

Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 112969 |
| Local Authority | DERBYSHIRE LA |
| Inspection number | 311073 |
| Inspection dates | 17–18 March 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Andrew Cook HMI |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 11–19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 1882 |
| 6th form | 323 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Martin Brader |
| Headteacher | Miss Teresa Roche |
| Date of previous school inspection | 29 September 2003 |
| School address | Green Lane Dronfield Sheffield South Yorkshire S18 2FZ |
| Telephone number | 01246412372 |
| Fax number | 01246412885 |

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school is much larger than average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. There is a much lower than average proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and less than 1% whose first language is not English. The proportion of students with learning difficulties is below average but the school has recently reviewed this and reports that this figure is now moving towards the national average.

The school was redesignated as a specialist Technology College.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a school where students make satisfactory progress. Most students who join the school in Year 7 have previously achieved above average standards and they maintain similar standards when they take tests and exams in Year 9 and Year 11.

Teaching is satisfactory. Although there are a number of good lessons taught, the proportion is not enough to ensure students make better than satisfactory progress. In some of the best lessons, teaching motivates students and keeps challenging them to take on new learning. In a significant number of lessons, teaching lacks rigour and lessons fail to ensure that all students get work that is closely matched to their different abilities. The school is successfully improving teaching. Key priorities are to ensure students with learning difficulties and the most able make better progress. There is some evidence that teachers are beginning to make good use of assessment data to set targets for students and identify those who are not making sufficient progress. However, use of assessment data and the quality of academic guidance students receive is inconsistent. An example of inconsistency can be seen in the way that students' work is marked from detailed comments linked to national curriculum levels to no comment or correction.

The level of care students receive is good. Students' personal development is good. They enjoy school and their good behaviour and attitudes are often the reason why they work well in lessons. Attendance is good. Staff deal with any bullying and racism. Students' moral, social and spiritual development is good. Opportunities to appreciate and learn from different cultures only take place in some subjects and therefore students' cultural development is no better than satisfactory. Students adopt healthy lifestyles. They are well prepared to take on further education or move on to employment.

The curriculum is satisfactory and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. The curriculum is developing. For example, good work has started to broaden the choice for students who want to follow vocational study courses. The school has made impressive strides in information and communication technology (ICT) through development of the school's website. This also provides the wider public with details of local study opportunities.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership supported effectively by the senior leadership group. Over the past two years, the senior leadership group has realised that the effectiveness of the school must be judged on how much progress students make and they have effectively put all of their energy into making this point. The quality of other leaders in the school varies and when taking into account the measure of student progress some have very limited effectiveness. Governors support the drive of the headteacher to focus on achievement. Because they now receive more information about how well the school is doing, they are able to ask pertinent questions.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The sixth form provides a satisfactory standard of education for its students. Overall standards are average at A level and AS level GCE and are rising, especially for higher attaining students. Achievement is satisfactory overall and improving. Students have positive attitudes and enjoy their studies and their personal development and well-being is good. Teaching is satisfactory. Students find most lessons interesting and challenging. However, occasionally students do not

have sufficient opportunity to actively participate in their learning and develop independent study skills. The satisfactory curriculum offers a good range of academic subjects but a more limited range of vocational subjects. Students feel very well cared for and report that their worries are quickly and effectively resolved by their tutors. Academic guidance is improving and many students now receive clear advice from their teachers on how to improve their work to reach their challenging targets. However, this is not yet consistent practice across all subjects and care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. Students report that they occasionally find private study difficult because the available computers are too slow and the accommodation overcrowded. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school has effective measures to regularly check students' achievement and to remedy slow progress. This is leading to improvements in standards and achievement. However, the responsibility for standards in teaching and learning is shared amongst middle leaders and not enough is being done to ensure a consistent approach or level of effectiveness.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace and challenge of teaching so that it meets the needs of students with different abilities.
- Build on emerging good practice to use assessment data robustly to identify where students are not making good progress.
- Provide all students with academic guidance to show them how they can make better progress.
- Improve the consistency and effectiveness of middle leadership.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

Students make satisfactory progress in the main school. In 2007, although Year 9 standards were above average they were much closer to the national average than results had been since 2003.

The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades A* - C has fallen over the last three years but remains above the national average. Standards in art and design and geography were below average. A number of students with learning difficulties and some of the most able had not made satisfactory progress by the time they took their GCSE exams in 2007. The school has taken action to address underachievement and, although there is some way to go, better provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the most able students is improving their progress.

The school has failed to meet some of its specialist college academic targets. Standards in technology overall dropped in 2007. The school has made some progress towards meeting its specialist curriculum goals for 11 to 16 year olds but has had less success in meeting those in the sixth form. For example, in mathematics the school has met its target for early GCSE entry but has not increased its uptake in physics or provided vocational courses in technology in the sixth form.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The spiritual, moral and social development of students is good and well developed through the school's personal social education (PSE) programme, assemblies, and activities in sports and arts. Behaviour around the school is good. Students move good-naturedly around the crowded site but the lack of outdoor space prevents younger students from 'letting off steam'. Students say that occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. A well-planned PSE programme contributes to students' knowledge of healthy lifestyles and students enjoy eating in the attractive dining rooms. Many students take part in a wide range of after-school sports. The School Council, which participates in a range of decision-making activities, helps students develop an understanding of responsible citizenship. The curriculum, work experience and modules on personal finance and work-related learning contribute to students' preparation for their future economic well-being and enable students to leave with an impressive 'record of achievement' document. Students say that they enjoy school and, as a result, levels of attendance are above the national average and recently have notably improved for Year 11 and sixth form students. Although students have many opportunities for contributing to the wider community, they would benefit from further opportunities to develop their responsibilities within the school and the local community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school has focused upon various developments in teaching and learning over the last two years, which are beginning to bear fruit. Good lessons are characterised by positive relations between students and adults, appropriate levels of challenge and varied activities that promote interest and engagement. Good questioning by teachers pushes students to explain their learning and ideas. Students work hard in these lessons and many reach good standards in tests and examinations. Learning in the majority of cases across the school is, however, satisfactory. Pace and challenge is variable, there is not always a correct match of tasks to students' needs and lower expectations lead to uninspiring teaching. Planning does not always identify clear learning objectives and there is insufficient recapping of what has been covered to convince students that they have achieved them. As a result, students' attention wanders and progress suffers. Marking and feedback are insufficiently developed across the school so that students do not always know how well they are progressing or what they have to do to reach their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. It is broad, balanced and the Specialist Status has some impact upon provision in design and technology and ICT. Statutory requirements are in place and changes to the Key Stage 4 physical education curriculum next year are planned

to meet recommendations. Work has been undertaken to develop basic skills in literacy and numeracy and the personal, social, health and citizenship programme contributes to students' economic well being. Subject departments are beginning to plan more effectively to meet the needs of all students. Good developments within the 14–16 curriculum are being made and these initiatives have begun to bring a clearer vocational focus. They involve working with local colleges and employers and bring greater choice for students. Progression routes within and beyond the school are clear and well established. There is an extensive programme of extra curricular provision, including visits, which, together with the good use of ICT as a learning tool, contribute well to students' personal development and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

Good procedures ensure students' health, welfare and safety both in school and when students are on work placements. Arrangements for safeguarding of students are robust and regularly reviewed. The school works well with agencies to support the students' pastoral welfare. Care for vulnerable students and those who have been excluded is a strength of the school.

Provision for students with learning difficulties is good where there is specialist support. However, elsewhere in the school it is satisfactory overall. Good practice in planning work to meet the needs of both lower and potential higher attaining students is not being applied consistently by all teachers. Year 11 students at high risk of not meeting their target grades are individually supported by staff although this strategy last year was not effective for almost a quarter of students involved. There is emerging practice in giving students sufficient academic guidance to make better progress, which is following the good practice in some subjects and year groups. Year leaders are not yet consistently using robust assessment data systems to identify students who would benefit from help to make better progress early in their school career. Students are guided well in choosing subjects to study from age 14 onwards and in planning their future post-16. Transition from primary school is managed well, as there is effective liaison between the schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

The school evaluates leadership and management as good but the variation in quality makes it satisfactory. Since joining the school, the good leadership of the headteacher has refocused the school on the progress students make rather than assuming that the standards they reach indicate they have done as well as they could have. Recent good appointments to the senior leadership group have ensured that there is extra capacity in the school to improve provision. Work in the sixth form and the coordination of how the school checks students' progress are just some of the ongoing work that demonstrates the senior leadership group are working effectively with the headteacher. The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

There is significant variation in the quality of Heads of Faculty. They have all had to adjust their focus so that their effectiveness is judged by the amount of progress students make in the subjects they lead. Heads of Faculty monitor and evaluate teaching and learning although

practice varies across each department and in some cases it is not robust. In science, it is particularly weak and there is little to show how analysis of assessment data has been used to identify the reasons for less effective teaching. Effective systems are in place for faculty improvement plans to contribute to the school's overall improvement plan. The quality of such plans is inconsistent and often targets do not precisely indicate by how much provision needs to improve to indicate acceptable progress.

Since the beginning of this academic year, the school has changed the job description of year leaders to be more focused on the academic achievement of students. This is a new role and evidence that this role is effectively driving up standards is very patchy because the school has not made clear judgements about the proportion of students making different amounts of progress.

The governors recognise the schools emphasis on students' progress. They receive accurate information and because of this know about the inconsistent quality of leadership and management. Governors have a good working relationship with the headteacher.

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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 | 16-19 |
|---|----------------|-------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 3 | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 | 3 |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 | |

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 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 | 2 | |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 | |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 3 | |
| 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? | 3 | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 | 3 |

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? | 3 | 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 | |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 | 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 | 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

19 March 2008

Dear Students,

Inspection of Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School, Dronfield, S18 2FZ

Following the inspection of your school, I am writing to inform you that the school was judged to be satisfactory. One of the main reasons why this judgement was made was because most of you make satisfactory progress in lessons. Many of you told us you enjoy school. We judged your behaviour and attitudes to be good. Staff make sure that the school is a safe place to be in. It was good to hear that many of you are taking the opportunities to join sports clubs and choosing the healthy options for lunch. There is a satisfactory range of subjects and courses on offer for you and there is some good work going on to make sure there are more vocational choices as you get older.

You make satisfactory progress because teaching in lessons is often satisfactory. The best lessons are those when everyone in a lesson gets work that matches their ability. This does not always happen and we have asked the school to make sure that this happens especially if you find learning difficult or if you are very able. If you ever have work that is too hard or too easy, you must let your teacher know. We have also asked the school to use the results of any tests or exams that you do as well as the work they grade or level to keep a check on how much progress you make. You also need to know about the progress you are making. Make sure you find out. We have also asked teachers to give you targets and to make sure, when they mark your work it helps you understand how well you have done and what you need to do to improve. When you get good advice, follow it.

Miss Roche your headteacher is a good leader. She has made sure that everyone, including governors, is more focused on making sure you make at least good progress. Some of the other leaders still have some work to do and we have asked the senior leadership group to make sure all leaders do a good job.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector