

Winifred Holtby School Technology College

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	118061
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	291010
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Marianne Young HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1551
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jenny Downing
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Liddle
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2005
School address	Midmere Avenue Leads Road Bransholme Hull HU7 4PW
Telephone number	01482 826207
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Age group	11-16
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Amended Report Addendum

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Winifred Holtby Technology College is a larger than average secondary school situated in a residential area to the north of Hull. The area surrounding the school has higher levels of social and economic disadvantage than is the case for most schools and the number of students eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with that found nationally. In most years there is a higher proportion of boys than girls. The vast majority of students are White British heritage. The college gained specialist status as a technology college in 1999. The school also holds the Healthy Schools Standard.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, 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 because students' achievement and attendance are inadequate.

Despite recent improvement, Winifred Holtby School is not providing an adequate education for its students. The legacy of underachievement for all students is now being tackled through more rigorous assessment of their performance and improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. However, the pace of change has been slow and students, especially in the current Year 11, are not achieving as well as they should. Although well below average, GCSE results improved in 2006 compared to those in 2005. The school was close to meeting its statutory targets for students in Year 9, but these were not challenging enough considering their attainment on entry in Year 7. Absenteeism and the poor attitudes to learning of a significant minority of students have diminished their achievement and standards over time. The school has clear plans to improve standards and has set itself challenging targets for the next two years.

Students' personal development is satisfactory. There have been improvements in behaviour and generally the behaviour in class is good and around the school it is satisfactory. Nonetheless a small minority of students still display negative attitudes and do not behave properly in lessons. Disruptive behaviour is still a cause of concern from some of the parents who replied to the questionnaire. Most students enjoy school and are keen to learn. Students report that more lessons and subjects are interesting. The school is working hard to improve attendance but overall, and for many individual students, it remains too low and is unsatisfactory. It remains a significant challenge for the school.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Senior managers work hard to monitor the quality of learning. Where there is still some inadequate teaching, this is being identified through the thorough schedule of observations and effective support is given. Good working relationships between staff and students and appropriate challenge for different groups of students are key strengths of the best lessons. The school's curriculum is good and continues to be developed to meet the needs of all students. The focused off-site provision for vulnerable students provides good support and challenge for these youngsters. Some students enthusiastically identify teachers who are their role models and who have a strong impact on them.

The headteacher and senior management team are aware of what is required to obtain better outcomes for students and how this can be achieved. There has been improvement since the previous inspection in many areas, but the achievement of all students is still not good enough. Senior and middle leaders are united in their determination to raise levels of achievement and are monitoring students' progress at regular intervals. They are supported and questioned effectively by members of the governing body who are not afraid to ask for clarification when necessary. The school has sound capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of all students in order to raise standards.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching and eliminate any that is inadequate.

- Improve the attendance of all learners, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are below average in Year 11 and overall achievement from students' starting point in Year 7 is inadequate. Students are still making up for a legacy of underachievement that was noted at the time of the previous inspection. The attainment of the students on entry to the school is average but they have significant weaknesses in literacy, especially writing. The school has responded by integrating literacy into the teaching programmes in all subjects, which is improving standards at a good pace in English. By the end of Year 9 standards are below average but in 2006 were nearer to the national average. Challenging targets are now being set for all students but those of higher abilities are not reaching the level expected for their age in national tests.

In 2006 the proportion of students who gained five or more GCSE passes at grade C and above, including English and mathematics, increased but remained well below what is expected nationally. Also in 2006 the proportion of students leaving the school without a qualification (10%) remained unacceptable. The improvement in the use of assessment data is now enabling teachers to give support to those students who are underachieving. Evidence from lesson observations and the school's own assessment data, indicates that the progress made by most students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is now satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall and in line with the school's own evaluation. Aspects of students' personal development are enriched by a very well planned religious education provision with a clear focus on learning about and learning from people of faith. Although many students show interest in their work, develop positive relationships and behave satisfactorily, there are still pockets of low level disruptive behaviour throughout the school. Senior managers, and especially the year officers, all of whom have a very visible presence in the school, have implemented various new systems to change students' behaviour and their passive or negative attitudes to the school and their learning. Simple measures, for example a yellow line along the middle of the corridor floors, have brought about order and discipline when students move from room to room. There has been a reduction in both the number of students excluded and arriving late to school. There has been a small increase in attendance since the last inspection, but it remains too low and is unsatisfactory. Too many of the older students still do not value education and their poor attendance impacts significantly on their achievement. Incidents of bullying are on the decline and are dealt with effectively. Students confirm that any problems are resolved quickly. The fact that a significant number of students are attracted by the less healthy and cheaper options readily available in the local shops is worrying as the school provides nutritious meals to encourage students towards a healthy lifestyle.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school has placed a strong emphasis on developing effective lessons and ensuring students are more involved in their own learning. Inspectors agree with senior managers that teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lesson planning is consistent across the school. Many lessons are good and there are examples of outstanding practice but inadequate teaching still exists. Moreover, the school has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of its teachers and has established effective strategies to help them improve their teaching.

Students benefit from teachers' high expectations and when the purpose of learning is made clear to them. Skilful questioning leads to students having a good understanding of how to improve their work and be actively involved and contribute their own ideas to lessons. However, there is often a lack of group and oral work in many lessons. Some are far too teacher-directed, and that ineffective teaching on occasions leads to inappropriate behaviour and a lack of involvement in learning. The school knows that there are some subject areas, for instance in English, where marking of students' books is particularly helpful, but this is not consistent across all subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has taken actions to ensure that the curriculum is more relevant to the needs of all learners and overall it is good. In Years 10 and 11 there is an increasing vocational dimension to the curriculum and effective links have been established with the world of work. Students in Years 7 to 9 study an appropriate range of subjects including drama which helps develop their oral skills and confidence. However, students do not receive the recommended two hours of physical education each week. Nonetheless, students compensate for this by taking part in the many sports clubs and teams run by the school. There is good provision for clubs and activities out of school time and these are popular with both boys and girls, many of whom reported to inspectors that they would like even more of them. This wish was echoed by some parents. Students benefit from the good 'home base' provision which enables those students in Years 7 to 9 to work in small groups and receive additional literacy and numeracy help. Inspectors saw the effective way that most teachers are extending students' literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in their lessons. However, systems to develop numeracy are not so well established.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, support and guidance for students. Particular strengths are found in the impact of the work done in 'the house' and 'the bungalow'. Both provide respite and a secure learning base for students, either with low ability levels, or with behavioural and emotional difficulties. An early indication of the impact of the 'house' is that students whose attendance is low are persuading their friends to attend also. The recently introduced systems prepare students for entry to the school, their option subjects and career choices. Good careers guidance has raised students' aspirations for future education and employment. The committed interest from teachers helps to drive improvements in behaviour and more positive

attitudes to learning from most students. Child protection procedures are in place and students who are at risk for any reason are quickly identified and supported. The school's systems for assessing students' progress are now being used with more confidence and rigour by most teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school evaluates leadership and management to be satisfactory and inspectors agree. The leadership of the headteacher is good and he is ably supported by his senior team. He shows strength of character taking some difficult decisions in order to meet the needs of the students. Clear systems and structures are now in place to monitor the progress and achievement made by all students. Despite some quite recent developments, the overall pace of change, especially in relation to improving students' achievement, has been slow. Links between the strengthened senior team and middle managers are increasing the accountability of staff for students' progress. Helpfully, the school recognises that training for middle leaders is a priority.

Self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory and allow the school to identify its strengths and areas for development. The quality of teaching and learning is now monitored rigorously although some groups of learners have been disadvantaged because in the past their achievement was not monitored sufficiently. The use of assessment data to identify underachievement is in place. However, it is still not used with confidence by all staff to help raise standards and achievement.

The governing body is providing satisfactory leadership for the school. The involvement of governors has increased recently and they are becoming more effective. They appreciate the quality and range of information presented to them. Overall, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

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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>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 May 2007

Dear Students

Winifred Holtby School Technology College, Hull, HU7 4PW

Following our recent visit to your school, we would like to thank all of you who helped us during the inspection. We would also like to tell you what we found. We have decided to give your school something called a Notice to Improve. We believe it is important that you understand what this means, what we are asking the school to do over the coming year and, most importantly, how you can help.

A notice to improve means that although your school does some things well, there are important areas that need to be put right. The main reasons why we believe the school needs to improve are:

- you do not achieve GCSE results which are as good as they should be
- your attendance is not good enough, too many of you do not think that coming to school regularly is important.

We have asked the school to improve by:

- making sure you all do as well as you can and get better examination results
- making learning as interesting as possible and for teachers to mark your work thoroughly so you know how to improve
- helping you all attend regularly.

It is important to stress that there are many good things about your school. For example, the adults in your school work hard to care for you and to deal with any problems you take to them. Many of you work hard and behave well in lessons, contributing your thoughts and ideas when asked.

We believe that the school can improve quickly. Inspectors will return next year to find out how well you are doing.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector