

Wingfield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106951
Local Authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	309272
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Philip Jarrett HMI

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	852
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Gladwin
Headteacher	Miss Pippa Dodgshon
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2005
School address	Wingfield Road Rotherham South Yorkshire S61 4AU
Telephone number	01709 513002
Fax number	01709 511196

Age group	11-16
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Inspection number	309272

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

Wingfield School is an average-sized comprehensive for students aged 11 to 16, situated in an area of relatively high social deprivation. The number of students eligible for a free school meal is above average. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Most students are of White British origin. The school has received a number of awards including Investors in People, Excellence in Enterprise and the Geography Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wingfield is a school that has improved markedly over recent years. It was removed from special measures as recently as December 2005 and this inspection confirms that it is now a good school. This improvement is based firstly on the positive impact of very good senior leadership which has led to significant improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The school now has many strengths including outstanding provision for pupils' care, guidance and support. However, despite improvements in achievement, standards are not yet high enough and senior leaders understand that continuing to improve the outcomes for learners remains the chief challenge facing the school.

Standards have risen across both key stages in recent years but remain below average. Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are below average, especially in aspects of literacy such as writing, and speaking and listening. This inhibits progress across the curriculum. Pupils' achievement has improved in the past three years and at a faster rate than similar schools. However, progress has been weaker in some subjects, including English and science, partly as a result of staffing and recruitment problems.

This is a school that works hard, and mostly successfully, to meet the needs of all students. There is a deep and genuine commitment to the welfare and progress of individual pupils. Students feel cared for and safe. There is some low level misbehaviour in lessons, especially where students are not fully engaged, but in general behaviour is good as a result of positive pupil attitudes and effective staff monitoring. The quality of care, guidance and support for students is outstanding, especially in relation to the school's more vulnerable students. Students speak well of the positive impact of the school on their self-confidence and personal development. They feel involved in school decisions and contribute to the life of the community.

Teaching is good. This is the result of rigorous monitoring and effective strategies to support and challenge teachers. Students respond especially well in subjects where teachers are enthusiastic and involve them directly through lively activities. The less effective teaching fails to motivate some students, especially boys. Students are very clear about their current levels of achievement and their predicted targets but marking is not yet consistent enough in providing good quality feedback about how to improve.

Senior leaders have given considerable thought to the content of the curriculum. The curriculum meets the needs of all students well, especially at Key Stage 4 through a variety of vocational and academic courses. There are also some innovative features to the curriculum for younger students, including interesting cross-curricular and thematic approaches. The school is aware that low levels of literacy and poor communication have a negative impact on students' achievement and these issues remain to be tackled more systematically in subjects across the curriculum.

Recent improvements are the direct result of very good leadership from the headteacher and other senior staff. The school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. It is rightly focused on trying to raise academic standards further. Very good strategies are in place to improve current areas of weakness, supported by an increasingly effective team of middle managers and an improving governing body. There is good practice to draw on in all areas of the school's provision. As a result, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement, especially in English and science.
- Develop pupils' literacy and communication skills across the curriculum.
- Improve the consistency of feedback given to pupils through teachers' marking.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have risen at the end of both key stages over recent years but remain below average. Girls do better than boys. The school is successful at ensuring that nearly all students leave with five or more GCSE qualifications and this reflects its inclusive ethos. Standards in mathematics have risen more sharply than English and science, especially at the end of Key Stage 3. There are significant weaknesses in students' writing and communication skills on entry to the school and this currently limits performance across subjects.

Achievement has improved in the past three years and is now good overall. Performance in the 2007 GCSE examinations shows that most groups of students achieved more highly than expected and better than pupils in similar schools. The three year trend in results was also much better than for similar schools. Able students made especially good progress.

Other inspection evidence confirmed that students currently in the school achieve well. Students made good progress in the lessons observed. The school's own effective tracking data reveals good progress by students as they move through the GCSE course and this was confirmed, for example, by results in a modular examination in mathematics in November where challenging targets set by the school were exceeded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good quality personal development and well-being makes a significant contribution to the progress of students. Students enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes towards learning. This reflects good teaching and the varied curriculum which plays a significant part in engaging many students who might otherwise become disenchanted with school. Attendance is broadly average.

Students move around the site in an orderly and safe manner, behaving well even when not directly supervised. Very good relationships exist between adults and students. Students have a clear understanding of right and wrong, partly because the headteacher and other adults act as very good role models. There is a clear and well understood system for behaviour management and, as a result, behaviour is almost always good. As one student said, 'You can't get away with anything now'. Although social and moral development is good, there are fewer opportunities for spiritual development.

Students increasingly feel involved in decision-making. For instance, they are regularly asked to comment on subject provision. The school takes their views seriously and acts on them, where appropriate. The school also demonstrates a strong commitment to a wide range of community activities. Students take part in worthwhile local events, such as attending Remembrance Day services and organising activities for the elderly. They develop a good understanding of issues relating to living in a British multicultural society, through citizenship lessons, assemblies and discussion in extended form periods. They gain a good understanding

of the world of work through varied enterprise activities and vocational programmes. However, students' preparedness for life after school is currently limited by low standards in basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved and is currently good. This is the result of strenuous efforts by senior and middle leaders to monitor and support teaching. Teachers are given regular and systematic feedback on their work, together with well focused training and effective sharing of good practice. As a result, some teaching observed was outstanding. In these lessons, teachers planned very effectively to include a variety of learning activities, the pace was good and students were actively involved in their learning. Able students were well challenged.

In most lessons, teachers had high expectations of behaviour and well established classroom routines which ensured that students concentrated well. Relationships were strong. Support staff worked effectively alongside teachers and this had a positive impact on the learning of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

In lessons where teaching was satisfactory, the tasks were not always challenging enough or well matched to students' individual needs. In a few lessons, students listened passively for too long and there was insufficient independent work to keep them interested. This sometimes led to low level disruption or lack of concentration, chiefly by boys.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has been highly innovative and largely successful in developing a curriculum which meets the needs of all students. This is seen in improved outcomes for learners, particularly the better progress of both the more able students and some of the least academic. Senior leaders have given considerable thought to the appropriateness of the curriculum at both key stages.

For younger students, the transition from primary school has been improved by the introduction in Year 7 of a Foundation Studies programme that aims to ensure a consistent and engaging approach to the teaching of the humanities and personal, social, health and citizenship education. There is also good provision for information and communication technology in Year 7. The school has piloted other cross-curricular programmes for younger students. Typically, senior leaders have fully evaluated these initiatives and have already revised the curriculum for 2008 to improve provision for thematic work, alongside enhanced time for English and mathematics.

In Years 10 and 11, there is a range of courses for students involving varying amounts of vocational and traditional academic elements. Students are carefully steered to the most suitable pathway, with good use made of performance and attitudinal data from earlier years. The new curriculum has promoted improvements in motivation, standards and behaviour.

Another interesting feature of the curriculum is the integrated studies course which links careers and personal, social and citizenship education with religious education. This programme ensures that statutory requirements in religious education are met and it has increased the numbers choosing to opt for a full GCSE course taught after school. Citizenship is well provided for and has improved as a consequence of rigorous monitoring, including feedback from students. Excellent use is made of visiting speakers to promote debate.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is a very caring school where all adults demonstrate high levels of commitment to students' well-being and progress. Staff go to considerable lengths to understand the needs of every student and to put measures in place to improve their achievements and personal development. This is particularly the case for the many students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with complex emotional or social problems. These pupils develop considerably, gain in confidence and achieve well. The school makes good use of a wide range of external agencies and partnerships to provide very effective additional support for these students.

The school has established an Inclusion Council, in addition to the usual whole school council, in order to ensure that the views of its most vulnerable students are listened to and acted upon. These students spoke very positively about the high quality of support they receive. They also talked about the difficulties they encountered when they first joined the school, how these had been resolved and the impact of the school on their self-esteem and social skills.

The progress of students is tracked systematically and well. This leads to effective intervention to support underachieving students. Because teachers have a very good understanding of students' strengths and aspirations, students receive excellent guidance concerning which choices to make when moving into Key Stage 4. Students are well aware of their current standards and expected progress. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always provide clear guidance on how students can improve.

Students, teachers and parents know exactly how well students are doing and what they should seek to achieve. The fact that 95% of parents attended the recent academic review days is an indication of most parents' support for the school. Recent changes to the organisation of the tutor groups, involving students of mixed ages, are helping students to work more closely together and provide mutual support. All students thrive in the safe and secure environment provided.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. This includes some aspects that are very good and other areas that have clearly improved in recent years. As a result, the school has continued to move forward, improving standards and achievement as well as the academic and pastoral curriculum.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She models good practice through her own commitment and intelligence. She is a strong presence around the school and well regarded by students. The headteacher is well supported by a very good senior leadership team which demonstrates the same high levels of commitment and provides good leadership to different aspects of the school. Together, this ensures a consistency of approach that is focused strongly on care for individual students and high expectations of behaviour and standards. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

The governing body has also improved, partly as a result of stronger recruitment and good leadership. It is well informed about the school, shares senior leaders' understanding of strengths

and areas for development, and is seeking to increase the involvement of more governors in the daily work of the school.

The leadership of the school is reflective and self-critical. Systematic monitoring of all aspects of school life has led to rigorous self-evaluation. Middle leadership has improved and is now good overall. Underperformance in subjects like English and science has been identified and effective strategies are now in place, supported by staff changes, to drive up standards. Subject leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They are provided with support and challenge and have responded to this well. The system of departmental review is outstanding. It is regular, thorough, challenging, draws on a wide range of evidence, and provides clear direction for future development. The school sets challenging targets and is beginning to achieve them. Links with other agencies are very good, particularly the excellent collaborative work with other schools to provide mutual training and share good practice.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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

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?	1

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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
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

Inspection of Wingfield School, Rotherham, S61 4AU

My colleagues and I very much enjoyed meeting you during the inspection on 16–17 January 2008. You told us that you enjoy the school and that it has improved a great deal over recent years. We agree.

Your behaviour was good, both around the school at break times and during lessons.

In discussions, you told us that you felt safe and that teachers showed a lot of care for you. We think that this is one of the strongest features of the school. The school is very committed to developing you all as people and to improving your work across subjects. You feel that you are given a chance to share your views about the school and one of my colleagues had an especially interesting conversation with members of your Inclusion Council. They spoke very powerfully about how the school has helped them, especially in developing their self-confidence. Overall, yours is a very caring school. Teachers make sure that you behave and you all know how well you're doing and what targets to aim for. However, we have suggested that teachers might be able to improve the feedback they give to you through their marking.

We found that most of you make good progress because the teaching is good and you want to do well. However, despite this, standards are not as high as they might be. The school agrees and wants to raise standards still further. We have suggested that it should focus on improving results in some subjects including English and science, as well as trying to improve students' communication skills across all subjects.

The headteacher leads the school very well. She is really committed to your education and care. She is determined that you should all achieve the best you can. She is well supported in this aim by other senior teachers in the school. Together, they have helped the school to improve. Wingfield is a good school. Everyone now needs to work hard to try to raise standards. After our visit, the inspection team is confident that the school has what it takes to become even better.