



# Huntcliff School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 118087  
**Local Authority** North Lincolnshire  
**Inspection number** 291017  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ian Richardson 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 address</b>	Kirton-in-Lindsey
<b>School category</b>	Community		Gainsborough, Lincolnshire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		DN21 4NN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01652 648276
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	802	<b>Fax number</b>	01652 640390
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Margaret Rands JP
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Bond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2003		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The school is a slightly smaller than average secondary school. It is set in a rural community and receives students from a wide area. This year the school attracted students from 28 primary schools from rural and urban settings. There are few students from minority ethnic groups and for whom English is not their first language. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is significantly below the national average, and the proportion of students with statements of special needs is above the national average. Huntcliff School has been a Specialist College for Engineering and Technology since September 2003.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Huntcliff provides its students with a satisfactory education. Standards of attainment of students are above the national average, and the progress that students make is around the national average. Specialist college status has enabled the school to develop significantly its technology facilities, and to bring about the refurbishment of rooms in the mathematics and science departments to enhance the environment for learning. The introduction and developing use of interactive whiteboards is improving the range of teaching and learning activities to the benefit of students. While a few subjects, information and communication technology (ICT) in particular, have shown significant improvements in performance, specialist college status has not yet raised the achievement of students across the curriculum to above the average.

Students express high levels of confidence in their teachers and speak of their enjoyment of lessons. The large majority of students show positive attitudes to their work. They show high levels of trust in teachers, who are described by students as always willing to help 'even outside lessons'. Inspectors believe teaching and learning to be satisfactory; while much of the teaching is good, there is some weaker teaching that could be improved.

Students feel safe and well cared for. They describe how any incidence of bullying is rapidly and effectively dealt with. Their feelings of security are added to significantly by the work of Year 11 prefects and Year 10 mentors. Parents share these positive views, and a large majority describe their children as being safe and well cared for in school. Although confined to a small minority, the concern most frequently expressed by parents was about the behaviour of a minority of students. The school has implemented a range of strategies well targeted at reducing any poor behaviour. Several parents expressed the view that behaviour had improved in the school over the last few years. In a number of activities, such as year and school councils, students' personal development is being promoted. Students in the Year 11 council spoke articulately and with passion about their views, and took decisions in a clear and well-ordered way. While a member of staff was there to advise if necessary, it was the students who drove the meeting.

A very high proportion of parents believe their children are making good progress because of the good teaching. A number of parents took the trouble to write additional comments on the parent questionnaire. Many of these were positive and gave examples of the approachability of staff, and the way in which students' specific needs are addressed. The large majority of parents believe the school to be well led and managed, and some give examples of improvements over recent years. Leadership and management in the school is satisfactory and the school is providing satisfactory value for money. The leadership team shows satisfactory capacity to bring about further improvement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching and learning by more thorough monitoring and evaluation to improve planning, and to share good practice more effectively.
- Meet the needs of the full range of learners more effectively.
- Improve the behaviour of the minority of students who disrupt lessons.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are above average. Since students' starting levels are above average when they join the school, students' achievement is no better than satisfactory. Standards have improved in some subjects since the last inspection, but there was overall low performance in 2004. At Year 9, students perform better in mathematics than in science, where there have been staffing problems, and they do better in science than in English. By the end of Year 11, standards are above average in most subjects. The school's latest data show that students do particularly well at GCSE in ICT, physics, PE, geography and music. They have not done so well overall in design and technology and engineering, although engineering results improved significantly in 2006. Few students gain the top grades in English and English literature compared with their performance in other subjects. Students' basic skills in literacy are average because of weaknesses in writing, but they are above average in numeracy. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as other groups.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of students are satisfactory, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They enjoy school activities. For example, one Year 10 student said, 'There's lots of variety and loads to do.' Students become socially aware; they investigate moral issues and they develop a wider respect and knowledge of different cultures. They gain spiritual insight but in the observed assembly, where there were other opportunities for spiritual development, these were not fully explored.

Students feel safe. In Year 7, students can turn to trained Year 10 peer mentors and Year 11 prefects for help if required. Students are confident in approaching adults for further assistance if necessary. Year 10 and 11 students have responsibilities in the wider community and undertake work-related learning. Specialist careers advice and their developing skills in ICT, literacy and numeracy ensure students are prepared satisfactorily for life beyond school.

Students make a positive contribution to the school through year councils and the school council. A wide range of clubs and extra-curricular opportunities extends learning and enables students to stay physically fit; for example, through participation in sporting activities. There is an improving variety and balance of food offered at

lunchtime, described as 'much better than before'. Extensive charity work and visits encourage most students to appreciate the needs of others.

Most students behave appropriately. However, the school, parents and students acknowledge that the behaviour of a few has an adverse effect on progress in some lessons. The school is implementing strategies to improve attitudes and behaviour. Temporary exclusions of students have been significantly reduced. Attendance remains slightly above the national average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Of the teaching observed during the inspection, almost all was at least satisfactory and much was good with some being outstanding. Where teaching is good, students are actively engaged in their learning and try to improve, and teachers have high expectations of students' performance and behaviour, and plan a range of challenging and exciting activities, which motivate and interest students. In these lessons, relationships are positive, students enjoy their work and progress is good. In the less successful lessons, students became passive learners. A limited range of activities and a lack of challenge failed to interest them and as a result many worked too slowly and some, generally boys, engaged in disruptive behaviour.

Teachers plan carefully within a clear framework, which gives a level of consistency. However, planning does not always take account of the learning needs of different groups of students. Provision for gifted and talented students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and they achieve in line with other students. There is good practice in marking, for example, in some subjects students are invited to assess their own work and that of others. Not all teachers routinely remind students about targets and what they need to do to achieve them.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The award of specialist college status for engineering and technology enabled the school to develop vocational courses such as applied science, engineering and ICT. While provision for the development of numeracy is good, students do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their speaking skills and teachers' marking does not always adequately support the development of writing. Increasing use of ICT across the curriculum is welcomed by the students, and provides positive support for teaching and learning. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is good. It includes many sporting activities, an orchestra and choir, the pantomime group and a range of subject clubs such as the 'History Club'. There are also regular field trips and visits abroad. Some students

organise and run extra-curricular activities such as the drama group. They also contribute well to the local community outside of school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Students' academic and personal development are provided for through improving systems of support. The school has good links with the community and partner primary schools. Students' transfer to Year 7 is trouble free. Specialist help is offered to students leaving the school in Year 11.

Safeguarding procedures, including child protection training, are in place. Risk assessment arrangements are regularly reviewed. Those students judged to be at risk, including disaffected students who disrupt lessons, have appropriate arrangements to support their achievement and safety, although the impact of these arrangements is not yet fully felt. Adequate support is available for different groups of students, including subject support revision programmes and good extra-curricular activities.

Academic guidance, although broadly satisfactory, is an area for improvement. Teachers monitor and track students' progress but the quality of information passed on to students is inconsistent as is the quality of marking. Students achieve less well in subjects where improvement targets are not made clear enough.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher provides a strong lead for the school. The senior leadership team have a common understanding of the priorities for the development of the school. Departmental leaders and teachers are also clear about these priorities. The governing body contributes satisfactorily to the management and leadership of the school.

There is a clear systematic approach to the management of the school. Performance management procedures are in place and staff involved believe these arrangements to be secure and helpful. Staff are positive about the opportunities they have for professional development. The resources made available through the award of specialist college status have been well deployed to bring about improvements to the physical environment of the school. There has been significant refurbishment of mathematics, science and ICT areas. This expenditure, and the associated management aimed at raising standards have brought about significant improvements in GCSE outcomes in ICT, with students doing particularly well compared with other subjects. Over recent years until 2005 students have not done so well in engineering and areas of design and technology, despite the specialist college status. In 2006 standards in engineering improved considerably.

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Since the last Ofsted inspection report in 2003, when the achievement of students was well below similar schools, it is now satisfactory. The evaluative component of the

school's self-evaluation form needs further development to clearly express the impact of the procedures and priorities put into place. The management systems introduced have yet to raise the achievement of students across the curriculum to above satisfactory. The senior leadership has recognised the need for improvement in particular areas, such as monitoring and evaluation, which can inform planning and be the basis for identification and sharing of good practice. In its self-evaluation the school judges management and leadership to be good. However, the self-evaluation does not set out clearly the impact of management and leadership on outcomes by taking performance data fully into account. The impact is, as yet, partial with lack of evidence of improvements being wide spread and maintained.

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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?	3
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	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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	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	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>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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
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**

Huntcliff School  
Kirton-in-Lindsey  
Gainsborough  
Lincolnshire  
DN21 4NN  
12 October 2006

Dear Students

On behalf of the inspection team I want to thank you for the contributions you made to the inspection of your school. We interviewed representatives from all year groups and talked with many individual students. It is clear that you have a high regard for your teachers; you find them very willing to help with work and with any personal issues you have. It is good to learn from you that you feel safe in school, and that students support each other, for example, by the work that prefects and student mentors do.

What you said about the school was positive. The inspection team believes that the school is providing you with a satisfactory education. You are to be congratulated for the good efforts many of you make in your work in subjects, and in taking full part in school life. A minority of students do not show these good attitudes, and through poor behaviour they are missing out on the benefits the school is trying to bring them. Parents strongly approve of what the school is doing but the aspect of students' poor behaviour was a concern they most frequently expressed. The school has introduced ways of managing this poor behaviour and teachers deserve your positive support.

We think many of you can do even better by keeping up good efforts, taking on responsibility for the standards of your work, and asking teachers for more guidance if you are not clear how you can improve. We know you think good things about the school. Why not help them to get even better?

Yours sincerely

Ian Richardson

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools