



# Hereford Technology School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 118066  
**Local Authority** North East Lincolnshire  
**Inspection number** 291012  
**Inspection dates** 30–31 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Judith Straw

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 address</b>	Westward Ho
<b>School category</b>	Community		Grimsby
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		DN34 5AH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01472 310015
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1135	<b>Fax number</b>	01472 310016
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr M. Towle
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jim Cunningham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–16	30–31 January 2007	291012

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors. One inspector was based at the Western School site and four were based at the Hereford School site.

## Description of the school

Hereford Technology School is a larger than average community school in the centre of Grimsby. Since September 2006, it has been federated with Western Technology School which will close in August 2008 due to falling rolls in the area. Only Year 10 and 11 students remain at Western School where they will complete their 11–16 education by 2008. Both sites are in an area of considerable social deprivation. The number of students entitled to free school meals is well above average. The percentage of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is high. Most students are from White British backgrounds. The attainment of students when they begin their secondary education is generally below average. The headteacher of Hereford School is executive head of Western School. The Western site is managed on a day-to-day basis by an acting headteacher.

The judgements and comments in the report apply to both schools, unless otherwise stated.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Hereford Technology School, federated with Western Technology School, provides a satisfactory standard of education. Hereford is a much improved school with the ambition and good capacity to make further improvements. Most parents are entirely happy with the school. The school has worked hard to develop effective strategies to manage and improve behaviour in class and out of lessons, and has succeeded. The inspection found behaviour to be generally good in lessons and around the school. Students have positive attitudes and many enjoy their education. Although it is still unsatisfactory, attendance is gradually improving and approaching the national average.

Students feel safe in school and are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles, although many still choose unhealthy snacks at break and lunchtime. Participation in sport and in music and drama productions helps to give students confidence and raise self-esteem. The Hereford School charity committee were winners for the second year running in 2006 in the Giving Nation Citizenship Foundation Awards. Older students say they are 'pushed' to achieve and encouraged to be ambitious and go on to further education. Rising standards, improving literacy and social skills and a comprehensive package of work-related learning activities all help to prepare students satisfactorily for the world of work.

Standards are below average at Hereford School but students' progress and achievement are satisfactory. Standards have been steadily rising over the last four years and, in 2006, students achieved the school's best ever results in national tests at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE results at the end of Year 11. Attainment on entry is well below average at Western school but in 2005 students' achievement was good in relation to their starting point. Achievement in 2006 was satisfactory and pupils are making satisfactory progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory on both sites. As a result of rigorous monitoring, the school recognises the need to raise the proportion of good lessons.

Vocational opportunities for all students are impressive and meet students' learning needs well. Specialist college status is reflected in the increased use of computers and technology to enhance learning. All statutory child protection measures are in place. Students on both sites receive high quality care and support. The ethos of inclusion and comprehensive support systems, including home-school liaison, and the recently improved, good curriculum are helping to improve attendance and raise standards. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants and learning mentors.

The strong commitment of staff to both schools and their students is exemplary. For example, some teachers at Western School who have already moved to other schools because of the closure, return to give after-school sessions and Saturday morning lessons so that the students' education is not interrupted. There is remarkable community support from some other local schools who release teachers part-time to honour their commitment to Western School. The students respond by behaving well

and respecting their environment, which is spotlessly clean. However, a small minority do not attend regularly enough.

The schools' leadership and management are good, with particular strengths at senior management level. The headteacher is giving both schools vigorous and very effective leadership, so the pace of improvement is rapidly increasing. He and the acting headteacher on the Western site are determined to ensure that these students are well cared for, achieve well and feel nurtured until they leave. The schools' leaders have worked tirelessly to raise standards and promote students' self-esteem, achievement and ambition, however there is some inconsistency in the effectiveness of middle managers which reduces the impact of strategies to manage behaviour and raise standards. The newly federated board of governors provides effective support. Most issues from the last inspection have been dealt with, although attendance is still an area to improve. Recent improvements show that managers have strong resolve and considerable expertise to take the school forward.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching to the level of the best so that all students make good progress on both sites.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle management.
- Work with students and parents to ensure the rate of attendance for both sites improves further.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

In Hereford School, standards are below average overall but the progress of students is satisfactory. Students enter the school with below average standards and their literacy skills, particularly in writing, are often poor. However, robust strategies have been put in place and standards have been steadily rising over the last four years. In the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2006, students achieved the school's best ever results in mathematics and science. Standards were close to national averages and exceeded statutory targets. Students achieved least well in English and did not reach their target. Girls performed better than boys. Lower ability students did not achieve as well as average and higher ability students.

At the end of Year 11 in 2006, the percentage of students attaining five or more passes for grades A\*-C was the highest ever achieved by the school at 41%. Students exceeded targets and improved on the 2005 results by 8%. Students' results in English and technology were impressive. The present Year 11 students are making satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Girls attain higher standards than boys in Key Stage 4 but boys achieve better in relation to their starting point. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve satisfactorily.

Standards at Western School are well below average. In 2005, Year 11 students' achievement in relation to their starting point put them in the top 9% of the country overall and the top 1% for mathematics. Achievement overall in 2006 was satisfactory.

In some subjects achievement was good, for example, in drama, where pupils achieved well beyond expectations.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most students enjoy their education, particularly physical education lessons, and participate in many after-school activities. Their behaviour is generally good. Attendance is slowly improving but is still below national averages and unsatisfactory. Students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Students are well supported in developing good moral and social skills especially when working with their tutors, learning mentors and the school counsellor.

The school is encouraging students to eat healthily by changing the lunches offered, and students learn about healthy living in their lessons but many still choose unhealthy snacks during the day. Students feel safe from bullying and say that there is zero tolerance of racism. They have confidence in reporting incidents and that these will be dealt with effectively. They feel that the new system of reporting bullying by e-mail to a senior manager will be effective.

Students have an effective voice through the school councils which represent their views. Older students respond well to responsibilities such as becoming school prefects. Students following an alternative curriculum won a regional Community Impact Award in 2005 for their work which included gardening, fitting fire alarms and organising charity events. However, there are fewer opportunities for younger students to take responsibility. Students at the Western site behave well and respond very positively to the safe, secure learning environment which has been created for them.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory on both sites. Most lessons are well planned, with a clear structure and a range of activities. In good lessons, a clear learning objective is shared with the students. A range of learning opportunities is provided; this maintains interest and pace, and motivates and engages students. In these lessons students make good progress. In the satisfactory lessons, there is often too much direction by teachers and limited opportunities for independent learning; this constrains the pace of learning and the progress made. In a minority of lessons, there is insufficient focus on ensuring that activities meet the needs of the full range of abilities.

Marking is used satisfactorily to provide guidance to students on how to improve but this is not consistently effective in all subjects. Teachers do not make the most of reviews at the end of lessons to assess and consolidate learning, and identify areas for improvement. Teaching assistants and learning mentors are well informed by

teachers and work satisfactorily with them to support students. Consequently those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with other groups of students.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum has played an important role in improving attendance and raising standards. At Hereford School, the curriculum is broad and balanced at both key stages and meets statutory requirements. Personal, social and health education is delivered by a specialist team and ensures that all students are well prepared for life. The increasingly wide range of courses offered at Key Stage 4 means that the needs of all students are met. Vocational courses have been introduced at GCSE and BTEC levels and, through partnerships with other organisations, students are able to obtain NVQ and other vocational qualifications in a variety of subjects such as animal care and childcare.

For some students, a more personalised curriculum is designed with extended work experience. Good links with post-16 providers and a comprehensive careers education programme enable students to make more informed decisions about their futures. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provides many enrichment opportunities in a variety of areas such as creative arts, sports and outdoor pursuits.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum at Western School is even more flexible with many students following personalised learning programmes. A very wide range of enjoyable extra-curricular activities is offered along with revision sessions, monitoring and coursework clubs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good across both sites. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place and all staff are aware of procedures to be carried out where necessary. Health and safety are regularly reviewed and risk assessments are carried out where appropriate. The schools work well with a wide range of outside agencies to ensure good care for all students particularly the most disadvantaged. Pastoral care systems ensure that tutors know the students well. Some students make good use of mentoring areas at breaks and lunchtimes where they have the opportunity to talk to staff and share problems.

Parents are kept well informed through regular reports, review days and are able to access the school on-line. Regular newsletters inform them of general matters. There are good induction procedures for new students and careers advice prepares students well for when they leave school. Support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities is strong.

Because methods for checking students' progress are rigorous, under-performance is identified early and effective support is provided. Great strides forward have been made in using assessment data to inform all students about how they are getting on

and to boost their achievement and standards. Teachers share predicted grades and levels with students and this is consistently used to support learning through the use of short term targets. The good system for checking students' progress is one of the reasons why standards have risen.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The inspiring leadership of the executive head and acting head at the Western site is ensuring that the students there are fully supported in their education until the school closes in 2008. They have the trust and confidence of parents, students and governors. The headteacher and senior management team at the Hereford site are making a substantial and impressive contribution to renewing the school's direction and sense of purpose. Together they are tackling weaknesses and raising standards through accurate and realistic understanding of the quality of the work at both sites. For example, managers know teaching is satisfactory overall but are not satisfied with its quality and are determined to improve it.

Links with parents, support agencies, other educational institutions, the community and businesses are strong and effective. The often acute needs of individual students are increasingly well met. Monitoring and evaluation of performance at senior management level are accurate and shrewd but there is inconsistency in the quality of middle-managers, some of whom are unwilling to consistently apply the necessary strategies to improve students' behaviour and monitor teaching and learning. The newly federated board of governors supports the schools well. Governors are well-informed and have frequent contact with the schools. Finances are managed prudently and the school provides satisfactory value for money. The school's capacity to improve is good.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2
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
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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	2
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	2
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?	No

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

31 Jan 2007

Hereford Technology School and

Western Technology School

Grimsby

DN34 5AH

Dear Students,

Inspectors thank you very much for the help and courtesy that so many of you showed us during our recent inspection of your two schools. Many of you told us you enjoy school and about all the different activities that are provided for you.

We found that the standard of your work is improving and that, in 2006, results were the best ever at Hereford. The students at Western achieved even better than had been predicted. You can play your part in making sure that results are as good, or better, this year by working hard with your teachers. Your reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are very important in ensuring that you go on to further education or employment. However, some of you do not come to school regularly enough and so miss out on key learning opportunities.

We were impressed by the fact that most of you behave responsibly and work well in class. The students who do not behave well damage their own chances of progress as well as those of everyone else. We were very impressed by the spotless cleanliness of the Western site and the respect you show for your environment. Your contribution to the local community is good and we were impressed by the awards you have won for fund-raising activities. We also liked the many after-school classes that take place as well as the clubs and sporting activities you so enjoy. Your schools care well for you and give plenty of support when you need extra help. You have a good range of courses to choose from so that you can achieve the best possible results. Your opportunities to do work-related courses are particularly good.

There are areas where we think the schools can improve. Some teachers have real talent so you respond to them well and make good progress. Not all are as good as this. For example, more could be done to make sure that teaching is consistently effective. We think the senior managers of your school are working hard to raise standards for everyone. The school needs to make sure that everyone follows the same rules and procedures.

Most of you think the managers and teachers are doing a good job in helping the schools to improve and we fully agree with you.

Good luck to you all,

Judith Straw

(Lead inspector)