



Winterton Comprehensive School with Specialist Status in Engineering

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118099
Local Authority North Lincolnshire
Inspection number 291022
Inspection dates 26–27 September 2006
Reporting inspector Mark Williams HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Newport Drive
School category	Community		Winterton, Scunthorpe
Age range of pupils	11–16		DN15 9QD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01724 732777
Number on roll (school)	698	Fax number	01724 733051
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Andrew Pascoe
		Headteacher	Mr John Fitzgerald
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–16	26–27 September 2006	291022

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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

This is a smaller than average comprehensive school. It is situated in a mixed rural/semi-urban area. Almost all its students are White British. The percentage of students identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average as are the abilities of students when they join in Year 7. The school successfully secured specialist status in engineering in September 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that this is a good school, providing a good education for its students and offering good value for money.

Students now make good progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 and achieve well. This represents effective improvement since the previous inspection when standards in Years 10 and 11 required attention. The personal development and well-being of students are good. Students acting as peer mentors make an outstanding contribution to the well-being of other students in the school.

Teaching is good overall. Typically, the best lessons are well paced, provide students with opportunities to ask questions and expect them to take responsibility for their learning. However, teachers do not use assessments consistently to ascertain the progress that students make, nor to inform future teaching. As a result, a minority of lessons do not provide sufficient challenge to students. The curriculum is good and there is an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum has been enhanced by the school's specialism in engineering, for example, in its breadth, in the development of information and communication technology (ICT) and in links with local businesses and industry. Care, guidance and support are good. Good programmes exist to support vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the school's good systems of support have yet to impact positively on the very small number of students who are affected by the inappropriate behaviour of a very small minority of others. In addition, not all students are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is supported well by the senior leadership team, staff and governors. The school is well regarded in the community. Effective measures to improve have been taken since the previous inspection and there has been a consistent drive to raise standards and the rate of students' progress across the school, particularly in Key Stage 4. Successes achieved show the school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure best practice in teaching and day-to-day assessing of what students are able to do is made consistent across the school.
- Provide consistent opportunities for students to be aware of, and take greater responsibility for, their own learning and behaviour.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Results in national tests and examinations show a trend of steady improvement over the last five years. From broadly average levels of attainment on entry to the school, students make good progress so that results for Year 9 students in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been

consistently well above average. Progress in Years 10 and 11 has been less rapid so that, although GCSE results have been above average, students' achievement in relation to their attainment in Year 9 has been no better than satisfactory. This has been recognised by the school and more support for revision and coursework has been put in place, together with the targeting of students at risk of underperforming. The success of these strategies is evident in the 2006 GCSE results, which are the best ever achieved by the school. Effective systems for whole-school tracking and monitoring, underpinned by the detailed analysis of assessment data, and the targeted use of support staff, ensure that all groups of students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, now make good progress during their time in school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of students are good. Nearly all students enjoy coming to school and this is reflected by their good levels of attendance and punctuality. Most students enjoy their lessons and behave well in class and around school. However, behaviour is not as good when lessons do not provide appropriate challenge. At break and lunchtimes, a very small number of students are affected by the inappropriate behaviour of a very small minority of others. The school is aware of this and measures to combat it, such as the 'Wednesday Lunchtime Club' have recently been put into place. Overall, the students are polite and considerate to one another. For example, students in Years 10 and 11 participating in the 'peer mentoring programme' listen to other students carefully, understand their needs and work successfully to strengthen friendships. Their commitment to the school is outstanding.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good awareness of cultures other than their own and this is enhanced by their partnership with a school in China. Students know what to do to be safe in lessons and around school. For example, students in Year 11 undertaking engineering courses follow thorough risk assessments. Students throughout the school adopt healthy lifestyles by participating in an outstanding range of sporting activities and increasingly making healthy choices at lunchtimes.

Students make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community. Through the influential school council, students support a range of charities and have operated a school shop. The junior sports leaders organise exciting activities with students from feeder primary schools. As a result of the good progress made in their learning, good ICT skills and strong links with local schools and businesses, students are developing appropriate workplace and other skills that contribute well to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Typically, teachers plan their lessons well, providing opportunities for students to engage in different learning activities. In the most successful lessons, students are given opportunities to work independently. As a result, their attitudes to learning are highly positive. Such lessons move at a brisk pace with sharp, effective question and answer sessions. Students are challenged to think creatively, take responsibility for their own learning, use their imaginations and reflect upon what they have learned. Overall, classroom management is good ensuring students behave well and remain focused on their work, even when not directly supervised. Very good use is made of ICT. In lessons where opportunities are provided for students to work together and to support each other's learning, they make good progress. Skilled teaching assistants support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to take full part in lessons and make good progress. However, in a minority of lessons teaching is less successful. Mundane tasks cause students to lose interest and behaviour deteriorates. In these lessons, teachers do not use day-to-day assessments, such as marking and questioning, well enough to promote good habits of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it allows students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those identified as gifted or talented, to achieve well. Alternative off-site provision for a very small number of disengaged students in Years 10 and 11 allows them to gain vocational and basic skills qualifications.

All curriculum areas have benefited from considerable improvements in accommodation and resources. Specialist status has also enabled the curriculum to be more responsive to local needs through links with local engineering industries and further education colleges, and through the provision of computer courses for the local community. The outstanding provision for ICT, both through discrete courses and across the curriculum, is evident in the consistently well above average results attained. The outstanding range of extra-curricular activities contributes hugely to students' enjoyment and their personal development. A well planned programme of personal and social education, which also gives a sense of purpose to form periods, helps prepare students for life after school. However, despite these strengths, the Key Stage 4 curriculum does not currently allow sufficient opportunity for students to select combinations of courses best suited to their needs and aspirations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided for students are good. Health, safety and child protection procedures, coupled with good links with outside agencies, ensure students are adequately safeguarded. Risk assessments are of good quality. Arrangements for students starting school in Year 7 are good. Further good quality guidance and support are provided for students in Year 9 in preparation for choosing options for GCSE, and for those in Year 11 moving on to work or further education.

Good quality programmes are available to vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in order to include them in the life of the school. Students know they have safe places to go and report that all staff are approachable and take appropriate action if they have concerns. Newly introduced systems of support, such as the 'Wednesday Lunchtime Club', have been well received but their impact has not yet been measured.

The school supports students well in their development of skills for life. Students are helped to achieve success in their learning and social development through individual targets. However, day-to-day systems of assessment are not consistently applied and not all students are provided with sufficient opportunities to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning or behaviour.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management at all levels are good. They are successfully focused on raising standards.

The headteacher has a clear vision for an inclusive school in which all students are equally valued and expectations are high. He is well supported by the senior leadership team which shares his commitment to continuous improvement. Subject leaders recognise the need to evaluate the work of their departments carefully and they clearly understand their responsibilities for monitoring students' progress and identifying and supporting those students who are at risk of underachieving. The school has developed comprehensive systems for self-review and they have linked the outcomes of these reviews to school development priorities. As a result, the school development plan accurately identifies key areas for improvement and suggests appropriate strategies for delivery. However, the plan lacks clear links to financial planning and timescales and success criteria are not made explicit.

Effective leadership has ensured that the school has received significant benefit from its specialist engineering status including improved and extended accommodation, a broader curriculum, major developments in ICT and enhanced links with the community, including local businesses and industry.

Governors are committed and supportive; they carry out their responsibilities well through a strong committee structure and subject link governors who regularly visit

the school. Day to day management is effective and the school runs smoothly. Financial management is good. Staff and resources are well deployed and the school gives good value for money. The school has good capacity to improve because school leaders at all levels demonstrate a good understanding of future priorities, are clear about how to address them and exhibit the drive and optimism needed to support future progress.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	2
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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
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	1
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
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?	2

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
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
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

Winterton Comprehensive School with Specialist Status in Engineering

Newport Drive

Winterton

Scunthorpe

DN15 9QD

26 September 2006

Dear Students

As you are aware Mrs Straw, Mr McKay, Mr Penter and Mr Horsewood recently visited your school. On their behalf I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We greatly appreciated the time you spent talking to us and found your comments very helpful as we conducted the inspection.

You will be pleased to know that we agree with you and Mr Fitzgerald: Winterton Comprehensive School with Specialist Status in Engineering is a good school. Your achievements in your end of Key Stage 3 tests and in your GCSE examinations – the school's best ever in 2006 – mean you are all making good progress in your studies. This is because Mr Fitzgerald and his team lead your school well and teaching is good. You, of course, play a major role in this success. Your behaviour is good and you are developing useful skills for life. We do, however, judge that you could be doing even better. We have therefore asked Mr Fitzgerald to ensure that the good teaching in school and the way your day-to-day progress is recorded is made consistent throughout the school. We have also asked that you be given more opportunities for you to be aware of and take greater responsibility for your own learning and behaviour.

I particularly want you to be aware of the outstanding aspects of your school. These are the range of extra-curricular activities, the use of ICT and the contribution the peer mentors and junior sports leaders make to the school and wider community. We could clearly see you value your school's specialism while, at the same time, enhancing your sense of community.

We wish you well for the future.

Mark Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools