



St Hugh's CofE Mathematics and Computing College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120718
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280880
Inspection dates 18 January 2006 to 19 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. John Godwood LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	The Avenue
School category	Foundation		NG31 7PX
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01476405200
Number on roll	365	Fax number	01476 405252
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Janet Davison
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Trudy Brothwell

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 18 January 2006 - 19 January 2006	Inspection number 280880
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. It is comprehensive, but because Grantham has two grammar schools, students' attainment on entry is, in most years, well below average. For the students who left in 2005, attainment on entry was somewhat higher, but still below average. The presence of a girls' school in the locality leads to St Hugh's having fewer girls than boys. Most students come from an area of high social disadvantage. The number who have learning difficulties is well above average. Almost all students are White British, but there are small numbers from Portugal and Eastern Europe who speak English as an additional language. The school had considerable staffing difficulties during 2004/05. The previous headteacher left mid-year after a period of illness and the school had an acting headteacher. A new headteacher has been in post since September 2005. The school has specialist status for mathematics and computing. It became a Full Service Extended School in September 2005, providing additional courses and activities for children and the community.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The school's own view is that it is satisfactory. However, the inspection found it to be inadequate because GCSE results in 2005 show that students' progress is inadequate. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards. GCSE results have declined over the last two years and in 2005 were exceptionally low. The progress of girls was particularly poor. The low results were linked to staffing difficulties in some subjects and poor attendance. Students sat fewer GCSEs than is the case in most schools. However, the results in some subjects were good. In addition, students in Years 7 to 9 made good progress, particularly in mathematics and science. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, the school has improved rapidly and standards have begun to rise. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. She has raised expectations and set a very clear direction for raising standards. Students' personal development and behaviour are satisfactory. Attendance has improved from last year but remains too low. Most students are very supportive of the changes that are taking place. Teaching has improved since last year because there are fewer staffing difficulties and fewer supply teachers, though there remain issues in a few subjects. It is satisfactory, with much that is good but a minority that is inadequate. Students lack confidence and are too dependent on their teachers. The curriculum is satisfactory and has been improved this year. However, as a result of staff shortages, students are not taught religious education in Years 10 and 11 or a full music course in Years 7 to 9. Students with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported. The school's specialist status has led to good standards in mathematics at GCSE and improved computing facilities. However, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are low and until recently the subject has not had a significant impact on the school's ethos. The headteacher provides very effective guidance to senior and middle managers. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The quality of middle management, although still inconsistent, is improving. Students' progress and the quality of provision are now monitored closely but improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory because standards are lower than they were and attendance has not improved sufficiently. Finances are well managed but value for money is unsatisfactory. However, the school now knows itself well and the improvements since September show that it has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in GCSE examinations, and ensure that the students, particularly the girls, make better progress.
- Maintain the focus on improving students' attendance.
- Ensure that all students learn music in Years 7 to 9 and religious education in Years 10 and 11.
- Increase the amount of good teaching by giving students more opportunities to learn independently and think for themselves.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Students' achievement in GCSE examinations is inadequate. GCSE results were improving until 2003, but declined in 2004 and 2005, when they were exceptionally low. Students' attainment on entry was below average, nevertheless their progress was inadequate. Boys made satisfactory progress but girls' progress was very low. The weak results were due partly to students' poor attendance, which was well below average, and partly to staffing difficulties in some subjects, with lessons being taught by supply teachers. In addition, the absence of a headteacher meant that senior staff were preoccupied with day-to-day issues and gave too little attention to monitoring students' progress. The students with specific learning difficulties were well supported and made satisfactory progress. Students' overall results were low because they took fewer examinations than is the case in most schools. However, they performed well in several subjects, including art, mathematics, French and drama. In English they made satisfactory progress and in mathematics good progress. Results were poor in ICT, design and technology, geography, music and physical education. The results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 were also exceptionally low, but students made good progress in relation to their starting points. Progress was good in mathematics and science, and satisfactory in English. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, students' achievement has improved and standards are rising. In the current Year 11, girls are doing as well as boys. Of 72 students in the year, 31 have already gained a GCSE grade C or above in English or mathematics and 19 have both. However, these improvements are relatively recent and have not yet been translated into a full set of satisfactory GCSE results.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Students speak proudly about recent improvements. They are pleased, for example, that behaviour has improved and bullying is now dealt with effectively. They feel safe in school and well supported by their teachers. They enjoy the clubs and activities and are motivated by rewards for attendance or achievement. Behaviour is satisfactory. Most students are sensible around school and behave well in lessons. However, some misbehave if they find lessons dull or are not well managed. Many lack confidence and find it difficult to learn independently without close supervision. Students who have difficulties with behaviour or organisation are well supported and improve their skills. Attendance is closely monitored and has risen since September. It remains unsatisfactory, however, because it is below average. Students are taught about healthy eating and many engage in sport. They feel that since the arrival of the new headteacher the school values their views and involves them in its plans. They contribute to school life through the school council, which is active and makes a difference. Older students are trained as peer listeners and support younger students. The school prepares students well for working life through effective teaching of literacy and numeracy, good careers education and

work experience. Overall, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In most lessons, teachers explain the work clearly and use the interactive whiteboard well to give their presentation more impact. Students behave, listen and make satisfactory progress. They lack confidence, however, and need close supervision. They are not encouraged sufficiently to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning. In the best lessons, teachers expect a lot from students and involve them in interesting activities that are well matched to their abilities. Students take part in discussion or group work, and enjoy learning because they feel successful. They are clear about what they are learning and gain an understanding from assessing their own and others' work. In the weakest lessons, the purpose is not clear and students are talked to for a long time or required to copy from textbooks. As a result, they become bored and this sometimes leads to poor behaviour. Students who have learning difficulties are given extra help with basic skills and supported in class. The school has many computers but they are not used to their full effect in enhancing learning. Teachers have good opportunities to improve their skills through observing other lessons and coaching. Assessment has been improved recently and is used well to track students' progress against their targets. It is not always used sufficiently, however, in planning lessons that are well matched to what students already know. Most teachers mark work regularly, but do not always give students clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets most statutory requirements. However, due to staffing difficulties, students in Years 10 and 11 do not study religious education and students in Years 7 to 9 do not have music lessons, although they are all offered extra-curricular music. In keeping with the school's specialist status, all students study ICT. The curriculum has been improved this year by giving all Year 10 students a vocational course. The school has good links with Grantham College, where some courses take place. New courses are planned for next year to match students' interests in, for example, media or land and environment. The school tries to match courses to students' individual needs. Many Year 11 students, for example, have taken GCSE English or mathematics early. Other courses are offered through the provisions of the Full Service Extended School. Two managers for personalised learning have been recently appointed to track students' courses and their achievements. Students with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are provided with good additional support. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of sports, clubs and trips. Many subjects offer additional study support.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory with good features. Many of the procedures have been improved very recently. Relationships are good and students find teachers supportive and ready to offer additional help. Procedures for child protection and ensuring safety in school are satisfactory. There are good links with other agencies. The support for students and their families is being further developed. The support for students with behavioural difficulties has been much improved this year and is good. Students know where they stand and the consequences of their actions. The Learning Support Unit helps them improve their behaviour and has significantly reduced the number of exclusions. Good attendance is encouraged through rewards and close support for those who attend poorly. As a result, attendance has improved this year. Since the beginning of this school year, students have had monthly progress checks and guidance on how they can improve. Parents are kept well informed and consulted if problems arise. This is a significant improvement and provides a strong framework for improving the GCSE results. Careers education and guidance are good. The school makes good use of its links with other schools and colleges to raise students' aspirations to further education and training.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but the leadership of the new headteacher is outstanding and has led to rapid improvement since September. She has quickly identified the most significant issues and taken decisive action. She has motivated staff and students by improving behaviour, raising expectations and setting a clear direction for raising standards. Teaching has been thoroughly reviewed and is regularly monitored. Many developments are very recent and not fully embedded, but as a result of the headteacher's leadership, the school has good capacity to improve. The headteacher has the support of staff and students. Most subjects are soundly led. Curriculum leaders have this year been given very clear guidance and their work is closely monitored by the leadership team and headteacher. As a result, their motivation has improved and their work is more consistent. Staffing has improved, but there remain difficulties in science, music, ICT and religious education. In contrast to last year, the school now knows itself well. A thorough whole-school review set a clear agenda for improvement. Curriculum leaders and senior staff monitor lessons and students' work. Parents and students are consulted. Finances are managed efficiently but have not, until recently, been used effectively to raise standards. The headteacher has agreed imaginative plans to extend the curriculum by providing new facilities, including a media suite, a mini-farm and a student centre with interactive ICT facilities. The specialist status for mathematics and computing has led to good provision in mathematics. The school has benefited from new computers and interactive whiteboards. It has supported local primary schools with their ICT provision. However, computing status has had little impact on students' learning in most subjects. Plans are now in hand to improve this. Governance is satisfactory. It has improved in recent

months. Governors played a key role in appointing the new headteacher and now fulfil their role of overseeing the school's direction.

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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?	4	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	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

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

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	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

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 your help when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons and other activities. Many of you told us how much the school has improved since Mrs Brothwell has been headteacher. Mrs Brothwell has done an outstanding job in making clear what is expected and bringing in systems that have improved behaviour and begun to raise standards. You told us that you find most of your teachers very helpful. You make good progress in Years 7 to 9 and in some subjects in Years 10 and 11, particularly art, maths and French. We were pleased to see that the school council is active in gathering students' views and that students support one another as peer listeners. There are some things that still need to be improved. Most importantly, the GCSE results last year were too low and students did not make enough progress in Years 10 and 11. This was partly due to poor attendance. The current Year 11 students are making better progress, and this is helped by the rapid progress checks and extra lessons. Attendance has improved but is still not good enough, although many of you have very good attendance. Much of the teaching is now good, but there are still a few lessons where you do not learn enough and are not given enough chance to think for yourselves. Some new, interesting courses are being introduced. However, staff shortages mean that you do not all learn music in Years 7 to 9 or religious education in Years 10 and 11. The school has improved a lot, but standards are not yet high enough and for that reason it has been given a Notice to Improve. We are confident that the school will continue to improve and that you will help to make it as good as it can be.