



The Queen Elizabeth's High School, Gainsborough

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120655
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280864
Inspection dates 9 February 2006 to 10 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Shaun Dillon LI

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

Type of school	Grammar (selective)	School address	Morton Terrace
School category	Voluntary controlled		DN21 2ST
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01427612354
Number on roll	1174	Fax number	01427612856
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Joan Young
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2001	Headteacher	Mr. John Child

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 9 February 2006 - 10 February 2006	Inspection number 280864
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The Queen Elizabeth's High School is an increasingly popular school. It is above average size for an 11 to 18 school. The proportions of students eligible for free school meals, with English as an additional language, from areas of social and economic deprivation and from minority ethnic backgrounds are well below national averages. The proportion of students with learning difficulties, including those with statements of special educational need is well below the national average. Students' attainments when they start at the school are well above 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: 1

The overall effectiveness of the school is outstanding and this concurs with the school's view. Students' attainments on entry to the school are well above average and they make outstanding progress and reach exceptionally high standards in Years 9 and 11 and in the sixth form. Many students obtain the highest grades in GCSE and GCE examinations. Students enjoy school greatly and their attendance is very high. However, in the sixth form a minority of students attends less well. Most students behave very well, but a minority disrupts learning in lessons. The implementation of the rewards and sanctions policy is inconsistent. The school gives a high priority to healthy lifestyles. Students contribute outstandingly well to school and community life. Teaching and learning are outstanding; very knowledgeable teachers enable their students to learn effectively. However, the information and communication technology (ICT) resources to aid learning in lessons are not used enough. Teachers do not always give enough information to students to make them aware of their level of work or how to improve in Years 7 to 9. The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced, and students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Procedures for welfare and for safeguarding students' health and safety are outstanding. A few students and parents do not always perceive that the school has responded to their ideas. Leadership and management are outstanding. Senior managers and governors set high standards and work effectively and relentlessly with middle managers to raise standards. The school has made many improvements since the last inspection. The school continually and effectively aims to improve the learning experiences of its students and has considerable capacity to improve further. The management of finances is very prudent. The school provides outstanding value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's self-evaluation that the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are outstanding. Students reach exceptionally high standards that are consistently in the top 5% of all schools nationally. Teachers support students extremely well through a friendly and yet well structured learning environment. Outstanding teaching gives students very high expectations and enables them to learn independently. Teachers monitor students' progress very carefully and provide good support for those who have difficulties. Students contribute very constructively to many activities, including being effective mentors to younger students. The leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding. Senior managers evaluate the provision very rigorously and have a clear vision for development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the response to parents' and students' views. - Apply the rewards and sanctions policy more consistently to decrease low level disruption in lessons. - Improve

academic guidance during Years 7 to 9. - Increase the use of information and communication technology to aid learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement and standards are outstanding, confirming the school's own judgement. Students' attainment on entry is well above average and they make outstanding progress and reach exceptionally high standards at all stages. Most students reach the challenging targets agreed with their teachers. The results in Year 9 national tests are consistently exceptionally high. Results in English are more variable than those in mathematics and science. Boys and girls make equally good progress. GCSE results are also exceptionally high. They improved significantly in 2005. Students reach very high standards in most subjects. Over half of all results are A or A* grades, and one fifth are A* grades. Students do less well in art, graphics and statistics. The school is well aware of this and is working effectively to improve standards. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is above average. From this starting point, students' progress is significantly above average and they achieve GCE A - level and AS results that are consistently in the top 5% of schools nationally. Attainment is high in almost all subjects. The school supports students with learning difficulties well and they make good progress in relation to their abilities. The few students from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other students.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding, which concurs with the school's self-evaluation. Students enjoy school greatly. They confirm strongly their great pride in the school and its excellent reputation. Attendance in the main school is very high but in the sixth form, a minority of students has poor attendance. Students are enthusiastic, keen to work hard and achieve well in an environment where racism and bullying seldom occur. Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Behaviour in the classroom is very good and enhances learning. A minority of students occasionally disrupts lessons. The implementation of the rewards and sanctions policy is inconsistent. Sixth form students are very good role models for younger students and contribute significantly to the life of the school. The students' adoption of healthy lifestyles and safe practices in school is excellent. The healthy school initiative raises the importance of health issues and the school actively discourages unhealthy food. Students make outstanding contributions to their community, raise funds for local charities and support good causes. The school provides very well organised work experience in Year 10 and helps students to prepare exceptionally well for their future economic well-being. Spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Students have a very strong sense of right and wrong and base their values on openness and fairness. Students have very good social skills and show increasing confidence, maturity and independence. Cultural development is good overall but students' multi cultural awareness is underdeveloped.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. This agrees with the school's self-evaluation. Teachers have very high expectations of students and students respond very well. Relationships between teachers and students are very good. Many teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers ask questions very effectively and engage and challenge students. Most teachers enable students to learn at a good pace and match work well to students' abilities, and build very effectively on their previous learning. Whilst most students have very good attitudes, a minority of students disrupts learning by poor behaviour. Teachers inform students clearly about lesson aims and learning outcomes. They also make very accurate assessments of the progress that students are making. However, in Years 7 to 9, some students are unsure about their learning targets. Teachers do not ask students sufficiently frequently to consider how well they make progress. The quality of teachers' marking is good, but does not always provide students with enough information about what they need to do to improve. In most lessons the use of ICT to aid students' learning is not used enough. This is due to a shortage of resources. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are outstanding and encourage independent learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and this agrees with the school's judgement. The curriculum is broad and well balanced. Teachers encourage students to choose options which maintain wide breadth in their learning throughout the school. However, the vocational curriculum in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form is underdeveloped. High quality personal, social and health education, citizenship and careers programmes enable students to gain work related skills. Students have very good opportunities for work experience placements. Students have very good opportunities to learn basic skills. The school encourages students to think analytically, to be independent learners, and to be confident and mature young adults when they leave. Students participate well in a wide range of activities in sports and the arts. Many visitors give students new insights into the local community and enrich learning and personal experience very well. Sixth form students have a wide choice of GCE A-level courses. Many students also take general studies and join in a wide choice of complementary activities such as Young Enterprise.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The overall care, guidance and support for students are outstanding and this agrees with the school's judgement. Academic guidance is outstanding for older students but younger students are unaware of their attainment levels and how to improve their

work. Most staff care for their students very well and students find most staff very approachable. The school inducts new students very well. Sixth formers provide highly regarded support for new students. The school asks for students' views but the school's response is not enough. Students' year committees meet infrequently. The procedures for safeguarding students' health and safety are outstanding. The school has made appropriate arrangements for child protection and for looked after children. The welfare facilities and care for students with medical conditions are outstanding. The school caters effectively for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Other vulnerable students receive highly effective specialist support to ensure they enjoy a good quality of school life.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding overall. The school's evaluations are the same as inspectors' views. Senior managers and governors set a clear strategic direction for the school and expect high standards from staff and students. The leadership of the headteacher ensures the constant promotion of improvement. The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection. The self-evaluation form is accurate and contains clear judgements. However, it contains insufficient evidence on certain aspects. The school development plan is detailed and well structured and takes account of parents' views. Senior managers review examination results and students' progress very rigorously with middle managers. This process and resulting actions raise standards and students benefit. Middle managers implement systems to evaluate the work of their staff inconsistently. Lesson observation outcomes feed into performance management reviews and inform staff development activities. However, a corporate system to standardise judgements across departments is not in place. The school complies with the requirements of the disability discrimination and child protection acts. Managers and governors do not give enough emphasis to monitoring the implementation of the race relations action plan and to relevant staff development. Governors challenge and support senior managers very effectively. Link governors work very well with staff on cross school themes. Staff are well qualified. The accommodation is old but is well maintained. Students and staff have access to good ICT facilities. However, the resources to aid learning in lessons are lacking. Links with external providers of education and training are few, but strong and effective links exist with other agencies to support students. The leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding. Managers are highly effective in providing outstanding support for students, who make outstanding progress and attain very high standards.

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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	1
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	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
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	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
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?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	1	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
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	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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	1
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	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
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

Thank you for the friendly welcome which many of you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you, seeing how you worked with your teachers and finding out how you made progress at the school. We think you belong to an outstanding school. Most of you enjoy school, feel very safe and secure there and work hard during and outside lessons. Your behaviour is mostly excellent, but a small minority occasionally disrupts other students from learning in lessons. Most of you treat each other and the adults in the school with respect and courtesy. We are very pleased with the high standards of care, guidance and support which your teachers and other staff provide. Most of you participate in and enjoy the wide range of activities available outside lessons and outside school. You take a broad range of subjects through the school, but some of you would welcome the opportunity to study more vocational options. Most of you progress very well through the school and attain very high standards in Years 9, 11 and in the sixth form. Most of your lessons are good ones and many are outstanding. However, insufficient information and communication technology is available to help you learn in lessons. Most of you know where you are up to in school and what you need to do to achieve higher standards. However, some of you in Years 7 to 9 are unsure of the level at which you are working and of how to improve. Your teachers mark your work well, but occasionally they do not give you enough feedback to help you to do better the next time. We are pleased with the good work you are doing in the various school groups, but we think the school does not always respond sufficiently to the issues you raise. We judge that your sixth form is also outstanding and enables many of you to progress to higher education. We consider that the school is very well led and managed and that the governors and staff strive to improve your learning experiences. However, we suggest that the school could improve further by: - Improving its response to your and your parents' views. - Applying the merit and demerit policy more consistently. - Improving the subject guidance to students in Years 7 to 9. - Increasing the use of information and communication technology to help you to learn in lessons. Best wishes for your future.