

The Snaith School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118102
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	312812
Inspection dates	5–6 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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	813
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sheena Young
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Pickerill
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2005
School address	Pontefract Road Snaith Goole East Riding of Yorkshire DN14 9LB
Telephone number	01405 860327
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Age group	11-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Snaith School has specialist status as a business and enterprise college. It is smaller in numbers than average and serves the town of Snaith and the surrounding rural area. Overall the social and economic background of the students is relatively advantaged and a well below average proportion of students is eligible for a free school meal. Few students come from minority ethnic groups and there are very few whose first language is not English. Below average proportions of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has Sportsmark and Healthy Schools awards and Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Snaith School is a good school where students achieve well. Inspectors agree with the school's own assessment that all aspects of its work are good. Both students and their parents are very positive about the education the school provides. Parents comments included, 'an excellent school where the children come first', 'fantastic approach that recognises and rewards effort, not just academic achievement' and 'Snaith school has been the best possible start for my children'.

Students enter Year 7 with average standards and make good progress as they move through the school to reach above average standards when they leave. They achieve particularly well in the core subjects of mathematics and science but relatively less well in English. The school has taken decisive action to remedy this weakness and standards in English are now beginning to rise and most students are on track to meet their challenging targets.

Students achieve well because teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Typically lessons are well planned, activities are varied and interesting, teaching is knowledgeable and clear explanations extend students' skills and understanding well. In some lessons, which are satisfactory rather than good, activities are less stimulating and challenging and the pace of learning is slower. The school recognises that in order to improve further it needs to increase the proportion of lessons that are good or better. Leaders and managers are now monitoring lessons more closely and identifying good practice more precisely. However, this good practice is not yet shared sufficiently widely.

Leadership and management are good. Leadership is sensitive and supportive; it encourages the best efforts of staff and students. New appointments, reallocation of responsibilities and the training of middle managers are facilitating tighter management at all levels. With the recent track record of improvement in achievement, and strengthening of the levers of achievement such as assessment of students' progress and the development of teaching, the school is in a good position to make further headway.

Students' personal development and the care, guidance and support they receive are good. Ensuring that students are healthy, safe, happy and achieving well are at the heart of the school's work. Students are well behaved, mature young people who enjoy school and attend regularly. They get on well with each other and with their teachers so the school has a friendly and supportive atmosphere where all individuals are valued and respected.

Students have gained real benefit from the school's specialist status as a business and enterprise college. The school has forged good links with businesses and shares its expertise with other schools and colleges. The curriculum is good and has been enriched by the addition of vocational courses and the provision for business related subjects is good. There is a wealth of opportunities for students to develop enterprise and teamwork skills, which prepare students outstandingly well for future work and education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning by identifying and sharing best practice more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and achievement is good.

In the 2007, Year 9 tests students reached above average standards overall and achieved well. Test results were above average in mathematics and science but closer to average in English with fewer students achieving the higher grades.

GCSE results in 2007 were above average, as they have been for the last three years. Students achieved well and challenging targets, including those for specialist subjects, were met. Students achieved best in drama, art, information technology, electronics, geography, mathematics, science and religious education and least well in English and food technology. The school has recognised that students were performing less well in English at both key stages and has taken strong action to remedy this weakness. Currently, students are progressing well in lessons and detailed school data indicate that most are on track to reach their targets in English this year.

All groups of students are achieving well including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who receive good individual help from specialist staff.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues is developed well through planned experiences in subjects such as religious education, English, drama, and through the arrangements for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Some opportunities are missed for this development in both assemblies and tutor periods. The school has a positive, caring ethos which fosters very good relationships. Students enjoy school and are keen to learn. Their attendance, well monitored and promoted by the school, is substantially above the national average.

There is a well established code of conduct in the school. Students respond very well to its clear expectations and this is reflected in their good behaviour in lessons and around school. Students say they feel secure and are confident that staff or older students will quickly help them resolve any problems that may arise.

Students make positive contributions to the school and wider community. They value the extensive range of opportunities to take responsibility, for example, as prefects, anti-bullying mentors, or by serving on the school council. Students have a good awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The pastoral guidance programme effectively helps them learn about health related issues, including drugs awareness and sex education. They benefit from regular exercise through their good participation in physical education and a range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Good careers advice, extensive opportunities to develop business and enterprise skills and a wide range of vocational courses ensure that students are extremely well prepared for their future adult working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Two thirds of lessons observed were at least good. However, the school recognises, and inspectors agree, that the proportion of lessons that are good or outstanding is not yet as high as it might be. Teachers' secure levels of subject knowledge ensure that most students are well prepared for examinations. The very best lessons are stimulating and exciting. Learning objectives and outcomes are shared. Teachers plan a range of different activities and use a variety of resources that engage and challenge students. Good teaching enables them to become involved in their own learning, building on existing skills, with timely guidance from the teachers. Pace is good and so students achieve well. Students' work is marked regularly and most know how to improve further. Classroom management and relationships are good. Support staff work effectively alongside teachers and this has a positive impact on the learning of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Where lessons are satisfactory teachers' expectations are not as high as they could be, marking is less constructive and homework varies in quality and quantity. Sometimes teachers give insufficient explanation of new key learning and work is not as well matched to the needs of all students.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and has ample breadth and depth to meet the needs of all students well. A good range of both academic and vocational courses of different levels of difficulty are offered which suit both higher and lower attaining students. Specialist status has a positive impact on the curriculum so it provides good opportunities for students to study business related subjects and to develop their enterprise skills. As a result, students are particularly well prepared for the world of work. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and innovative cross curricular courses are being introduced in Year 7. The school is making good use of its extensive links with partner schools and colleges and is leading the way in preparing to offer a new diploma course in business, administration and finance in Year 10.

The PSHE curriculum together with new and recently improved arrangements for the teaching of citizenship are contributing well to students' personal development. However, registration and assembly times are not always as effectively used as they might be for promoting students' personal development. Students enjoy participating in extra-curricular activities, particularly sports and also speak enthusiastically about the many trips and educational visits they have been on.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and enable students to achieve well. There is a high level of commitment and concern for the welfare of each student, regardless of capability or circumstance. Necessary health, safety and safeguarding requirements are in place. Students are well known to staff and say they feel safe and well cared for. They trust staff to take their concerns seriously and value the steps taken by the school to deal with issues, such as bullying, should they occur. Effective partnerships with outside agencies help to provide sensitive care

and support for vulnerable students. Strong links with feeder primary schools smooth the transfer of Year 7 students into their new school, augmented by a popular residential experience early in their first term. A well planned guidance programme ensures students receive good support and information, for example, when deciding on their career and post-16 educational opportunities. Good links are maintained with parents through regular reports and progress meetings. Both academic and pastoral progress is now closely tracked throughout the school; most students know their targets and how to improve their work. Checks on progress are regular and those doing less well than they should are identified and effective support helps bring them back on track.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's skilful and perceptive leadership has stimulated the loyalty and commitment of staff at all levels in striving to maintain good quality in the school's work and seeking further improvement. In this she is well supported by the senior team. Senior staff generally have an accurate picture of how things stand and take action accordingly. New appointments and changes to senior and middle management are smoothing the progress of innovation. Opportunities have been provided prudently for the professional development of middle managers; subject departments are now generally well placed to forge ahead. The targets set for achievement and the uptake of courses associated with the specialist school status are challenging and are being met with success. Precision in pinpointing targets for improvement in the planning and presentation of lessons is beginning to develop; there is more scope for the sharing of good practice in teaching. The school has been entrepreneurial in turning the opportunities of specialist status to best advantage within the school and for the benefit of the wider community. Resources are used well and the school provides good value for money. Governors have a sharp perception of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are painstaking in their support and encouragement of initiatives for improving the school's provision.

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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?	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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

9 June 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of The Snaith School, East Riding of Yorkshire, DN14 9LB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and the team of inspectors when we visited your school. We particularly enjoyed our discussions with you and were very appreciative of the straightforward and honest way in which you gave us your opinions about Snaith School.

This is what we have said about your school in our report:

- Snaith school is a good school where you achieve well and reach above average standards
- your personal development and the care, guidance and support you receive are good
- the school is well led and managed and teaching and learning are good
- Snaith School has benefited from being a business and enterprise college and this has helped you to be particularly well prepared for the world of work.

This is what we have asked your school to do now:

- raise standards and achievement in English
- increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and learning by identifying and sharing best practice more effectively.

Please help your school to become even better by working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Wallis

Lead inspector