



Friesland School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112994
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289485
Inspection dates 12–13 October 2006
Reporting inspector Sue Harrison HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Nursery Avenue
School category	Foundation		Sandiacre, Sandiacre
Age range of pupils	11–19		Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG10 5AF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9397326
Number on roll (school)	1114	Fax number	0115 9491730
Number on roll (6th form)	201		
Appropriate authority	The local authority	Headteacher	Mr M Ruhmund
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–19	12–13 October 2006	289485

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school serves a mixture of urban and rural areas, with pockets of significant deprivation. It was designated a Performing Arts College with effect from September 2005. The school is a member of the Long Eaton Area Partnership (LEAP) group, which is a collaborative partnership of schools and further education colleges. Almost all the students are from White British backgrounds. There has been a significant increase in the number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in recent years, though this is still below the national average. Students' prior attainment is broadly in line with national averages, but is below the local authority average. The school sixth form has expanded considerably in recent years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The leadership team has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do to improve further. Results in the end of Key Stage 3 tests have been consistently good for the last three years. GCSE results dropped to slightly below average in 2005 but successful action to address this led to a significant improvement in 2006. Students make good progress in most subjects during their time at the school. In mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) however their satisfactory progress could be improved. Students are well behaved and attentive in the majority of lessons. A particular strength of the school is the work undertaken in performing arts, where teaching is outstanding and students learn enthusiastically. Other areas of strength include physical education (PE) and design and technology. Teaching is generally good across the whole school, but there are some lessons where the activities do not sufficiently engage student interest. Students say they remember work better when they have an active role in the lesson. Work undertaken in subjects like drama and PE is helping students to develop broader skills, such as team leadership and working together in groups. They enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them and contribute well to the local community. The school performances are very popular with students, parents and the wider community. Parents are generally very supportive of the school and have worked hard to raise money to supplement the school budget. A minority of parents say their views are not sufficiently taken into account, for example in to the reorganisation of the school day. Students in the upper school feel their views are valued, for example via the school council and the sixth form committee, but younger students are not always consulted about their teaching and learning. Support, care and guidance are outstanding aspects of the school. The majority of students and parents are very positive about the staff commitment to do everything possible to enable individuals to succeed. There are very good systems for pastoral care and innovative work is developing, for example drama therapy to help students with behavioural problems. Systems to monitor students' academic progress are effective. There are very good arrangements to help students settle into the school and make choices for progression. Students in the sixth form appreciate the help they get in finding the right place at university or applying for jobs. Leadership of the school is effective at identifying areas for improvement and driving up standards. Governance is good. Partnership work with other educational providers and with a range of external services and businesses is outstanding. The school has made good progress to address issues identified at the last inspection, particularly in the sixth form. It provides good value for money and has the capacity to make further improvement.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are good. The significant increase in the number of students recruited demonstrates its popularity. Students enjoy the sixth form, they attend well and few leave before the end of their courses. The quality

of teaching varies from outstanding to satisfactory and is good overall. Students have sessions early in Year 12 to help them develop independent study skills, but in some lessons there is not sufficient opportunity to practise these skills. In these lessons, students do not demonstrate the depth of enquiry expected at advanced level. Examination results have risen to above average overall and students make good progress in most subjects. The school is working well with the local consortium to develop a wide range of courses for all ability levels. Students receive excellent support and guidance from their tutors and effective systems are in place to monitor their progress. A particular strength of the sixth form is the partnership working, which enables students to develop wider skills and contribute well to the school and local community. All students participate in a work experience programme and many have found this beneficial in helping them to make decisions about their future careers. They continue to develop the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology in the sixth form. Enterprise projects, especially links with local businesses, contribute well to students' preparation for the future. Systems to help students make the transition into university or employment are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the outstanding practice in teaching and learning in performing arts is shared with all areas of the school. - Improve students' attainment in mathematics and ICT. - Ensure younger students have more opportunity to give their views about the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Standards are above average in the Year 9 national tests. Results are around the national average in mathematics and are above average in English and science. In GCSE examinations, results were above average until 2005 when they fell to just below the national average. Results in 2006 improved significantly, especially for those students gaining five or more grades A* to C. High standards are attained in design and technology, physical education and the performing arts subjects. Performance in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), although satisfactory, is below that of most other subjects. Achievement is good throughout the main school. The school sets suitably challenging targets and these are usually achieved. Students make good progress because of effective teaching and the helpful academic support and guidance they receive. They make the most of the opportunities available to take GCSE examinations before Year 11 and most progress well to gain good results. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. More able girls outperform boys in gaining the higher grades in GCSE examinations. Standards are above average in the sixth form. Students make good progress on advanced level courses and reach the standards they need to enter higher education or employment. Few do not complete the courses they begin. Girls do especially well. The trend in advanced course

performance has been well above the rising national trend over the last four years. The few students following intermediate level courses also do well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Students enjoy their education which is reflected in their high levels of motivation and good behaviour. Attendance is good and monitored closely. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and successfully promoted within most lessons. They show consideration and respect for one another and learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Students feel safe and the school day is organised to lessen incidents of bullying and unsupervised time. However, the shortened lunch break is not popular with all students and parents. The school effectively promotes healthy lifestyles through the food options offered to students in the canteen. A well attended breakfast club and healthy eating tuck shop have recently been introduced during break times. Students participate in the wide variety of very good sports activities on offer during the school day and many take part in extra-curricular sport. Older students make significant contributions to the school community by acting as positive role models and supporting younger students who experience reading difficulties. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme successfully incorporates student involvement in the wider community and involves them in working in local hospices, primary schools and care centres. The school council meets regularly to discuss issues relating to school life. However inspectors agree with students from the younger age groups that their views on teaching and learning are not sought.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Most teaching and learning are good in the main school and enable students to make good progress. Lessons are generally well planned with learning that is challenging and interesting. Work is usually adapted well to meet all needs. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities are helped to learn successfully. Some lessons are outstanding, for example in performing arts subjects, where teachers enthuse students to participate actively in learning. Students say how much they prefer active participation, rather than the passive activities they are required to undertake in some lessons, where the range of teaching methods is limited. Homework is set regularly and encourages students to learn independently. Teachers use assessment information increasingly well to guide the planning of work and, in physical education, students are taught well to evaluate their own and others' performances. The pace of learning

in most lessons is good and students respond well. Relationships in lessons are good and classes are calm and orderly. Work is usually marked helpfully, but there is inconsistency in the quality of the written advice provided. In the sixth form, teachers' subject knowledge is very good and contributes to the impressive upward trend in advanced level course results.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The range of work and activities is good. The provision for performing arts is particularly successful. All students in Key Stage 3 take part in dance and drama as well as music. This promotes their self-confidence and skills for working in teams. Performance arts have proved very popular with students and many choose to continue these subjects in Years 10 and 11. The school is actively promoting the arts in neighbouring primary and secondary schools. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the many drama and music performances produced by students and teachers each year, which are received enthusiastically by the local community. The school is extending the range of choices in subjects to better reflect the changing needs of its students. For example, the school has increased support for English and mathematics in Year 7 and developed vocational education in Key Stage 4, where students can take qualifications in child care, construction and motor vehicle maintenance. In addition to the good range of GCSE subjects there are entry level certificates in a number of subjects for students to achieve alternative accreditation, where it is appropriate to their needs. Students have the opportunity to study for a qualification in Citizenship and early results are positive. Weaknesses in the provision of ICT are being addressed and this is beginning to have an impact on raising achievement in this subject. Opportunities for students to contribute to the community are good. There is a wide range of additional activities outside lessons and many students participate in a variety of clubs and sporting activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school has a strong commitment to providing high standards of care and support to all students. Effective policies and procedures ensure compliance with child protection requirements. Incidents of bullying are few but, where they do occur, most students are fully aware of procedures to follow and problems are dealt with quickly. There are excellent transition arrangements in place and very good links with local primary schools to ensure students receive appropriate support in relation to their educational and emotional needs. The school has an outstanding resource in the form of a dedicated support centre. This acts as a base for a wide range of specialist support services. Experienced and specialist behaviour managers oversee and provide high standards of support to students and there is close liaison with parents and carers. Drama therapy is being carefully planned to provide

students with appropriate ways of dealing with issues and problems which inhibit learning. This has already made an impact in developing the skills of teaching and support staff in the identification of additional needs. Arrangements for academic guidance are good. Students receive helpful advice and guidance regarding their future options and career choices. Careers guidance is incorporated into students' programmes and there are good working relationships with local Connexions services.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. Significant changes to the management team over the last three years have set a clear direction for school improvement. The recent appointment of Directors of Study is further strengthening the whole school focus on improving standards of teaching and learning. Training activities on classroom observation have taken place and the school is working towards developing consistently good practice in teaching and learning. Good practice is beginning to be shared and there are plans in place to extend this. Faculties are increasingly working together in an effort to bring all provision up to the standards of the best. The performance management system is a strength of the school. Staff are given time to reflect on their own practice and have dedicated time to identify their professional development needs with their line manager. This leads to measurable staff targets to improve performance. School governance is good. The governors know the school well and work in partnership with the headteacher to set the strategic direction. They celebrate the strengths of the school and are clear about where it needs to improve further. Monitoring of the school's finances is robust and committed staff, parents and students work hard to provide additional funding for the school to complement the budget. The specialist school status is beginning to impact on the whole school. All staff have spent a training day together on 'the expected impact of the specialist status on all curriculum areas'. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and rigorous. This in addition to improvement since the last inspection and the action taken to address weaknesses all indicate that the school has good capacity 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?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	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?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
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	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	1	1

¹ 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.

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	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
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

16 October 2006 Dear Students Friesland School, Nursery Avenue, Sandiacre, Nottingham, NG10 5AF As you know, a group of inspectors recently visited your school. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and for your help in finding our way around. We really enjoyed visiting your school and listening to your views. I am writing now to tell you about our findings. We think that Friesland is a good school. Some of your lessons are outstanding and the majority of teaching and learning is good, although we agree with you that in some lessons you could be more actively involved. We were very impressed by the level of support you receive to help you to succeed. Most of you are very well behaved and try hard in lessons. The school has made a lot of progress in developing its sixth form since the last inspection and this is now a good aspect of the school. You enjoy the range of extra activities on offer and many of you take part in activities within school and in the wider community. The performance arts subjects are a particular strength of the school and other subjects you enjoy include physical education and design. Many of you take part in the successful performances and team sports that take place. The majority of students make good progress in most subjects during their time at school. You achieve above average results in tests at the end of Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form. GCSE results were slightly below average in 2005 but improved in 2006. We think the leaders and managers of the school know well what the school is good at and what it needs to do to improve further. We have asked the headteacher to spread the good practice in performing arts to all areas of the school and to improve further the standards in mathematics and ICT. Your comments, and those of your parents, were very positive overall, but some of you don't like the shortened lunch break. Most students think the school listens well to their views but we agree that the younger students do not always have the opportunity to give their views about school. May I take this opportunity to wish you all well with your studies in the future. Yours sincerely Sue Harrison HMI Lead Inspector