

Risedale Sports and Community College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121663
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	335397
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Honoree Gordon HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	520
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Dennis
Headteacher	Mr Mick Hill
Date of previous school inspection	0 April 2008
School address	Hipswell Catterick Garrison North Yorkshire DL9 4BD
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, and held meetings with the Executive Principal, the Associate Principal and members of the senior and middle leadership teams, governors, staff, groups of students and a few parents and carers. They observed the work of the college and looked at documents and records. These included the college's data about students' progress; records related to safeguarding; the college's plans for improvement, and evaluations of how effectively these were being implemented; and information about how the college monitors lessons.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the college's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- students' current standards and progress, including the results of GCSE and equivalent examinations in 2009
- how far the college had improved since going into special measures in 2008
- whether teaching had improved sufficiently to ensure that students always make good progress in lessons
- safeguarding policy and records.

Information about the school

Risedale Sports and Community College is a small secondary school with a specialism in sport and a secondary specialism in English. Since September 2009 Risedale has been part of a 'hard' federation with Northallerton College (which has students aged 14 to 19). Risedale Sports and Community College draws from several local primary schools. Many students are from army families and consequently mobility is high among the student population. A small number of army families are from Nepal and Vietnam.

At the previous inspection in May 2008 the college was placed into a category of concern and was judged to require special measures in order to improve. Since then the Principal of Northallerton College has been Executive Principal of Risedale, assisted by an Associate Principal. The college has had three monitoring inspections since May 2008. This inspection was the fourth and deemed to be a section 5 full inspection. In September 2009 a newly refurbished youth centre funded by the local authority opened on site. This is used by students in Years 10 and 11.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the college no longer requires special measures.

Overall, effectiveness is satisfactory and the outcomes for students are satisfactory. The college has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 2008. The outstanding leadership of the Executive Principal and the partnership with Northallerton College that have led ultimately to formal federation underpin this. Examination results in 2009 for students at the end of Year 11 rose considerably compared with results in 2008. Standards in English improved markedly. Though attainment remains well below average in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, these results are an encouraging sign, reflecting the good improvement noted at each monitoring inspection on tackling the areas of weakness. Current standards, as observed in students' work and in lessons, are broadly average.

Students' attainment on entry to Risedale is below the national average and many have low literacy levels. Students make satisfactory progress overall during their time at the college. In a number of the lessons inspectors observed progress was good. This is because teaching has improved. The college has made it a priority to improve teaching in order to promote students' achievement. The systems to track students' progress operate well so that teachers have a clear picture now of how students are doing and can use this information when they plan lessons. Some teachers are more effective in this than others, so some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in the use of assessment remain. As a result, in some lessons pace can be too slow and students are not sufficiently challenged. This slows down their progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory: it has been improved and now meets students' needs better, adding to their enjoyment of learning. The college is focusing strongly on developing students' literacy skills as a key to higher achievement. The federation is increasingly offering opportunities for shared resources, staffing and expertise that extend the overall provision for students.

Behaviour is satisfactory. Students say that they are happy at the college and that it has improved over the preceding year. They are clear that there is a stronger focus on learning. Students themselves show much better attitudes to learning than in the recent past, though they have yet to develop all the skills they need to be really independent, responsible learners. Many students are aware of the levels they are working at but are often less sure of what to do to improve. Students are getting more involved in the life of the college and, of late, have more opportunities to express their views, for example through a school council.

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Students say that they feel safe in the college and that any bullying is dealt with better than before. They welcome the anti-bullying council, though they have ideas about how they might like to take these recent initiatives further, or improve them.

The college has a clear vision for building on recent improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels have developed the necessary skills to be able to do this, as demonstrated by the positive impact of their actions thus far. Self-evaluation is robust, accurate and honest. The college shows good capacity to sustain this improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by:
 - making sure that the progress of students is consistently good
 - building upon recent improvements in students' literacy skills.
- Ensure that students make faster progress and further improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - increasing the pace and level of challenge in lessons, so that good progress is evident throughout the college
 - seeing that teachers' use of the information they have about students' progress is more widespread and that they use this information more effectively in planning and delivering lessons that will meet the whole range of students' needs.
- Promote students' personal development by:
 - consolidating and extending recent initiatives aimed at encouraging student voice in school
 - helping students to take on more responsibility for their own learning and ensuring that they all know what to do to improve their work further.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Students' achievement and enjoyment are satisfactory overall. Students are now making at least satisfactory progress in their learning. In a number of lessons observed their progress was good. This was usually when the teaching was good, too, and this is enabling students to begin to catch up to where they should be. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from ethnic minority groups are progressing in a similar way. For a good number of them progress is good.

Over the last year the standards students reach by the time that they leave the college at the end of Year 11 have risen, though they remain well below average. The results of GCSE and other equivalent examinations that were taken in 2009 show a marked increase in the proportion of students gaining a number of good grades. The proportion

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who gained good qualifications including English and mathematics also rose. This latter figure now places the college just above the minimum national threshold that is set for secondary schools and represents a considerable improvement on the results students obtained in 2008.

In English, the proportion of students who gained good GCSE grades rose noticeably in 2009 and stands at just under half of the year group. Moreover, half of the students in Year 11 additionally obtained an adult literacy and numeracy qualification at a level equivalent to GCSE. In this way the college is now helping students to be better equipped with the basic skills they will need for future employment or training. This improvement is directly related to the college's push on developing literacy and has been influenced by the college's secondary specialism.

Students' attainment in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 4 is also improving, though not as rapidly. Attainment in these subjects is still well below average. The improvement in students' attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is due to several factors that have begun to combine to have a positive impact: better tracking of students' progress, so that the college knows how each student is doing; more inspired and better-planned teaching; and the intensive support that has been provided for students who are at risk of underachieving.

The move to a more vocationally based course in physical education has made a good contribution to the rise in overall standards in the college. The specialism has also led to higher rates of student participation in sport and stronger links with the local community. This makes an important contribution to students' health. Through the programme for personal, social and health education, students have some awareness of other factors related to a healthy lifestyle.

In other year groups the standards observed in students' work and in lessons are better than at the time of the previous inspection in 2008, and now are broadly average. . However, students' low levels of literacy still hold them back in a number of subjects. The college is aware of this and continues to tackle literacy with vigour.

Attendance has risen and is now broadly average, reflecting students' greater enjoyment. There are effective procedures for working to improve the attendance of a small number of students who are persistently absent. Exclusion rates have fallen as the college has found alternative ways of keeping students engaged, positive and able to succeed in learning.

Students' awareness of other cultures is growing, but to date the college has not drawn extensively on the background or experiences of the different groups of students and families it has. A forum for parents and carers, and one specifically for families from Nepal and Vietnam, have begun to work together actively to raise awareness of other cultures, both in the college and the local community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching has improved. The college has travelled a considerable distance to reach the point where teaching is securely satisfactory and much of it is good. Inspectors saw a number of good lessons and some inspired teaching, where students were really engaged by the tasks set. In one outstanding English lesson higher-attaining students in Year 8 had been set two different levels of task to suit the abilities within that set, to write about how effectively a poet was using language. Because the tasks set were so well matched to each student's ability this generated animated discussion in groups about use of language. Students were able to demonstrate their understanding of key features they had learnt in quite a sophisticated way.

However, in a number of lessons the pace dragged a little and students were not being sufficiently challenged. This meant that students' progress was slower. Sometimes teachers gave too much time to relatively simple tasks. Teachers demonstrate that they now have the skills needed to move learning on, but lesson plans and delivery are not yet sufficiently refined to ensure an exact match between their expectations of what students can do and the actual skill level or point each student has already reached. Students are generally aware of the levels they are working at, but less so about how they might improve. Though teachers' use of assessment is generally much better now, there is still inconsistency in how effectively they use this information.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a strong current priority to improve basic skills. This is helping students to 'close the gap' with where they should be in relation to standards attained. There is an appropriate range of vocational options, some of which are offered through the federation and links with colleges. The curriculum is more flexible than it

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was previously because the federation facilitates the sharing of specialist staff and expertise among teachers. The partnership between Risedale and Northallerton is particularly strong, with a shared timetable and the possibility of extending this to offer a wider range of progression routes into the sixth form. Changes to the curriculum have ensured that it meets students' needs better than before. For example, all students are able to follow a greater number of GCSE courses or gain additional qualifications.

The care, guidance and support provided to students are satisfactory, with a number of good features. Since the previous inspection the provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or additional language needs, has been better organised through a dedicated unit, through setting in small groups, and through specific help from teaching assistants. A Nepalese teaching assistant provides English language support. The college is in the process of collating a database that will show teachers all aspects of a student's academic and pastoral progress at a glance, including the student's views and information about his or her particular needs. In this way the college hopes that lessons can be better tailored to individual students' needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The college has good capacity to sustain its recent improvement. The federation has brought with it new governance arrangements that are providing strength across the two schools. It is a new body, but much expertise has carried forward. Governors are well informed and show good awareness of the college's strengths and areas for improvement. They are not afraid to challenge the college's leaders but are still developing awareness of some wider aspects of college life.

The leadership of the Executive Principal and the Associate Principal is outstanding. They have set out the agenda for improvement clearly but, importantly, have taken other staff along with them at a pace that means impact can now be seen in improved achievement and in several other aspects of the college's provision.

The quality and skills of middle and senior managers have developed rapidly over the last year so that all are confidently playing their part in driving forward improvements and in monitoring the impact of actions taken. The college has a good system for monitoring the quality of lessons. Record forms are comprehensive but do not focus enough on the detail of the learning outcomes for students.

Much of the improvement in teaching is directly attributable to the strong partnership

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with Northallerton College that has fostered the sharing of good practice. The college also continues to benefit from close links, good support and advice from the local authority. The new youth centre is an example of an initiative supported by the local authority that is a response to students' views and is promoting social skills and engagement among older students.

Procedures and practice to help safeguard students are good. The college has conducted all the necessary checks on staff and keeps the required safety records. Staff receive regular training on child protection. The college's work to promote equality and tackle discrimination and its promotion of community cohesion are satisfactory. Good links continue to develop with the local community. For example, a reading project is underway at two of the primary schools, as part of the drive on literacy. The parents' and carers' forums are an indication of improved communication, so that families from different backgrounds are able to work more closely with the college to support their children.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires are not normally distributed to parents and carers for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so. Inspectors were able to talk to groups of students and a few parents and carers, who were supportive of the school and appreciated the good moves the school is making to work with different groups of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 November 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Risedale Sports and Community College, North Yorkshire, DL9 4BD

I am writing to thank you for your help when I came to inspect the college recently with Mr Gulab and to tell you what we found.

We agree with you that the college has improved a lot since the previous inspection in 2008. Indeed, we have judged that it no longer requires special measures. The leaders and managers of the college have shown that they have clear ideas for how to improve the college further and they have the capacity needed to make this happen.

All aspects of the college's work are now at least satisfactory. Some, such as attendance, are also continuing to improve. We judged a few aspects of the college's work to be good.

- The college's procedures for helping to safeguard you are good.
- The ways in which the college works in partnership with others, such as other schools and your families, to provide education and opportunities for you are good. We can see how strong the links are, particularly with Northallerton College. This has brought real benefits to Risedale.
- The vision and drive that all leaders and managers have for making the college better are good. Mr Hill and Mr Kelly together have shown outstanding leadership in making things happen. We saw good improvement since your previous inspection.
- The careful check on lessons is good.

Here is what we think the college needs to work on next.

- It needs to continue to raise your standards in English, mathematics and science. The GCSE and other examination results in 2009 now put the college above the minimum level that the government has set for schools. However, your attainment is still well below the national average so the priority given to these subjects must continue.
- Teachers need to get the lessons right. They have worked hard to do this, but we would like to see further improvement. Sometimes lessons lack pace and you are not sufficiently challenged. Teachers need to use the information they have about your progress to ensure that lessons are always pitched at the right level to help you make good progress.

- The college needs to work on how best to promote your personal development, for example through building on the opportunities you now have for expressing your views about college life and how you can get involved.

You can help by:

- continuing to work hard to develop your skills in English, mathematics and science
- looking at how you can become more independent and responsible in your own learning.

Yours sincerely

Honoree Gordon

Her Majesty's Inspector

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