



Lincoln Yarborough School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120703
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280875
Inspection dates 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Lynn Churchman LI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Riseholme Road
School category	Foundation		LN1 3SP
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522529203
Number on roll	942	Fax number	01522504007
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. David Dubut
Date of previous inspection	6 December 1999	Headteacher	Mr. Rob Boothroyd

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	Inspection number 280875
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Yarborough School is a mixed 11-19 comprehensive school located on an attractive and spacious site that it shares with the local leisure centre. With 942 pupils on roll, including 171 in the sixth form, it is of about average size. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs are higher than average. However, the proportion with statements of special educational need is in line with the average. The school became a specialist college for business and enterprise in September 2003. It is now fully staffed following a shortage of specialist teachers in mathematics. The school's stated mission is to place learning at the centre of its work whilst promoting a caring, challenging and supportive ethos.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is providing an education that is at least satisfactory and many aspects of its work are good. It provides satisfactory value for money. The strong leadership provided by the headteacher and senior managers has produced a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising the achievement of learners. The significant improvements in examination results in 2005 show the impact of these developments and demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve. Pupils enjoy their school life in a safe and secure environment where they are encouraged to learn and their achievements are regularly celebrated. The curriculum provided is good. The school has introduced a new, ambitious curriculum at Key Stage 4 and has developed good links through its status as a specialist college for business and enterprise. The support provided to pupils as they enter the school is good. The care and support provided for pupils with special educational needs are good and they make good progress. Pupils are given good guidance and advice on their choice of subjects at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The school has developed a very rigorous and comprehensive system for checking and improving its work, particularly teaching and learning. The self-evaluation gives an accurate picture of the school. This inspection confirms that improvements have been made in teaching and learning since the last inspection, especially in lesson planning. These developments have helped to raise standards and improve achievement between 2004 and 2005. The challenge for the school will be to ensure that the most effective teaching becomes more widespread in order to continue these improvements. In particular, low standards and under-achievement in aspects of mathematics need to be addressed. The leadership and management of the sixth form are good resulting in good provision for students. Recruitment to the sixth form has increased significantly and retention is generally high. Young people are enjoying their courses and the wider responsibilities they are encouraged to undertake. They contribute well to the local community and are effectively developing work-related skills. Standards are high and learners' progress is good. The proportion of students achieving higher grades at AS and A level has improved significantly. Achievement on the vocational courses is particularly impressive. Teaching is good but in a few lessons students are not being encouraged to think for themselves. There is a system to check progress against target grades but this needs to be further developed in a few subjects. The school has a good understanding of the strengths of the sixth form and what it can do bring about further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in mathematics. - Raise the quality and consistency of teaching to that of the best. - Ensure that learners take more responsibility for their learning and behaviour in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils enter the school at age 11 with below average results in their assessments. Despite this many pupils are making the expected progress in several subjects and examination results are improving. Pupils are making better progress in Years 7 to 9 than they were two years ago. In 2005, the National Curriculum test results for 14-year olds rose to almost the average, showing appropriate achievement for these pupils, particularly in science and English. Progress in mathematics has been impeded by instability in staffing and inconsistency in teaching. Results in mathematics are below average and need to be improved. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, the school has implemented a number of strategies to raise standards and improve achievement in Years 10 and 11. These strategies include the more rigorous analysis of examination results to identify areas in which improvement is needed, the agreement of appropriate strategies to raise standards, the mentoring of heads of department to secure improvement and more systematic target-setting and monitoring the progress of individual pupils. The impact of these strategies is seen in the much improved 2005 results. The targets set for the year group were achieved, with the percentage of pupils obtaining 5 or more A* to C grades, at 50%, being close to the 2004 national average. Pupils made good progress in English literature and science and this is reflected in rising standards. Consistent with the school's specialism, pupils make good progress in business studies. However, not enough progress is made in some subjects and standards are not high enough in mathematics, history and geography. For this reason, inspectors support the school's assessment that standards and achievement overall are satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Most pupils enjoy their education and are pleased with their achievements. They respond well to the praise and encouragement of staff and make satisfactory progress in their personal development. There are some aspects that are good. This is in agreement with the school's self-evaluation. Pupils feel safe at school and make a broad and valuable contribution to the community. They are frequently involved in fundraising for various charities. These experiences help them to develop some important skills necessary for when they leave school. They learn about the world of work and benefit from links with local businesses, for example, in establishing a business plan for the school's conference facilities. However, other important skills, such as taking responsibility for their learning and behaviour, are not as well developed. Pupils respond well to the school's efforts to develop more healthy lifestyles. Most pupils spend more than two hours each week on physical activities. Attendance at lunch-time and after-school clubs and events in sport, drama, music and art is good. The school council has worked effectively, such as helping to develop a more healthy lunch menu.

The school has introduced an electronic registration system and this has had a positive effect on attendance. Attendance has improved over the last year and punctuality is now very good. The number of exclusions has reduced; permanent exclusions are infrequent. Behaviour around the school is good. In lessons, most pupils behave well and work hard. However, in a few lessons some pupils misbehave. In these lessons, pupils do not develop effective skills to learn independently and do not take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Since the arrival of the headteacher in January 2004, the school has developed a very thorough, systematic and rigorous approach to checking the quality of teaching and learning. As a consequence, senior and middle managers know the strengths and weaknesses. They have strategies in place to make improvements and to support teachers who experience difficulties. Improvements have been made since the last inspection, particularly to lesson planning. Lessons typically have a greater variety of learning activities and more effective use is made of information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers want pupils to succeed and devote considerable time and energy to the planning and preparation of lessons. Other strengths noted in the lessons observed included teachers' enthusiasm, high expectations of pupils, good levels of challenge and pace, and effective use of questioning to encourage pupils to think about issues and suggest ideas. In the majority of lessons, teaching leads to effective learning and pupils make satisfactory or good progress as a result. In good lessons, tasks and activities are carefully matched to course requirements and pitched at the right level. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in their learning. There are some occasions when learning tasks are not matched sufficiently to individual pupils' needs. Further work is needed to reduce instances of poor behaviour in a minority of lessons. In some cases the ends of lessons need to be used more effectively to reinforce what has been learned. The school has developed a common approach to assessment and recording. This is beginning to provide a more consistent approach to marking. It helps pupils to know what progress they are making and how to improve. In addition, it is key to the school's developments in setting individual targets for pupils as part of the drive to raise standards and to improve achievement. The next stage in the school's work on teaching and learning is to strengthen its approaches to assessment for learning. Business studies is making a beneficial contribution to these developments. The school's own assessment, agreed by inspectors, is that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but improving in a number of respects. It recognises that its continued pursuit of higher standards and better achievement will depend significantly on the way the school tackles improvements to teaching to ensure that the quality more consistently mirrors that of the best.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum for all ages is good. It has improved since the last inspection, deficiencies have been addressed and statutory requirements are being met. The school has introduced an innovative approach to expand the number of vocational courses and opportunities for work-related learning. It is relevant to the needs of pupils and provides flexibility and choices at Key Stage 4. Provision of ICT is good across the school and in Key Stage 4, every pupil can follow an externally accredited course in the subject. The school caters well for pupil's personal and social development, and health education. Pupils with learning difficulties have good access to the curriculum and the choices within it. The school offers a good range of enrichment activities including those beyond the school day. The provision of and take-up in sports, games and a variety of arts activities are particularly good. The school's specialist status in business and enterprise has created additional opportunities through Young Enterprise for pupils to develop their economic understanding and skills. Strong partnerships with local businesses support this.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's self-evaluation that it provides good guidance and support for its pupils. Starting from very first contacts with school there is a strong ethos of care for all pupils. The induction for pupils new to the school is good and helps them to settle in quickly. Liaison by key staff with parents and feeder primary schools provides detailed information that helps to identify any pupils who might need additional help. Supportive relationships are built within tutor and year groups, and these are bolstered through social activities and events. Careers advice and guidance is effective. A strong feature is a meeting that is held with each Year 9 pupil, together with their parents, to discuss and begin planning about how they might achieve their career ambitions. This is supplemented by regular input from the Connexions service. Target-setting for individual pupils is well managed and parents are also involved in discussion about these and what can be expected of their children. An increased emphasis on rewarding good effort and behaviour, as well as the progress made in standards in work, has been successful. Well-used praise and rewards, together with more effective support for pupils who are having difficulties, are contributing well to improving behaviour and decreasing the use of exclusion. Support for pupils who have special educational needs is good. Advice to staff on how to meet such needs is based on detailed assessments. Careful monitoring, with regular target-setting, contributes well to ensure that progress is maintained. Suitable arrangements are in place to safeguard vulnerable children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior team have set a clear direction for improvement, raising standards overall in 2005. The basis for this improvement is a greater sharing of responsibilities, together with much more rigorous checking of how well the school is doing, and why, and what it needs to do to get better. This has provided senior staff with a good understanding of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and enables action to be taken to secure improvements. The senior management team is highly visible throughout the school and their regular walks around the school not only provide them with continuous feedback on the day-to-day life of the school, but also provide staff with the confidence that comes from this close support. The impact of these improvements is seen in the recent rise in standards at the end of Years 9 and 11, and in the maintenance of good standards in the sixth form. Governance is good. The governing body influences the work of the school and ensures almost all statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. The co-ordination of support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is particularly strong. This, together with good links with relevant outside agencies, ensures their needs are effectively met. Resources are managed well and used effectively. The strengths in leadership and management give the school good potential for further improvement.

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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?	3	2
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	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	3	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
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	2
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	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	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
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?	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?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
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	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
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

As you know, a group of inspectors visited your school recently. I would like to thank you all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your co-operation and assistance during our visit. We appreciated your comments and opinions. I am writing now to tell you about our findings. The inspection found that there were many things that the school does well. No school works well without good leadership from the headteacher onwards, and your school certainly has that. Almost all of you are happy to come to school, work hard and take advantage of the wide range of activities and events the school provides for you. Your parents too generally believe that the school is successful. The school provides you with a better range of courses than we usually see, including vocational courses as you get older. The information and advice you are given before you choose your courses is good. Teachers and other staff in the school know you well and work hard to help you succeed. This is helping to improve performance in examinations. Virtually all of last year's leavers achieved 5 or more GCSE passes and half of them passed at least five of their GCSE's at the higher grades A* to C. We also believe that you would achieve better if you were more active in lessons and took more responsibility for your own learning and progress. We want your teachers to make you think, discuss, debate and justify your thoughts and to work together to solve problems. This is what we saw in the best lessons. We therefore think that there are three aspects of the school's work that need to improve most: - Many of you should achieve higher standards in mathematics - Some of you need to behave better in some lessons - You could get more out of your lessons by taking more responsibility for your own learning and progress so that you always achieve your best We are confident that the school can continue to improve. We wish you well in the future.