years 10 and 11. Pupils in years 7 to 9 follow a broad and balanced curriculum. In addition, the social education programme teaches them about citizenship, health including drugs education, sex and relationships. This helps pupils to know about healthy lifestyles and how to deal with risk-taking behaviour. The programme also prepares pupils to appreciate the demands of the world of work and how they can contribute to their community. There are modules on industrial awareness and enterprise, a two-week work placement in Year 10 and a community placement for all. The school is gradually developing some vocational courses for years 10 and 11 to meet the changing needs of pupils. Two such courses run in partnership with local colleges. A local training provider and college offer a more suitable work-based alternative to GCSEs for a small number of Year 11 pupils who have lost interest in education in school. Although the short lunch hour limits the number of extra-curricular activities which can be offered in school time, the school works round this well and pupils are willing to stay at the end of the day to follow interests. Participation and success adds to pupils' confidence and develops responsibility and good teamwork.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school rated this section as good but inspectors have given an overall grade of satisfactory. There are indeed many good features and some very good provision, for example, the careers guidance. Matron and other non-teaching staff provide very

good support for pupils when they need someone to turn to and talk things through. A senior member of staff has responsibility for organising the care of vulnerable pupils and does this effectively. Child protection procedures are securely in place and the required checks have been completed. There is a happy atmosphere in school. Pupils say they enjoy school, there are good links with home and parents are very supportive. Many parents responded to the questionnaire and their replies were overwhelmingly very positive, with support for pupils with learning difficulties singled out for particular praise. The school enjoys a good reputation locally. One comment stood out: "Happiness and receiving a top class education, what more could a parent want?"

However, some aspects could be more thorough: the school needs to track more carefully and more regularly how pupils are progressing in their subjects. In addition, the contribution the school makes to preparing pupils for adult life and their personal development requires monitoring more closely. Pupils in some years are now set academic targets, but progress towards these is not followed up sufficiently well. Pupils with learning difficulties are making satisfactory progress, but some teachers have not yet adapted their teaching sufficiently to the new challenges these pupils present.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school and is well supported by the governors, parents and a number of staff. She listens to pupils' views. The school's limited resources are effectively deployed and it provides good value for money. The headteacher inherited a large budget deficit and has had to make unwelcome cuts over the past three years. Despite this, the school has continued to achieve examination results that are above the national average. Overall, improvement since the last inspection report is satisfactory, but more work needs to be done on some of the points raised then. There is still a lack of formal, consistent procedures in place to analyse how the school is doing and what progress pupils make. Managers have the capacity to do this, though there are a number of managers and teachers who do not appreciate the need for change. The school's procedures for checking and analysing how it is doing are weak. Its self-evaluation was rather vague and short on detail and evidence to support its conclusions. Managers are not clear whether what they are doing is making a difference to pupils' progress. Lesson quality varies too much. Where managers have stepped in to improve teaching and learning it has made a difference, but they have only tackled a few areas so far. The governors are beginning to hold the school to account by developing links with subject areas to gain information to plan for the school's development.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	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	4	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	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	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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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To the school council

15 September 2005

Dear pupils

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of your school. We were able to visit lessons and to talk to a number of you and to the staff. We also read the results of questionnaires completed by you and by your parents. These were very helpful to us and we enjoyed visiting your school.

Here is a summary of our main findings:

The school provides you with a satisfactory education. We know you and your parents are proud of the good reputation of your school and we want to congratulate you on your results in tests and examinations. These are above national averages and still rising. Some of you get really high grades. This represents a lot of hard work by you and your teachers.

Most of you make the amount of progress we would expect to see, but we know that you come in to the school with good results from your primary schools and we feel, therefore, that your school could expect even more from you. We would like to see you progress faster in the time that you are here.

Your personal development is good; you were cheerful, confident, and polite and we noticed how well you get on with each other and the staff.

Your behaviour is good and you work hard in lessons.

The school takes care of you and you have people you can turn to if need be.

We noticed a number of good features, like opportunities for sport and careers advice.

The school provides a suitable range of subjects for you to study and is adding new courses as well as GCSEs.

Your teachers have good subject knowledge; we saw some good lessons, but some were a bit dull.

We were disappointed that indoor physical education facilities had not improved yet. (We know the school has tried to get action on this).

The leadership and management of the school are fine and the school provides good value for money. Your headteacher and senior staff have some good ideas for how to move the school on.

We have made some suggestions:

1. We know you are keen to do well so we think your teachers should set you challenging targets and check your progress towards meeting these more frequently.
2. We know from what you told us that you like lessons which are interesting, go at a fast pace and where you can get involved. We could see you responded well to these sorts of lessons and were enjoying them, so we have asked the school to look at how more of your lessons can be like this. We think this will help you to do even better.
3. We have asked the headteacher and senior managers to be very clear about their plans for acting on our suggestions and then get them into place quickly.

Your school has improved since its last inspection and it is continuing to maintain above average standards. We feel confident your headteacher and staff can work on our suggestions and that, with your support, your school will go from strength to strength.

Mrs H Gordon

Her Majesty's Inspector of schools

Annex B