

# Tupton Hall School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112933
<b>Local Authority</b>	DERBYSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	289467
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Simpson HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1870
6th form	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Skinner
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Patrick Cook
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 September 2002
<b>School address</b>	Station New Road Old Tupton Chesterfield Derbyshire S42 6LG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 863127
<b>Fax number</b>	01246 250068

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<b>Age group</b>	11-18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Tupton Hall is a larger than average secondary school. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average and all but one of the students have English as a first language. The percentage of the school's pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly below 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

The overall effectiveness of Tupton Hall is satisfactory. Students enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment. They progress through the school satisfactorily and standards by the time they leave are in line with national averages. In recent years the school has been particularly focused on raising standards in Years 10 and 11 and improvements in student achievement are evident. The students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Sports College status has contributed to a greater awareness of healthy lifestyles. The school has accurately evaluated achievement and standards and the personal development of students but the inspection team judge that it has been too generous in evaluating the impact of its provision and leadership and management.

The overall progress that students make during their time at Tupton Hall is improving. Through performance management, teachers have been held more accountable for the achievement of students in Years 10 and 11. Individual departments are developing useful systems to monitor students' progress and attitudes. However, whilst the school has a wealth of data, systems to analyse this and to establish that all students are making enough progress over time are insufficiently robust.

The concern for the pastoral care and support of students is a strength of the school. During the inspection the students' behaviour was satisfactory. However, parents, students and staff all express some concerns. In particular they do not see that the conduct of more challenging students is treated consistently. The overall number of exclusions is high. Although over half of the parental questionnaires were positive about the school, one in five parents and the school council felt that their views were not taken into account sufficiently. On the other hand, the sports council is making a positive difference to healthy lifestyles and opportunities for students to participate in recreational and extra-curricular activities.

The progress that students make over time indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory. This is improving as a result of the work of the Advanced Skills Teachers and a group of staff focused on this area. However, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection confirmed that there is a lack of consistency within and between some subjects. Students respond well when teachers have good subject knowledge, expect them to learn independently and have a strong classroom presence which enables them to promote positive attitudes to learning. In several lessons observed, tasks lacked challenge, and the needs of different groups of students were not well met. The physical education department is developing excellent systems for evaluating how well students are acquiring the skills for successful learning, which are improving its already strong provision. Their judgements correspond with the inspection team's findings about teaching in general: they have rightly identified that learning activities should be planned so that students take greater responsibility and are less dependent on adults.

The quality of the curriculum is good and has benefited from sports college status. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used extensively as a learning tool and the additional finances arising from sports college status are being spent thoughtfully to improve provision throughout the school. A range of courses has been progressively developed to meet the needs of students and provides many opportunities to study in a variety of learning environments, such as in the work place, local colleges and universities.

In line with the students' progress and personal development, for which they are accountable, leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear commitment to raising standards

and providing students with a broad educational experience. However, the leadership team does not sufficiently analyse and evaluate the information available to measure the impact of its work. For example, to be able to provide a summary of how well each year group is progressing towards challenging targets. The school has a number of talented middle leaders who are becoming more systematic about monitoring and evaluation in order to measure the impact of actions taken on teaching and learning and students' progress. Their contribution to classroom observations is steadily improving and the school has plans to extend this further. Specialist College status is well led, the school is meeting its targets and provision has improved throughout the school. The physical education department is playing an increasingly important role in staff training and focusing upon students' attitudes to learning. The school has a very useful ICT action plan which is informing developments and accurately identifies aspects of evaluation that require improvement. The school has also successfully met the challenge of a major building programme. Tupton Hall has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and, given the improvements in students' achievement by the end of Year 11, demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve.

### **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

#### **Grade: 3**

The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory and improving. Students' achievement is satisfactory. Standards overall are above average. Attainment in academic subjects is above average with the social sciences being a particularly strong. Most students complete the courses they begin. The school has a good range of advanced level courses, but there is no opportunity for students to pursue full-time intermediate programmes which the school recognises is an area for development. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. The inspection team observed examples of good, lively teaching, but some lacks challenge and learning relies too heavily on the teacher directing and guiding the acquisition of knowledge at the expense of students acquiring the skills of independent investigation and study. Pastoral care and support are good and valued by the students. They appreciate the guidance they receive with regard to higher education and employment. The personal development of students is satisfactory. They are articulate and positive about their studies and feel safe and secure. They have some opportunities to support lessons, including as part of their pursuit of sports leadership awards, and to help younger students with their reading. However, students express the wish to have more opportunities to contribute to the school. Academic monitoring is satisfactory. The school has begun to participate in a national data base which enables it to compare students' progress against those in other schools. As this is relatively recent, students are expressing some confusion about the guidance they are receiving. Leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory with some good features, for example, support and advice regarding higher education options. The leadership team in the sixth form are well respected by students and staff alike.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Be more consistent in the management of behaviour.
- Use the data available within the school to better evaluate the progress students are making and to take swift action where there is underachievement.
- Further develop procedures which enable middle leaders to play a fuller part in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- Increase the challenge in lessons and plan more thoroughly for the needs of different groups of students.

- Increase confidence within the school community that their views will be listened to and acted upon.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory overall and standards are average in Years 7 to 11 and above average for students who gain accreditation in the sixth form. Students enter the school attaining standards close to those expected nationally at age 11. Year 9 national test results were in line with national averages in 2005 and 2006. GCSE examination results were also average and have risen since 2004. In 2006, over half the students gained five or more higher GCSE grades which was the school's best performance in three years and broadly in line with the national average. The school's results at 5A\*-C, including English and mathematics, were above the national average. Girls outperformed boys. The percentages gaining five or more passes, and those gaining at least one pass, were also in line with national averages. The school sets itself suitably challenging targets based on the prior attainment data it uses. Specialist school academic targets were largely met in 2006.

In the last three years, there has been improved progress in Years 10 and 11, reflecting the school's focus to raise standards in Key Stage 4. Key Stage 3 has been a lesser priority, and staffing difficulties have also contributed to slower progress at this stage. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities and the few from minority ethnic backgrounds make progress in line with that of others. Progress seen currently in lessons is satisfactory.

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

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Students have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle and appreciate the healthy school meals. The school's sports provision is good and encourages a high proportion of students to participate in physical exercise. Attendance is satisfactory and most students enjoy coming to school. Students are prepared to help others in the school and the community through fund raising activities and acting as mentors. The members of the school council are confident and enthusiastic young adults who are strong advocates for the students they represent. However, they are eager to take on more responsibilities so that they can make a real difference to the life of the school. Improving students' spiritual development was a key issue at the last inspection, and this is now satisfactory, as is their cultural, moral and social development. Some parents, students and staff are concerned about aspects of behaviour. While inspectors found occasional inattentive behaviour in lessons, the behaviour of the majority of students was satisfactory during the inspection. Nevertheless, staff do not consistently apply the whole school behaviour policy which has clear rewards and sanctions. The acquisition of satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills, work experience opportunities and events such as career days helps students prepare for the next stage of their education and future working lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching through monitoring lessons and providing support for teachers. Nevertheless, this has yet to be wholly effective across the school, and there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and many of them teach confidently. Many of the lessons are well-structured and linked to clear learning objectives, have good pace and focus, and ensure that students enjoy the lessons, are challenged and make progress. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support learning. There is some good use of assessment as part of the learning process, for example, encouraging students to compare their work against the criteria for National Curriculum levels. In other lessons not enough attention is given to the different learning needs of students and developing the independence of learners, and there is insufficient challenge through questioning to check students' understanding. In the less effective lessons observed, assessment is not as effective and marking is inconsistent and not always rigorous enough. The majority of students are receptive, enjoy their work and show good attitudes. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in lessons. A minority of students are not well motivated and are inattentive in lessons. Most teachers manage behaviour well, but a minority of teachers do not take effective action and this leads to inconsistency of approach.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum is good and meets the Derbyshire's model for the aspirational curriculum. At Key Stage 3 the curriculum meets statutory requirements and in addition all students study drama and experience taster courses in modern languages which helps them to make choices about their programmes of study later in the school. Key Stage 4 core provision includes ICT and religious education, and a range of students' needs are met through both GCSE and alternative accreditation. The school provides increased curriculum flexibility through collaboration with other providers through a local learning community arrangement. Work experience, business mentors and enterprise days develop awareness of careers and future economic well-being. Healthy living is also promoted by health awareness days and by funded development of a joint physical education and science project on physiology.

The range of extra-curricular activities on offer is a strength of the school. A high proportion of students participate in extra-curricular sport, reflecting the focus on healthy living provided by sports college status. There is a good range of clubs, and there are out of school and overseas contacts for example, through the youth sports trust link with a school in Nigeria. Links with local primary schools are fostered through the involvement of Key Stage 4 and sixth form students in arranging sporting events.

## Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The school places a strong emphasis on the pastoral support and guidance offered to the students. Careful management ensures that the majority of new students settle into Year 7 quickly and students in Years 9 and 11 are well informed about their next stage of education. Arrangements to ensure students' health, safety and protection are in place and secure. The school works with a wide range of agencies to secure an appropriate level of support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. These students also benefit from the good provision offered by the specially trained staff. For instance, some students attend a lunchtime group that develops their social skills and confidence; others attend a break time group that provides a safe environment where they can talk with staff and share any concerns. The academic guidance students receive is inconsistent across the school but satisfactory overall. Students value discussions with staff that help them to improve their work, check progress against their learning targets and raise achievement. However, they say that these discussions should take place at more regular and frequent intervals. A number of parents and students would like the school to seek their views and take more account of their suggestions.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders and managers have been improving performance by progressively closer monitoring. Some benefits are apparent, and there has been a modest, but consistent, improvement in GCSE results in the last three years. However, senior leaders' monitoring of teaching, students' progress towards their targets and the application and impact of the behaviour policy, is not yet rigorous enough for better outcomes to be realised. Middle leaders and managers evaluate their subjects' performance well, and are determined and enthusiastic to improve achievement and teaching quality further. Since the previous inspection, the school's senior leaders have realised their vision to improve the quality of education by the successful acquisition and occupation of impressive new accommodation. Educational resources available to staff and students have been transformed. These improvements are adding considerably to the quality of education for all students. In 2005, the school gained specialist status in sport and ICT, and this development is well led. During these changes, a substantial budget deficit has been well managed and the school is currently in credit. Governors are very committed to ensuring the school's effectiveness. They give their time unstintingly in its interest and are better informed about the quality of education provided than at the last inspection. The impact of their monitoring is not yet reflected in students' higher achievement.



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## Annex A

## 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	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	3
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	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

22 June 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Tupton Hall School, Chesterfield, S42 6LG

Thank you for the way in which you conducted yourselves during the inspection and your readiness to talk to us. Our inspection findings are informed by your views and the views of your parents.

During the two days we thought you were co-operative, used your socialising areas sensibly and moved around the school in an orderly manner. The new building and specialist sports college status has certainly improved the quality of education you are experiencing. You have a good range of activities beyond the school curriculum, for example, sports leadership awards which enable you to demonstrate considerable responsibility. We could see that you responded positively when lessons gave you the opportunity to question, investigate and make choices about your learning. You appreciate teachers who treat you with fairness and respect. However, we know that you and your parents are concerned about behaviour and would like it to be treated more consistently across the school and we have asked the school to improve this.

We also recognise that you and your parents would like the views you express to the school to be acted upon and again we have asked the school to consider how it can do this better. We'd like to see you more challenged by work, and the way you are supported in completing tasks taking greater account of your different abilities and needs. Finally we think that some of the school's procedures could be improved to make sure that the school has a clear picture of the progress of you are making.

Yours sincerely

David Simpson

HMI