

The Hayfield School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106811
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	324468
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Heather Barnett HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1105
Sixth form	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Hartshorn
Headteacher	Dr Sai Patel
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2006
School address	Hurst Lane Auckley Doncaster South Yorkshire DN9 3HG
Telephone number	01302 770589
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Age group	11–18
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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

Hayfield is a larger than average mixed comprehensive school. The school achieved specialist status for mathematics and computing in September 2004 and is a Training School. In April 2008, the school gained specialist language status. It has achieved a number of awards, such as Investors in People and Sport England. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups is low compared with the national average, as is the proportion of students whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below average, as is the percentage of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Few students come from areas of social and economic disadvantage. The school has a large community education programme. A new headteacher took up post in April 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hayfield is a good school with outstanding aspects. Students enjoy coming to school and behave well. Achievement is good and standards are above average. Students enter the school with standards that are slightly above average and make good progress to achieve results that are above average at the end of Key Stage 4. The personal development and well-being of learners is good with some outstanding features. Students have an excellent understanding of the need for a healthy and safe lifestyle and their attendance is outstanding. They are well prepared for their next steps at the end of Year 11.

Teaching and learning are good. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well and teachers use questions effectively to check students' understanding. However, the work planned for lessons does not always meet the needs of all learners or challenge the most-able and there is a need to involve students more actively in their learning. The school is aware of these issues and is working on them. The curriculum is being well developed to meet the needs of different groups of students. Extra-curricular activities are very well developed and highly popular with the students.

Students receive outstanding care, guidance and support. There are very effective transition arrangements to support students when they enter the school. There is also an exemplary tracking system. This supports students in helping them to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Leadership and management are good. A great many initiatives have been put in place by the new headteacher and their positive impact can already be seen. However, it is too early to see their full effect. The leadership has highlighted key priorities for development. These rightly include further development of communications by working on more effective ways of gathering and taking account of students' and parents' views. The specialisms of the school have been used to good effect, for example, in supporting improvements to the curriculum and in students' achievement. The school provides good value for money. It has responded well to the issues raised at the last inspection and demonstrates good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form is a popular choice not just for students within the school, but also for the increasing number of external students it is attracting. Students' attainment on entry is broadly average and their results represent good progress over two years. The retention rate at both AS and A2 is high. By the end of two years, many achieve pass grades at a level that enables a significant proportion of them to continue into higher education, although the proportion of higher grades at A level was lower than would have been expected compared with national averages in 2008. There are variations in achievement between subjects. Business studies results are outstanding, in contrast, however, psychology results were disappointing in 2008. Changes have been made here and tracking data show improvement.

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students develop confidence and personal skills to equip them for post-18 work or study. They feel well looked after and many make a good contribution to the rest of the school through the help they give to younger pupils with their literacy and numeracy. Teaching and learning are good overall, but sometimes teachers could provide more challenge for the most-able learners. The curriculum is good and the care,

guidance and support the students receive is excellent. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good and strongly focused on supporting students and helping them to fulfil their potential. Students receive sound guidance for the transition into the sixth form and from it to higher education and further training.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that lessons are planned so that work set matches the ability of all learners and provides sufficient challenge for the most-able students.
- Further develop teaching and learning to ensure students are more actively involved in their learning.
- Further develop communication strategies to ensure that the views of students and parents are collected and responded to more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and achievement is good. Students join the school with slightly above average prior attainment and they make good progress. The 2008 examination results placed the school above the national average for all indicators, including the percentage of students achieving five or more passes at A* to C (including English and mathematics) and A* to G grades. A number of departments perform particularly well, including communication studies and modern foreign languages.

Over the last three years standards in English has been static, but above the national average. In mathematics, standards have varied slightly but again they have been above the national average. The progress students make between entering and leaving the school has been variable over the last three years. The reasons behind this pattern have been recognised by the school and effective strategies put in place to address them. Monitoring information now indicates that the school is on track to meet its challenging Key Stage 4 targets for 2009. The specialist school provision, in the mathematics and ICT departments, has been instrumental in supporting the efforts to raise performance in all areas of the school. The school did identify in the past that students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities did not always make expected progress. As a result of strong support these students are now making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' personal development and well-being are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students get on well, and show consideration for other people's values in lessons and around the school. They develop a good awareness of their own values through religious education and personal, social and health education in particular, as well as through their experience of different cultures on residential activities and visits abroad. The school has introduced a further link with an African school to enhance this awareness. Students' adoption of healthy and safe approaches to life are both outstanding. This is in part due to the guidance they get from adults, but also linked to their exceptionally high take up of physical activities. Attendance is outstanding, rates are high and increasing. Students make a good contribution to the school and local community, for example, two boys in Year 9 led a reading programme in a local primary school. The contribution of the school council is more limited and the school is working to improve this. Behaviour is good with some very positive aspects seen in Year 7 physical education (PE) lessons and in the dining room, though several groups of students

expressed concern about classroom behaviour. Students enjoy most lessons, particularly those where they are able to be active and independent. All of this combines with well developed basic skills to prepare them well for future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons so that there is a range of interesting activities and students are clear about what they are to learn. There are good relationships and positive behaviour in lessons, especially when students are actively involved in their learning. Good use is made of ICT to support learning, for example, in composition lessons in music. Teachers use questions to ascertain students' prior understanding, but do not always encourage students to develop their thinking sufficiently. Data are increasingly used to inform planning. However, lesson objectives are not yet sufficiently focused on the different levels at which students are working, so work is not well-enough differentiated to meet the needs of all students or to challenge the most-able. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to model learning well. However, occasionally they spend too long on introductory activities or offer too much information, so that opportunities are missed for students to learn independently or with their friends. While marking is well done in many subjects, there are inconsistencies across school where it does not tell students at what level they are working or what they must do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and fosters students' personal and academic development well. It is continuously under review and has been modified recently to ensure that it meets the needs, interests and aspirations of learners of all abilities more closely. For example, more applied vocational courses for GCSE have been introduced in Key Stage 4. As a consequence, the results already obtained by lower ability students in BTEC double award science demonstrate good achievement from their starting points. Following consideration of students' preferences, the views of parents and also teachers' evaluation of students' performance in both their academic work and attitudes towards study, they are assigned to appropriate different curriculum routes in Key Stage 4. The vocational offer has been extended and movement between various routes is always possible.

Students speak highly of the very impressive extra-curricular activities on offer and school data shows there is high take-up in a range of these, including sports. They add that the current personal, social and health education programme and also citizenship are very effective in ensuring that they are aware of issues associated with the problems of bullying and racism. As they say, 'We learn about equality and how everyone should be treated the same.'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school's arrangements to ensure students' safety and well-being are rigorous. There is a well established tutorial system and students are clear that they are well supported and always have someone to turn to, who will treat them with respect. Teachers and support staff monitor the needs and progress of vulnerable students

and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities very carefully, and work closely with parents to resolve difficulties. Good links with outside agencies enable the school to tailor support to individual students' needs so that almost all are able to progress into further education or training. There is an extensive induction programme to ensure that students can settle quickly into Year 7, which is being used as a model by the local authority. The recently introduced tracking system is having an exemplary impact on staff and students' understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has put a number of new initiatives in place. The senior management team has also been restructured, with new posts of responsibility being introduced, for example, to monitor quality assurance and teaching and learning. These developments are already having a positive impact on some areas, such as the curriculum, the new reporting system and the tracking of students' progress, but it is too early to see their full impact. The school's self-evaluation is very detailed and shows an awareness of strengths and areas for development. Departments have produced self-evaluation forms for the first time this year and some areas have been further developed than others in terms of critical analysis of information. The performance management system, school development plan and self-assessment have been effectively linked together. The use of challenging targets is more robust this year and used across all areas of the school to support improvements in students' progress.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. The impact of language specialist status has been used well to develop the school's international dimension. The school works well with a wide range of partners. There are positive relationships between all groups of students and staff within the school. The school recognises that it needs to do more to gather and use the views of students and parents. Although many parents are highly supportive of the school, responses to the inspection parental questionnaire showed that a significant minority felt there were issues relating to communication and the school not taking into account their views and those of their children. The governing body has recently restructured its committees to make more effective use of the expertise of governors and are planning to develop links with departments. Governors fulfil their statutory duties, support the school well and provide effective challenge to 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
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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
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?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2	

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	1	
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	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of The Hayfield School, Doncaster, DN9 3HG

Thank you for all of the help you gave to the inspectors when we were at your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing the work you were doing. As well as looking at your work we read the questionnaires completed by your parents; they were most helpful.

We think Hayfield is a good school with outstanding care, guidance and support. You are making good progress and reach standards that are above average at GCSE and A level. The school provides you with the skills you need to do well when you leave. Your personal development is good, you enjoy coming to school, have an outstanding attendance rate and excellent understanding of the need for a safe and healthy lifestyle. Many of you enjoy making a helpful contribution to the local community, but would like the school council to have a greater role within the school. Teaching and learning are good and you work best when actively involved in your learning. The curriculum is good and improving. You really appreciate the wide ranging extra-curricular activities on offer. The leaders and managers of the school have a clear idea of what the school needs to do to improve further and are working hard on these areas. The main areas are:

- making sure lessons are planned so that work set matches the ability of all of you and provides challenge for the most-able
- further developing teaching and learning so that you are more actively involved in your learning
- further developing communication strategies to ensure that your views and those of your parents are collected and responded to more effectively.