



Allertonshire School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121678
LEA North Yorkshire
Inspection number 281078
Inspection dates 23 November 2005 to 24 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms Honoree Gordon HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Brompton Road
School category	Community		Northallerton
Age range of pupils	11 to 14		North Yorkshire DL6 1ED
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01609 772888
Number on roll	747	Fax number	01609 780517
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Brian Phillips
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs M Hart

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 14	23 November 2005 - 24 November 2005	281078

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Allertonshire School is a mixed comprehensive technology specialist college educating students from age 11 to 14 and situated in a market town in North Yorkshire. The majority of students are from relatively favourable home backgrounds, but a significant minority are quite disadvantaged. The attainment of students on entry is slightly above the national average. There are fewer students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is usually found. Students come from a number of primary schools and most proceed to the local secondary college with which the school works in close cooperation. The school roll has fallen recently because of a drop in the national birth rate.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The progress of the individual is at the heart of what the school does. It 'goes the extra mile' to make sure of this but is too modest about its successes. Standards are consistently above average and continuing to rise. All students achieve very well indeed; the progress of able students and of those with learning difficulties is particularly impressive. Students are well equipped with the academic and social skills needed for the next stage in their education. The curriculum is broad and balanced, challenging and often innovative; it is enriched well by the extensive range of extra-curricular activities. However, opportunities for students' spiritual education are insufficient and the school does not track the contribution other subjects make to citizenship education. The personal development of the students is excellent. They quickly settle into the new school, take on responsibilities and get actively involved in how the school is run. Students say they enjoy school. They are keen to learn and behaviour is excellent. The school cares for, guides and supports its students very well, enhanced by excellent links with partner schools and good parental support. The inclusion unit is particularly effective. Teachers tailor their lessons to meet students' needs very well; inspectors saw several outstanding lessons. Leadership and management are excellent. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. Governors support the school well. It provides excellent value for money. Despite a falling roll, standards have risen and prudent budgetary decisions have been taken. The school has very good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Evaluate the impact of the contribution made by other subjects to education for citizenship.
- Look for further opportunities to develop students' spirituality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Students' achievement is excellent. Standards have improved and are consistently above the national average. Standards are rising in all core subjects and in nearly all other subjects. Results in mathematics are now very good. Some subjects are well above average. English results in 2004 were disappointing and not typical.

Students' attainment on entering the school is slightly above average. All students make very good progress over the three years. School data for 2005 show that a group of previously underachieving boys targeted for improvement is now achieving very well. High attaining students do particularly well in mathematics and science. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well beyond the ambitious targets set for them.

Some able students begin general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) courses in Year 9 and gain GCSE in a modern foreign language in Year 10 at Northallerton

College. Students also achieve highly in extra-curricular activities such as mathematics challenges or in music and sport. Students are highly motivated. A culture of learning is evident throughout the school. Teachers use assessment data very well to set appropriate targets and students know how to improve. Students are very well equipped with the skills they need both academically and socially for the next stage in their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The provision for students' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Students' personal confidence, willingness to share, excellent grasp of basic skills and commitment prepare them well for future life. They are polite, cheerful and helpful, with a strong moral sense. Students are inventive and generous in their charitable work. Social, moral and cultural education is good, though there are too few opportunities to develop spirituality. The many school visits and the link with a charity in Mozambique extend students' understanding of the wider world.

Participation in sports and the arts is impressive and often of high quality. Students join in many activities, especially music, drama and sport. Leadership and responsibility develop well, especially in Year 9. Students influence decisions through the Healthy School Forum. Students enjoy school, work hard and behave very well. Attendance is high. The social inclusion department works hard to motivate disaffected students. Students know how to keep safe and how to live healthily. The school nurse and guidance team promote emotional health and well-being well.

Parents are happy with the school but a few express concerns over bullying. There are good systems for dealing with any such incidents, which involve a small minority of students. Students say they feel safe at school and know who to turn to for advice.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning overall are outstanding because teachers meet learners' needs so well and because students as a result are keen to learn. Curriculum and lessons are planned closely with partner schools to ensure that work at each stage builds on what has gone on before. Students with additional learning needs are particularly well supported and taught. Inspectors saw several outstanding lessons. Senior managers monitor lessons well and teachers share good ideas for how to make lessons interesting and enjoyable. Sometimes teachers share expertise with other schools, for example, in science.

Basic skills are well taught, but teachers also develop students' independence and responsibility for their own learning. Students grow in confidence because the school places a high value on learning and because relationships between students and staff

are so good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage behaviour effectively. Teachers and assistants encourage all students

to focus on high standards of work. They know their students well and systematically assess their progress to inform lesson planning. Lessons are challenging and interesting. Students know their targets and how to improve.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to enhance learning in the classroom and in independent work, in the resource centres.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent, and continually evolving to meet students' needs, for example, a new drama course is developing thinking skills. The school plans jointly with its partner schools to ensure the smooth transfer of students. The 'Flying Start' summer project helps vulnerable students settle in quickly. The joint sports coordinator has further improved the uptake and standards in physical education. All curriculum requirements are met, but a daily act of collective worship is only partly in place. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all learners very well. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) help students learn how to avoid risk-taking behaviours. The school should track the contribution other subjects make to citizenship. The curriculum is significantly enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, visits, a social skills programme, master classes and challenge competitions. 'Fast-tracked' students in Year 9 begin GCSE work early.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are excellent, led by a guidance team. The school staff show a high level of commitment to ensuring a secure and supportive environment for all students. Policies for safeguarding students are in place. The school works very effectively in partnership with others to meet students' needs, especially at transition from Year 6 and again at the end of Year 9. Students are supported by professionals, including a school nurse and careers adviser. Students are appointed and trained as 'listeners' to add a further layer of support. The Social Inclusion Department provides very effective support for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties or at times of crisis. Their needs are identified and individual programmes put in place to help, resulting in far fewer temporary exclusions. Teachers use assessment very effectively to guide students and the school communicates regularly with parents about their progress. Students receive good careers advice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent at all levels. The school knows itself well and has very good self-evaluation procedures. However, it is too modest about what

it has achieved, grading its overall effectiveness as good, with some outstanding features. Inspectors find it to be outstanding all round. The headteacher provides quiet, yet purposeful direction. The staff share her vision. She has created a happy school where all students achieve very well and which constantly strives to improve even further. The individual is at the heart of the school's work. The school delivers high quality care and makes appropriate checks on the appointment of staff. The curriculum has evolved very well to meet students' needs and there are plans for further development. Actions have been taken successfully to encourage the achievement of boys. Teachers are enabled to share good practice. The school works very effectively with its partners and with parents. Transfer arrangements are a particular strength and provide good continuity for students' education. Parents are pleased with the school. The school consults widely with others, including students, over how it is doing and what its future plans should be. Governors support the school well and have close links with departments. Since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement: in standards, PSHCE provision, use of data and assessment and communications with parents. The school is very well placed to improve further. It has continued to raise standards against a tight budget because of its falling roll. It provides excellent value for money.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	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	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed visiting. We think your school is outstanding and that your headteacher leads it very well. We saw some super lessons and we were able to talk to a number of you and to the staff. You told us you enjoy school and that there are people you can turn to for advice. You also said you feel the school deals well with any incidents of bullying. We also read the questionnaires done by your parents. They were mostly very supportive of the school. To improve even further, we have suggested that the headteacher looks at citizenship education a little more and also provides more opportunities for your spiritual education.

Here is a summary of our main findings.

- Your examination results are consistently above average.
- You all make very good progress.
- You are keen to learn.
- Your attendance is excellent.
- You behave very well in lessons and around school.
- Your teachers take great care to guide and support you.
- Your school helps you well to settle in when you have to transfer school.
- You get on very well with your teachers.
- Your teachers plan lessons very well to meet your different needs.
- Your curriculum is excellent.
- You learn how to keep healthy and stay safe.
- You have a great choice of activities outside lessons.
- You like to take on responsibility and you do well for charity.

The school has really improved since the last inspection and we feel sure it will continue to do so with your support. You should be very proud of your school. Well done on all your achievements! Now you have to keep up the good work!