



The Deepings School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120635
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291808
Inspection dates 17–18 January 2007
Reporting inspector David Jones HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Park Road
School category	Community		Deeping St James, Deeping St James
Age range of pupils	11–18		Peterborough PE6 8NF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01778 342159
Number on roll (school)	1344	Fax number	01778 380590
Number on roll (6th form)	198		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr A Smith
		Headteacher	Mr C Beckett
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–18	17–18 January 2007	291808

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors over two days.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and educates pupils from Market Deeping and the surrounding villages. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry has improved recently and is now above average. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at normal times is low. The pupils are predominately of White British heritage, with limited numbers of pupils from a minority ethnic background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average, as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school achieved specialist status in Business and Enterprise Education in September 2003.

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 with some outstanding features that gives very good value for money. Leadership and management are good. The delegation of responsibilities amongst senior managers has brought dynamism to the work of quality assurance. Self-evaluation is accurate and senior staff have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Action has been taken to address those areas in need of development.

The pupils are guided towards healthy lifestyles by good physical education provision and the development of a healthy eating agenda. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.

Standards and achievement are good overall and outstanding in Key Stage 3. The school's 2006 GCSE results were the highest ever attained, exceeding the local and national average. Half of the year group secured at least seven or more higher grade passes, including English and mathematics. More than one in four pupils obtained ten or more such passes. Pupils' progress was good in the majority of lessons observed. On occasions, there is insufficient support for lower ability pupils to develop their level of subject specific literacy skills. In 2006, standards at advanced level were satisfactory. Achievement was good and showed progress from the position achieved the previous year.

The curriculum is outstanding, it meets statutory requirements and the balance of courses reflects the school's specialist status. The wide range of cultural and sporting extra curricular opportunities provided is particularly impressive.

The pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good, notably so where tasks provide engagement and challenge. Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Care, guidance and support are also good and receive regular plaudits from parents.

Teaching and learning are good. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior managers is robust and accurate. There is scope for good practice to be shared more widely. Sixth form provision is good overall. Assessment information is used effectively to inform management decisions, guide pupils' progress and monitor the effectiveness of provision. Reports to parents are good and more frequent than is normally the case. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is usually good and it is managed effectively. The school's capacity to improve is outstanding due to the strength of its senior and middle management teams.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good and improving. Standards are just above average, with pupils currently making good progress. This is evident in lessons and in the most recent A-level results. Standards fell a little a few years ago, but the school has taken effective action to address the issue. Effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress have been implemented and the quality assurance of under performing subjects is rigorous.

Sixth form teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. These improvements in provision reflect the effective monitoring recently carried out by senior staff, in conjunction with the impact of impressive recent appointments. Staff are increasingly aware of pupils' long term targets and how each lesson should help them progress. Relationships are very constructive and pupils respond with very positive attitudes.

Pupils' personal development is very good. The sixth form contribute effectively to the life of the school and pupils comment favourably on how these commitments have influenced their own attitudes. Care, guidance and support are good. There is very good advice and support for university applicants, but less support for those who wish to follow other routes.

The curriculum is good. It matches most pupils' needs and plans are in place for further enhancements in September 2007. Some of these will address pupils' interest in vocational courses at level 2 or minority A-level courses.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good because they enable pupils to make good progress. The overall effect of senior managers' support has been very beneficial. However, the head and deputy head of the sixth form are not as active as they might be in the day to day monitoring of provision and evaluation of current performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the head of the sixth form's day to day monitoring role and the use of performance data, in order to set even higher expectations for pupils' achievement.
- Make greater use of the school's quality assurance procedures in order to eliminate the weaknesses remaining in teaching, through increased sharing of good practice.
- Ensure the learning of lower attaining pupils' is not constrained by low literacy levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Achievement and standards are good overall but outstanding at Key Stage 3. Pupils make rapid progress against realistic targets at age 14. Pupils' progress at age 16 improved significantly in 2006 and was above the local and national averages. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress as well as the rest of the year group.

The 2006 Key Stage 3 results for English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 6 or better, were well above the national average. The results for English were in the top 5% of schools nationally.

The 2006 Key Stage 4 GCSE results exceeded the targets set by the governors and were above the national average. Six out of ten pupils achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE that included English and mathematics. One in four of the year group

obtained ten or more such passes. Notable successes were achieved in; business studies, food technology, history, physical education, geography, English literature, and religious education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Personal development is good and pupils have a positive attitude to learning. Behaviour in lessons and assemblies is good. It is satisfactory in crowded corridors. Pupils comment that bullying is dealt with fairly and effectively. Parents are very supportive of the school. Pupils were full of praise for the school. They feel they enjoy their education and the way the school is developing.

Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although spiritual development is only satisfactory. Cultural development is very good, as shown through the displays of art and through the varied productions of music and drama.

Pupils take their responsibilities in the 'house' systems and for the school council seriously. Pupils show very good skills in working with others, through the various mentoring schemes. Pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and personal safety is good. Pupils feel the school is a safe place where they can always find someone to support them. Community links are outstanding; for example, through shared provision with local primary schools. The school prepares pupils well for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Overall, teaching and learning are good with a significant proportion of outstanding teaching. Some lessons were satisfactory and a small minority inadequate. This confirms the information provided by the school's effective quality assurance procedures. The majority of teachers provide challenging lessons, display good subject knowledge, a passion for the topic and set a demanding pace. Generally, good planning uses different methods and learning styles to help pupils make good progress. In the less effective lessons, insufficient support is provided for lower ability pupils to develop their level of subject specific literacy skills.

The school's specialist business and enterprise status has effectively influenced the teaching. The pupils are encouraged to be active, independent learners. The majority of teachers consistently apply the agreed behaviour management strategies. Where teaching is less engaging or in a few instances inadequate, planning is weak and lessons lack sufficient challenge.

Most lessons make good use of the recently enhanced information and communication technology (ICT) facilities. Regular assessments, homework and marking are well used to set targets and monitor pupils' progress. Good systems have been developed to monitor and assess pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. It provides excellent opportunities for all learners to progress well and reflects the school's specialist business and enterprise status.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum is broad and balanced, with all pupils studying business and enterprise in Years 8 and 9. All pupils take a common core of subjects at Key Stage 4 through one of three curriculum pathways. The Key Stage 4 curriculum includes an excellent range of academic and vocational options which include business studies. Additional work related courses and extended work experience are provided in partnership with other institutions. These meet the needs of less academic pupils and those at risk of disaffection. Higher attaining pupils take a range of short GCSE courses in Year 9, progressing to applied GCSE courses and AS courses in Year 11.

Pupils receive excellent careers guidance. There is a highly effective, well planned programme of personal and social education that includes citizenship and promotes the pupils' awareness of health and safety. There are extensive and varied opportunities for enrichment activities particularly in music and sport, with high levels of pupil participation. The breadth of extra curricular provision, including outside visits is excellent and adds considerable enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place and conscientiously observed. Child protection procedures are clear and pupils at risk are quickly identified and supported. Support for gifted and talented pupils, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English, is mostly good. The very strong pastoral system provides very good support for pupils through the house system and the school council. Attendance is above average and is rigorously monitored. Exclusions have reduced significantly in the last year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. Outstanding quality assurance procedures provide the evidence for rigorous self-evaluation procedures. The school development plan is very clear and reflects agreed priorities. A strong senior management team has been assembled by the headteacher since his appointment. Senior leaders were invited to observe teaching with HMI. Their monitoring and evaluation of teaching was rigorous and accurate. The school has correctly identified a small number of areas where teaching needs further support. The business and enterprise specialist school status achieved in 2003 has resulted in significant curriculum enhancement. Plans are being considered to seek a second specialism. Middle management is good overall with some departments and sections of the school more dynamic than others.

The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good. Senior managers direct improvement and promote the well-being of learners through good care, guidance and support. The governance of the school is good. Resource management is good and the school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. Financial management is very good. The local authority has asked the school to pilot the new national financial standards for schools.

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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?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	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	1	
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	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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	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	1	
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

21 January 2007

The Deepings School, Park Road, Deeping St James, Peterborough, PE6 8NF

Dear Pupils

As you will remember, an inspection team visited your school early in January this year. It is a particular pleasure to write to you and say how impressed we were with you and with your school.

We felt that the quality of teaching and learning was good and at times outstanding. Most of you display positive attitudes to learning and work hard. As a result of all of this hard work standards have improved significantly. The care, guidance and support you receive are good and the curriculum opportunities provided for you are outstanding.

Thank you for contributing to the inspection. We spoke with many of you in class, around the school and as part of key interviews. I was pleased to receive the letters and telephone calls from your parents. Although I was unable to speak to all of them, I have tried to answer their questions in the report, so please give them my thanks.

In discussion with the headteacher and the governing body I have asked them to set even higher expectations for sixth form achievement, provide more engaging tasks in some of your less exciting lessons and improve the support for those of you who struggle with literacy. The headteacher will tell you how you can be involved in this process.

I look forward to hearing about your future successes.

David Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector.