

Friesland School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112994
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	338070
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Frank Knowles

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1372
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Wimpenny
Headteacher	Peter Monk
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
School address	Nursery Avenue Sandiacre Nottingham
Telephone number	0115 939 7326
Fax number	0115 949 1730
Email address	enquiries@friesland.derbyshire.sch.uk

Age group	11–19
Inspection dates	14–15 December 2009
Inspection number	338070

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by six additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 47 lessons or part lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of students, including from the sixth form. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's internal assessment data and the school improvement plan, safeguarding records, policies for different aspects of the school, and students' work. Inspectors also analysed questionnaire responses from 273 parents, 104 students and 76 staff.

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

- the impact of the school's actions to accelerate students' progress, particularly in Key Stage 3, in English, mathematics and examination courses where there has been underperformance
- the systematic use of assessment data to provide interim progress measures to support student goal-setting and to identify areas where support or intervention is needed
- the extent to which the school's new vision is shared among governors, staff, parents and students
- the quality of the school's care, guidance and support systems.

Information about the school

Friesland School is a large school serving Sandiacre. It also draws students from the surrounding area, including into the sixth form. The large majority of students come from White British backgrounds, with a small but increasing number coming from a range of minority ethnic heritages. Most year groups have approximately equal numbers of boys and girls, but the sixth form has more girls than boys. Students come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average, and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. Few students leave or join the school outside the usual entry points of Year 7 and Year 12, resulting in a very stable school roll.

The school plays a full part in the Erewash Learning Community to broaden curriculum provision for students age 14 to 19. It is a specialist performing arts college, with lead subjects of drama, music and dance. Friesland holds the Artsmark Gold, Sportsmark and Careermark awards. The new headteacher took up his post in September 2009.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Friesland School has rightly achieved a good reputation among parents for the quality of education it provides, the standards its students reach and the care, guidance and support that underpins its success. As one parent commented, 'We have found all our children's teachers very supportive'. Standards are improving steadily but the school recognises the need to accelerate improvement. Building on existing strengths, the new headteacher's vision to create an outstanding school is supported strongly by governors, staff, parents and students alike. The leadership group's focus on achieving even better outcomes is well grounded in the school's accurate self-evaluation and is carried out through sharply focused improvements in the curriculum, teaching and assessment. The new headteacher and leadership group have already identified areas of weakness and taken action, for example in mathematics, science and modern languages. The resulting improvements in provision and progress indicate the school is well able to sustain improvement into the future.

Support for students' well-being and progress is outstanding. The school's well-developed system for tracking the progress of individual students is very effective. Students know their targets and the progress they are making towards them. Tutors check individual progress and identify where support or intervention is needed, including for more able students. Students feel able to talk to staff about any problems and know that they will receive full support, with staff often using time after school to provide extra help. The transition from primary school is very effective, with students settling in quickly to become confident learners. Advice and guidance for career pathways, including into the sixth form are very strong, with virtually all students leaving the school with a further education, training or employment place arranged. The school's support for vulnerable students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptionally good. It involves specialist professionals, school staff and student mentors, and the effectiveness of their work is recognised by students and parents. Students' behaviour is good, with effective strategies in place to deal with incidents of disruption or bullying. One student commented that, 'A lot is done about bullying and a lot of help is given to the students being bullied.' As a result, students feel safe in school and feel confident in talking to staff or student mentors.

Students learn well because good teaching provides interesting activities, well structured lessons, a brisk pace and a range of independent, group and whole-class activities. Teachers make good use of their knowledge of examination and assessment requirements. Work in the performing arts has had a considerable influence on students' willingness to participate confidently in learning activities and this has supported students' good progress. Questioning is not used consistently enough, however,

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

especially at the end of lessons, to assess understanding and guide lesson planning so that activities match the needs of individual students. Marking does not always provide sufficient information on what students need to do to improve their work and assessment data is not used well enough to support lesson planning.

Staff morale is good, and clear measures of accountability that relate to student outcomes have enabled the leadership group to gain a good understanding of areas of the school that need improvement. The group's evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate, The governing body works effectively to ensure the school meets its statutory responsibilities, although the school's promotion of community cohesion does not yet focus sufficiently on diversity, both nationally and locally. The school does not yet make full use of its assessment data. When evaluating the school's performance, senior and middle leaders are not yet using progress data analysed by different groups of students. This means that teachers do not always intervene early enough to support the learning of a group of students or a class, or in a subject. Opportunities are also missed to link the setting and review of students' short-term goals in subjects with the discussions held by tutors, and this lessens the impact of tutor discussions about students' progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more use of existing assessment data to identify areas of outstanding practice and where improvement is needed by:
 - analysing the progress of different classes and other groups of students
 - using these analyses, alongside clear criteria for judging the quality of teaching and learning, in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's provision
 - integrating the processes for setting and reviewing students' short-term goals in subjects with those used by tutors.
 - Apply assessment strategies consistently throughout the school by:
 - improving marking to provide clear support on how students can improve their work and accelerate their progress
 - using questioning and plenary sessions more skilfully to review learning and plan the next steps
 - making greater use of assessment data in teachers' planning to ensure that learning is differentiated to meet the individual needs of students.
 - Improve the school's promotion of community cohesion by providing more opportunities for students to gain an understanding of the diversity of the communities found nationally and in the broader area around the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The school has shown a steady increase in its performance over the last three years and standards are above average. The proportion of students achieving at least five A* to C grades increased from the school's above average position in the previous year to 72

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

per cent in 2009, and was above the school's target. The proportion achieving at least five A* to C grades including English and mathematics also increased in 2009. There is very little variation in the attainment or progress of different groups in the school. Particular success in science following the adoption of a new course for some students has shown the school how a curriculum well-matched to the needs of students has motivated students and led to higher standards.

The schools' tracking procedures indicates that the majority of students make more than the predicted progress towards their challenging targets, representing good achievement. In lessons, students' willingness to engage fully in learning activities supports a good pace of learning. In the lessons observed, paired and group work supported learning well, influenced by the outstanding practice in the school's specialist areas. The support provided for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures they, too, make good progress.

Students enjoy learning at Friesland, and take part enthusiastically in lessons and extra-curricular activities. Attendance is above average. Participation in sport is high, reflecting students' understanding of the need for exercise and to eat healthily. The school's healthy menu for school lunches is another positive feature of the school, with high take-up. Students adopt safe practices in lessons and around the school, including the use of the internet. Despite the public access to the sports centre on the school site, they feel that the vigilance of staff and good visitor security ensures their safety. The school council makes a good contribution to school life through representing student views effectively and bringing about improvements such as increasing the availability of sandwiches at lunchtime and the removal of graffiti. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, but students have few opportunities to engage with cultures outside their own outside the multi-cultural events that take place in the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2

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

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	
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is based on a clear lesson structure, takes account of the range of students' learning styles and most lessons have clear objectives. Students respond well to their activities and have good relationships with their teachers, based on high expectations and a desire to succeed. Good behaviour means teachers spend the maximum time on students' learning, but when a behavioural issue arises, they deal with it well. Students work well in groups and pairs to plan and implement tasks. The ends of lessons are often rushed and this means the teacher is not able to question thoroughly and assess effectively what students have learned. This means that planning does not always take into account what students have already learned and activities do not differentiate learning. Marking mostly provides good feedback to the students but they are not always given an indication of what they need to do to improve their work.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all its students. It is developing its practice in Key Stage 3 through 'Learning to Learn' strategies in Year 7 which allow students to make use of new ways of learning. Recent curriculum changes in science in Year 10 and 11 have brought about significant improvement in standards. The STEMNET club, which links science, mathematics, engineering and technology with the performing arts, has been successful in motivating students, particularly in science, and enrichment activities are in place for high-attaining students. Participation in the Erewash Learning Community has broadened the number of vocational subjects available for students in Key Stage 4. Recent curriculum changes have improved students' motivation, behaviour and commitment to learning.

Parents and students speak highly of the care provided by the school, including support for the students who join the school during term time. The school works very well with external partners, for example over careers advice, to provide a range of support for all students. Vulnerable students are also well supported through specialist staff and mentoring programmes, such as those that are run each break by specially trained sixth form students. The work of the multi-agency Behaviour and Education Support Team (BEST) is outstanding in supporting vulnerable and challenging students, including those with specific medical needs which ensures that they remain engaged in learning and achieve well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Very quickly after taking up his appointment, the headteacher shared his clear vision for the school with staff and governors. The resulting universal support from them and, subsequently from parents and students, has ensured the school is moving forward securely. By challenging staff and holding them to account, the headteacher has established a much clearer focus on improvement. This is supported by lesson observations, results from student surveys and students' involvement in reviews, but the school does not use its assessment data effectively enough to drive improvement. Clear plans for some areas, for example in English, mathematics, law in the sixth form and music have brought about improvement in teaching and learning, although it is too early to see their impact on standards. The recent development of learning walks has widened the school's approach to the evaluation of teaching and learning. The senior leaders have not yet developed a set of common criteria to support classroom observation, however.

Governors are influential in shaping the direction of the school, with the chair and vice-chair closely involved in developing and evaluating the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation documents. The governors know the school well through visits, department links and an understanding of the school's performance. Communication with parents is strong, with progress reports twice a year, full reports once a year and a good-quality newsletter. Parents are increasingly using new technology to communicate with the school, and the school makes every effort to respond the same day. The contact with parents of students with special educational needs is of very high quality. The school's partnerships with other organisations over the curriculum and individual student support are very strong. The school's safeguarding procedures are robust and of good quality, with all necessary checks in place and a strong focus on training for staff and alertness to potential issues. The school takes care to include all students in its activities, promoting equality of opportunity and tackling the few instances of discrimination well. Its links with its immediate community are good, but does not provide the diversity of experiences that are needed to promote good community cohesion in the broader area around the school and in the national context.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Sixth form

Standards in the sixth form are above average. The average point score per student has increased steadily, although there was a slight dip in 2009. Teaching is good, with challenging subject content and a rigorous approach to learning, an improvement since the last inspection. High levels of student engagement in learning result in students making good progress. The school places great emphasis on individual discussions on application and again on entry to the sixth form to ensure appropriate choice of course. Students show a great degree of maturity in their voluntary work, both in the school and with other organisations. Their commitment to providing mentoring and support for younger students at Friesland is high, and the benefits to the school are great. Support for students moving on to higher education, further training and employment is outstanding, with great care and attention from tutors and senior staff when students select courses, and for the application process and interviews. As one student said, 'the sixth form is a big network of help if you need it.' Leadership and management of the sixth form focuses on ensuring students are on track to success, with action taken to improve provision where particular subjects are not proving successful. Charity events, residential outdoor activities and an annual exchange trip with a school in Philadelphia all enrich the sixth form provision significantly.

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

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents' views of the school through the questionnaire were very positive, confirming the school's own survey results from earlier in 2009. Over 90% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with more than half of the questions asked. Some parents felt that the school did not take account parents' suggestions, but inspectors found that the school does more than many to survey parents' views and build them into its plans for development.

Behaviour was a concern for some respondents and was the subject of a number of comments, where parents were concerned about classroom disruption and bullying. Inspection evidence indicates that, on the small number of occasions where behaviour is an issue in classrooms, the school has good procedures for dealing with it. The school is also working to improve teaching in some classes so that problems do not occur. Students themselves believe the school deals swiftly and strongly with bullying, and responds well to concerns raised anonymously through the box available for this purpose. Sixth-form students, too, noted the support they gave confidentially during breakfast club and through their break-time sessions in the bungalow. While students recognised that a small amount of bullying occurs in a large school, they feel it is a very low level at Friesland and that incidents are dealt with effectively by staff.

Parents also raise issues over lunchtime arrangements and about teaching, learning and slow progress in some lessons. Some parents and students find the choice of food available towards the end of each lunch period is limited, and the school is considering how to improve this. Parents also commented on the short time available to eat lunch after queuing, but students said it the time was generally sufficient. On slow progress, inspectors found that progress was good overall, but understand parents' concerns where it is not due to the school's use of assessment data to identify clearly groups where progress is not as fast as it should be

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Friesland 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 273 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1372 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	83	30	176	64	9	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	72	26	188	69	12	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	87	32	169	62	16	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	84	31	153	56	28	10	4	1
The teaching is good at this school	64	23	190	70	14	5	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	15	185	68	35	13	5	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	18	181	66	35	13	3	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)	50	18	186	68	18	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	21	193	71	17	6	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	66	24	152	56	31	11	8	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	14	176	64	26	10	8	3
The school is led and managed effectively	69	25	183	67	12	4	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	34	163	60	11	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 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.



16 December 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Friesland School, Sandiacre, NG10 5AF

Thank you for contributing to the school's recent inspection so positively. We appreciated your openness when you spoke with us and the friendly way in which we were received in your school. We found your views very helpful in coming to conclusions about the school, including the outstanding care, guidance and support that it provides. We were particularly impressed with your positive attitudes to the school and the way you were involved in your work, whether individually, in pairs or in groups.

We concluded that you go to a good school because:

- standards are above average and you make good progress
- the curriculum and teaching are good
- the specialist area of performing arts has had a good influence on learning in the rest of the school
- your behaviour is good, with little bullying and good ways of dealing with poor behaviour and any bullying that does occur
- you feel very safe at school and enjoy coming to school, with good attendance
- the school is well led and managed by the headteacher and senior staff.

Even good schools can be improved further, and we have asked the headteacher and staff to follow up three areas:

- make better use of assessment data so that they can identify more easily when groups of students are not making enough progress and then do something to improve things for you
- use the ends of lessons more effectively to find out how much you have learned and plan differentiated work to match students' different needs
- do more to help you experience and understand the cultural diversity present in the United Kingdom and in the broad area around the school.

For your part, you can support the school's improvement by continuing to work enthusiastically in lessons and taking part in the school's many extra-curricular activities. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Knowles

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.