

Hebburn Comprehensive School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108731
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	337134
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Tanya Harber Stuart 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 of pupils on the school roll	952
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Robert Pinder
Headteacher	Mr Niall Anderson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 28 lessons and observed 28 teachers; seven of these observations were carried out jointly with members of the extended senior leadership team. Meetings were held with the chair of governors, members of the school's staff and groups of students. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings including governors' meetings, documentation concerning the management of students' behaviour, and data concerning levels of attainment and achievement. The inspectors also took into consideration the 151 responses to the parental questionnaire, the 187 responses to the students' questionnaire and the 43 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- the levels of attainment reached by students in the school, especially in the two core subjects of mathematics and English
- the effectiveness of the leaders and managers in raising the attainment of the students and increasing the progress that they make, particularly in mathematics and English
- the effectiveness of the changes made to teaching, the curriculum, and to care, guidance and support to help those students at risk of exclusion.

Information about the school

Hebburn Comprehensive School is an average sized school mainly serving the wards of Hebburn North, Monkton and Hebburn South. The vast majority of the students are of White British heritage and very few students speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than average, as is the proportion of students who have a statement of special educational needs. The school has specialist status in mathematics and computing. It is an Investor in People and is in the process of being refurbished.

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

Hebburn Comprehensive School is a satisfactory school with good features. The care, guidance and support offered to the students are good and, combined with the good curriculum, are making a positive impact on improving outcomes for students. The transition arrangements the school has in place to support the students, in particular for those transferring from primary schools and those leaving at the end of Year 11, are strong. The vast majority of parents, carers and students agreed that the students are well-prepared for their futures.

In 2009, the students in Year 11 left the school with levels of attainment which were significantly above the national average in terms of the proportion who achieved five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to G. However, the proportion who left the school with five A* to C grades at GCSE, including mathematics and English, was significantly below the national average. Although these results, taking into account the students' starting points, show that the students made satisfactory progress overall, their progress in English was significantly less than would be expected. Leaders and managers took swift and decisive action with respect to these results. These actions mean that the proportion of students leaving the school in 2010 with five A* to C grades including English and mathematics will rise, if students perform as expected. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that students' overall attainment is broadly average and students make satisfactory progress between Year 7 and Year 11.

Teaching is satisfactory overall but there is too much variation in the quality especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics. In too many lessons, data are not used effectively enough to plan lessons and to provide activities which meet the needs and the interests of the students. This means that the progress the students make is limited to satisfactory. The curriculum has been recently adapted at Key Stage 4 and overall it is good. The range of courses on offer has, because of the good use of partnerships, increased. These courses better suit the students.

The headteacher and extended senior leadership team are pivotal in clearly articulating their vision to raise students' aspirations and attainment. The leaders and managers, at all levels, are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school: self-evaluation is honest and evaluative. Actions taken have resulted in improved outcomes for students: attainment has risen, attendance has improved, the number of exclusions has fallen considerably and the proportion of students not in education, training or employment when they leave the school has also fallen. However, the monitoring of some of these actions, especially with respect to improving the day-to-day quality of teaching, is not rigorous enough to enable the students to make better than satisfactory

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progress. The governors are actively involved in the strategic leadership of the school; they challenge and support the leaders and managers well. The school is in a good position to move forward in further improving outcomes for students and its capacity to improve is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students make at least good progress by:
 - improving the consistency and quality of teaching especially in the core subjects of mathematics and English
 - using data to plan lessons and to structure learning to meet the needs and interests of all the students.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management of teaching by:
 - ensuring that monitoring is rigorous, regular and focused on outcomes for students, especially with respect to improving the day-to-day quality of teaching.
- 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 enter the school with levels of attainment which are broadly in line with the national average. Over the past three years, levels of attainment have risen and are now broadly average. This means that all students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress overall. In the school's specialist subject of mathematics the students make satisfactory progress. In the specialist subject of information and communication technology the students met the targets set in 2009. In lessons observed, the progress that the students made varied considerably. In some lessons they made good progress. In others, progress was limited because data was not used effectively to plan learning.

Around the school and in the social areas students treat each other and members of staff with respect. Over the past year, the school has put in place new strategies for dealing with behaviour and as a result the number of exclusions, and the number of days lost due to exclusions, have fallen considerably. Students' behaviour has improved and is good. The number of incidents of bullying is low and the students are confident that those that do occur are dealt with quickly and fairly. Consequently, students feel safe.

In the last inspection, attendance was inadequate; the whole school community has worked hard to improve attendance and it is now above average. The students have a good understanding of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and their participation in extra-curricular activities is high. Students make an active contribution to their local community. Of particular note is the 'active citizen' project in Year 10 which all students

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are involved in.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In the good lessons there is a brisk pace. Carefully designed resources challenge the more-able and support those students who need more help. Teachers' questioning is effective and ensures that the students extend their answers and justify their points of view. However, in too many lessons assessment data are not used effectively enough to plan different activities and tasks which meet the needs and interests of all the students. This means that the students are all asked to complete the same work. Some students find the work too difficult, others are not challenged by it. In these lessons, the students make only satisfactory progress. Although there is some good marking which gives clear guidance to the students about what they have to do to improve their work, this good practice is not consistent across all subjects. The use of assessment data is much stronger in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3.

Teaching assistants are effectively managed and deployed in lessons. They support students with special educational needs and/or disabilities unobtrusively and enable

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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them to make satisfactory progress.

The recently reviewed curriculum at Key Stage 4 has had a very positive impact on those students at risk of exclusion. The courses provided in conjunction with other educational establishments have motivated the students, improved their behaviour and attendance, and are contributing to them making progress.

Care, guidance and support are good. The support given to students at the key points of their education, such as when they leave or join the school, is very effective. Support given to Year 11 has reduced the proportion of students who are not in education, employment or training after they leave school. The new and effective systems for managing behaviour, including the provision of the 'amber room', have had a positive impact on improving behaviour in the school. The support for students is carefully targeted and this has enabled students to overcome significant barriers to their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the school; the self-evaluation is honest and evaluative. In the past year, leaders have taken many actions which have had a positive impact on outcomes for students. For example, the more varied curriculum has contributed to engaging a greater number of students, reducing exclusion rates and increasing the level of attendance. They also responded quickly to the under achievement in English in 2009. Although there is a comprehensive monitoring system for teaching, it is not rigorous or regular enough. Monitoring is not always focused on the outcomes that students achieve by the end of each lesson. This means that the day-to-day teaching is not good enough to ensure that the students make good progress.

Governors are very actively involved in the strategic leadership of the school. They are rigorous in their monitoring of the school and hold the leaders and managers to account. Satisfactory safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Over time, progress has been made in closing the attainment gap between different groups of students.

The school has a wide range of good partnerships to develop the curriculum and the support it is able to offer all students. These partnerships are strongly contributing to the improving outcomes for students. The school has a good understanding of its local and national context. There is a comprehensive plan in place to develop community

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cohesion. One highlight of this is the formation of the Hebburn Learning Partnership for adults and families which is supporting well the learning of people in the local community. Partnerships with parents and carers are a strength of the school. The headteacher views links with parents and carers as the key to improving the progress the students make and there is regular and effective communication, collaboration and consultation between the school and families, which is appreciated by parents and carers.

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	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

The 151 parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They stated that the school supports their children at critical times of their education. They were in strong support of the school in its efforts to meet their children's particular needs. Parents and carers thought that the school took account of their suggestions and concerns. They also felt that the school was well led. The inspectors agreed with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hebburn Comprehensive School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 151 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 952 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	29	92	61	10	7	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	53	35	91	60	5	3	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	65	43	76	50	8	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	36	86	57	8	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	35	93	62	4	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	25	93	62	17	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	22	102	68	12	8	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	48	32	92	61	3	2	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	33	91	60	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	28	89	59	10	7	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	21	102	68	4	3	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	65	43	78	52	5	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	44	76	50	6	4	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



2 July 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Hebburn Comprehensive School, Hebburn, NE31 2QU

Thank you for welcoming me and the other inspectors to your school. We appreciated the time you spent talking to us, in meetings, in lessons and around the school. Many of you and your parents filled in a questionnaire and this meant we were able to take into account a large range of views.

We found that Hebburn Comprehensive School provides you with a satisfactory education. You are cared for well and this enables you to make the decisions needed to move onto the next stage of your education. Your parents are also pleased with the support you receive. Many of you take advantage of the vast opportunities which are available for you. You behave well in school, especially in the social areas and at break and lunch. You also make a very positive contribution to your local community, and to the wider community through fundraising and different activities. You are all now attending regularly. You are happy with the way that your views are heard.

To make Hebburn Comprehensive School an even better school we have asked that:

- in all lessons you are provided with activities which you find interesting and which support and challenge you to make better progress
- everybody is focused on improving day-to-day teaching and learning.

To play your part you need to continue to attend school and continue to make your views known through your school council.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tanya Harber Stuart

Her Majesty's Inspector

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