

Hungerhill School A Specialist Centre for Science, Mathematics and Computing

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106795
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	301361
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan McKenna

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	1148
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Bates
Headteacher	Mr G Wakeling
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2003
School address	Hungerhill Lane Edenthorpe Doncaster South Yorkshire DN3 2JY
Telephone number	01302 885811
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Introduction

The school was inspected by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The very large majority of students at this above average size school are of White British heritage. Fewer than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or statements of special educational need. The school attracts students from beyond its immediate locality. Students come from areas that vary socio-economically but most are from areas that are broadly average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average.

The school gained specialist college status for science, mathematics and computing in September 2005. The school has the Sportsmark award and the Kitemark Quality Standard for study support.

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. It enables students to make outstanding progress in their personal development and to achieve well academically. It is popular and parents are overwhelmingly positive about it, with a typical comment being, 'We are satisfied with all aspects of the school and feel we have made a very good choice selecting Hungerhill for our child.'

The pastoral care provided for students is a strength of the school. All students are well known to staff and well cared for and students with particular needs receive very high quality support. This helps students feel safe and secure in school. They thrive in the climate in which every individual is strongly valued and they develop excellent personal skills. Relationships are warm and harmonious, behaviour is exemplary and attendance is significantly above average. Students enjoy school very much and make a mature contribution to the school and the wider community.

Students enter the school with above average standards. The standards they reach by the time they leave are significantly above the national average and they achieve well overall during their time in school. There are some subject differences in performance. They achieve well in several, for example the results in some of the vocational courses are high. English and mathematics have been among the lower performing subjects, in part because of some staffing problems. The school has taken focused action to tackle areas where results are not as strong, such as the performance of boys relative to girls, with success. There is evidence that standards are rising further. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers manage students effectively and create a positive climate for learning. In the main, students are given varied, interesting and relevant activities that are well matched to their needs and help them learn well. Teaching quality is variable, however. While most is good and some is outstanding, not all is of this standard. Thorough systems are in place to track students' progress and inform the guidance they are given on how to improve. These are better established at Key Stage 4 than Key Stage 3 where they have been introduced more recently. While these systems are proving to be helpful, not all students fully understand how well they are doing yet or precisely what they need to do to improve to meet their targets. The curriculum is good, with the range of vocational courses at Key Stage 4 a strength.

One of the strengths of the school's specialist status is in the improved use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.

Interactive whiteboards are used to make lessons more interesting and this has had a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially that of boys. Mathematics and science teachers make good use of ICT resources for aspects such as setting homework, and this practice is now being shared with other departments. There is, however, a mixed picture of success within these subjects, with the school having achieved some, but not all, of its specialist school targets. The specialist status helps the school work effectively with partner primary schools and the community, for example by running ICT classes for primary pupils and basic literacy and numeracy courses for adults.

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and other leaders have a strong commitment to ensuring that the school enables pupils to develop well personally and academically. Leaders at all levels are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Middle leaders are held accountable for the effectiveness of their areas and action to improve students' achievement has been strengthened by analysis and use of the information resulting from the tracking of their progress. Procedures for monitoring and evaluation are thorough and the

school's improvement plan contains appropriate priorities. Where the school directs its attention to bring about improvement, such as developing the vocational curriculum, the use of ICT or narrowing the gender gap, it is successful. The school has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of students' achievement across subjects and especially improve it in English and mathematics.
- Make the quality of teaching more consistently good.
- Improve the extent to which all students, especially those at Key Stage 3, understand how well they are doing, how to improve and what they need to do to meet their targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are consistently above the national average, in part because results in science are always above average. Results in mathematics fluctuate, but were above average in 2007. Results in English were average. Students' achievement was satisfactory in science, but they underperformed in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, improvements in some aspects of the subjects were evident and these improvements have continued into this year. At Key Stage 4, students make up lost ground. They perform well in a range of subjects, such as art and design, areas of design technology and French, and very well in some of the vocational subjects such as health and social care and sport. As a result, overall standards in 2007 were significantly above average and achievement was good. The action being taken by the school to raise standards further is having a positive impact. Achievement, including in English and mathematics, is improving. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the very small numbers from minority ethnic groups or in public care all perform well. Targets set are challenging, although not always met.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Students have a well developed understanding of moral issues and this is shown in the way they show respect for each other. They respond very well to the wide range of opportunities they are given to learn about living in a culturally diverse community and to develop spiritually. The school goes to considerable lengths to find out what students think, and they are involved in important decision making. Changes to make lunch choices healthier were implemented as a direct result of the wishes of students. The majority now stay for school meals, demonstrating their desire to adopt healthier lifestyles. The school is aware that it needs to increase the amount of time given to physical activity in order that students are able to develop even healthier lifestyles. Students say they feel safe in school and the very rare incidents of bullying are swiftly dealt with. They contribute to the school and broader community in many ways, including undertaking effective activities with primary schools. As a result, the overwhelming majority of students settle quickly on entry to Year 7. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being through participation in vocational studies and their improving basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Some is outstanding. The majority of lessons are well planned. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to provide clear explanations of the topics being studied and to provide varied and interesting tasks. Students are keen to learn, apply themselves to their work and behave well. Teachers' questioning is often skilful, developing students' understanding more deeply. The school's investment in interactive whiteboards has resulted in many visually stimulating lessons which help students make good progress. Students' learning is enhanced in many lessons through them appraising their own and each other's work. Tasks are often well matched to students' differing needs. There is some inconsistency in teaching, however. Where it is less effective, the range of activities is narrow and tasks are less well matched to students' needs. Teachers sometimes talk too much, limiting the opportunities for students to work independently. Some work is regularly marked with comments that help students know what they need to do to improve. Other work, however, is superficially or infrequently marked which does not help students to work to their potential.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of students well overall. There has been a particular emphasis on extending the number of vocational courses in Key Stage 4 and a good range is now offered. Some of them are very popular and successful and strongly promote students' achievement and enjoyment of school. Students use ICT in other subjects well. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is strong. The school is aware that students are not equally successful in all subjects and the curriculum is being reviewed with a particular focus on improving provision in English and mathematics, as well as developing further aspects such as work-related learning and citizenship. Students do not receive the recommended time for physical education. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is provided and participation in them is high.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff are highly committed to the welfare of the students and pastoral care is strong. Students say there are always adults in school to turn to if problems arise. There is an effective team who give outstanding support to vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has individually tailored timetables and college places for the small number of students in Years 10 and 11 who are at risk of exclusion or disengagement. Almost all of these students are now succeeding and are likely to progress into further education or training. The school has worked very hard to raise attendance and has been outstandingly successful. All statutory requirements for safeguarding are in place.

The school has extended systems for checking on students' progress by introducing them into Key Stage 3. A range of staff are playing an increasingly important role in these measures, with tutors focusing on guiding students as to how they can improve. These changes are beginning

to have a positive effect on students' achievements. However, the changes are not yet consistently applied in Key Stage 3 and throughout all subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The thorough systems for evaluating the school's effectiveness, including the quality of teaching, results in strengths and areas requiring development being well known by the school's leaders. Clear priorities for improvement have been identified and action plans to bring this about are being implemented, with success in targeted areas. The school's efforts to improve provision and outcomes in English and mathematics have been hampered by staffing difficulties, but, with some of these resolved, progress in these areas is now evident. A new leadership structure is in place, reflecting the vision the school has of itself for the future, and there is a commitment to ongoing professional development among staff. Senior leaders carry out their responsibilities effectively. The quality of middle leadership, while good overall, is more variable. Effective steps are being taken to tackle this. The governing body provides good support and challenge because it works in close partnership with the school's leaders to scrutinise progress. The school provides good value for money.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know your school was inspected recently and this letter is to inform you about the results of the inspection. However, first I would like to thank you on behalf of the inspection team for talking with us during our visit.

We judge that your school is good. A strength is the very high quality of pastoral care you receive. You are all very well looked after, especially those of you with additional needs. This helps you feel safe and secure and contributes to your personal development being outstanding. The relationships you have with each other, your behaviour and attendance are all excellent. You make a strong contribution to the school and broader community.

Teaching is good overall, although it is variable in quality. The curriculum is also good, especially the range of vocational courses at Key Stage 4. These help you achieve well and the standards you reach by the time you leave school are significantly above average. You perform very well in some subjects such as art and design, design technology, sport, and health and social care. However, achievement has not been equally good in all subjects, and levels of achievement in English and mathematics have not been among the strongest. Where the school has prioritised areas to improve, such as narrowing the difference between girls' and boys' attainment, it has been successful and there is evidence that achievement is improving and standards are rising. There are thorough systems in place for checking your progress and giving you guidance on how to improve, although not all of you yet fully understand how well you are doing and what you need to do to meet your targets, especially at Key Stage 3.

Your school is well led and managed. To help the school improve further we have asked the headteacher and other school leaders to make sure that your achievement across subjects is more consistent and especially to improve it in English and mathematics, make the quality of teaching more consistently good and to make sure you all know how you are doing and what to do to improve and meet your targets.

You can help the leaders and teachers in your school by continuing to work as hard as you do now. I wish you well for the future.