

Hessle High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118074
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	339133
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Ian Richardson 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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1525
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Elsom
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Young
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2007
School address	Tranby House Heads Lane Hessle HU13 0JQ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 36 lessons and 35 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the senior leadership team, groups of students, teachers and governors. They observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation including the school's development plan, notes of meetings of the governing body, a selection of the school's policies, records of lesson observations carried out by staff and documents describing the school's involvement in community activity. Questionnaires completed by staff and students were received and scrutinised. A total of 104 completed questionnaires were received from parents and carers and inspectors looked at records of parents' and carers' involvement in the school. This is a federated school consisting of Hessle High School and Hessle Penshurst Primary, having one governing body and one management structure. There was a grade 3 monitoring visit of the primary school carried out simultaneously with the section 5 inspection of the high school. There were joint meetings of inspectors with the school's leaders and managers, the governing body and staff concerned with safeguarding.

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

- the improving trends in achievement described in the school's self-evaluation
- the progress made by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the quality and consistency of teaching across the whole school
- the impact of recent curriculum innovations in addressing the needs of sections of the school community
- the staff's understanding of the priorities and vision of the school's leadership and management.

Information about the school

Hessle High School is much larger than average. The school is situated in the small town of Hessle to the west of Kingston-upon-Hull. It is a split site with students of secondary school age being accommodated on two sites and pupils of primary age on a third site. It is a federated school consisting of Hessle High School and Hessle Penshurst Primary with an executive headteacher. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is believed not to be English is very small compared with the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below the national average with the proportion with a statement of special educational needs being above the national average. The school was designated as a specialist science college in September 2003 and redesignated in September 2007. The school was awarded Sportsmark in 2007; Healthy Schools status from 2008 to 2011; Silver Artsmark in June 2008; and status as Open University Partner in 2009, Associate Institution of University of Hull in 2010 and as a Pilot Social Enterprise School in 2010. Child care is provided on site each weekday morning during term time. This is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.

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

Hessle High School is a good school providing well for its students. Since the last inspection the school has made significant improvements. The areas for improvement given in the last report by Ofsted have all been addressed and further improvements promoted. These improvements have come about as a consequence of good management and leadership. There has been significant review, renewal and innovation to change the management structure to meet the identified needs in this federated school. There is now a culture in which assiduous monitoring and evaluation is carried out which provides a very good basis for management decisions. The forensic analysis of performance data carried out across the school is now informing teachers' planning and allowing them to meet better the needs of individuals and groups. These improvements and the focus on improving teaching and learning are promoting a strong improvement in performance and progress. The self-evaluation carried out by the school is accurate and redolent with thorough analysis and interpretation of data. All this indicates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

No groups of students significantly underachieve at the school. The progress made by the 'school action' group of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities had been previously relatively weak but strategies have been successfully implemented to improve learning and progress for these students. The needs of other groups that were doing less well, such as middle-ability girls, have been addressed and progress has improved. Other concerns being addressed are the lower than expected performance at the higher grades at GCSE. The school recognises that higher-ability pupils have been entered for too many awards, up to 15 GCSEs, which has restricted their attainment. The curriculum and option system has been changed to improve the situation. The relative weaknesses in provision and students' achievement in the sixth form noted in the previous inspection report are now satisfactory and improving. This is recognised by the school in its self-evaluation.

While teaching overall is good, and in some case outstanding, it is variable. At the time of the last inspection there were too many lessons that were dominated by teachers in which students were not engaged and required to be active contributors to the lessons. This is still true of the smaller proportion of satisfactory teaching. There is much good behaviour in lessons and teachers need to increase the proportion of time in which students are engaged in independent learning or active participation. The good or better lessons often involved the teacher in requiring students' participation rather than expecting them to be passive. There is ample expertise and good practice in the school to be shared with all staff.

Students are friendly, open and honest in discussions. They are adamant that there is

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little bullying or other tensions or problems. On the rare occasions when incidents occur they are recorded appropriately and action taken promptly that remedies the situation in the vast majority of cases. The contribution that students make to the school and wider community is outstanding. The school promotes community cohesion well. For example, work such as its links with a school in Bradford contributes strongly to students' understanding of and tolerance towards multicultural Britain.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Capitalise on the good behaviour of students to promote the school's policy on 'behaviours for learning' and generate higher levels of engagement of students in their learning.
- Ensure that a higher proportion of good or better teaching and learning is consistently evident across all key stages, including the sixth form.
- Raise the proportion of students attaining A and A* grades at GCSE and A and B grades at A level.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The progress made by students by the end of Key Stage 4 is good. This is seen in data relating to qualifications and also in lesson observations, where two thirds showed good or better learning and progress. The school has addressed the variation in students' progress that existed until the current year. For example, progress in mathematics is now good, with the proportion of students making the expected progress being well above the national average. The underachievement of a small number of girls due to poor attendance and disengagement has been tackled through rigorous monitoring and mentoring. It is clear that students now show good achievement and enjoyment. A minority of students stated in their questionnaire responses that they did not enjoy school. However, 90% of parents and carers said their children did enjoy school. In this specialist science school outcomes at GCSE in science in 2009 were not significantly above other subjects.

The achievement of students overall is good and improving. The attainment of students at the end of Key Stage 4 is currently above average and has improved strongly over the last three years. This is a consequence of the school's clear focus on raising attainment, forensic analysis of performance data, setting challenging targets and well-targeted interventions. Intelligent adjustments to the curriculum for year groups and individuals have provided courses appropriate to the needs of all students.

Students with a statement of special educational needs have made good progress as a result of the excellent support they receive. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities but who do not have a statement of special educational needs was a cause for concern. The school has introduced a very appropriate curriculum which is allowing students to make good progress and they are on track to achieve well above the national standards for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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Students learn well about healthy lifestyles through personal and social health studies, science and a range of visiting speakers. They understand well the need for a balanced diet and regular exercise in order to stay fit and healthy. They make informed choices when selecting food. When interviewed, students were very positive about the school's contribution to their uptake of healthy lifestyles and knowledge of ways to reduce risks. Students take advantage of the very good range of opportunities available for physical exercise.

The very well-established school council comprises some very conscientious and eloquent students. They make very good contributions to important school developments and they can describe large numbers of projects they have initiated and the school has funded. Some members of the school council are on the governing body as associates and others are on the youth town council. Students are involved in all recruitment of new staff. They have initiated and found funding for some significant positive community projects, such as a local cycle way.

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
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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?

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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There were no lessons judged to be inadequate during the inspection. In joint observations grades of senior staff agreed with grades of the inspection team. A robust and comprehensive system for monitoring the quality of teaching is helping to promote higher standards. In the good or better lessons students are active and participating well. In the last report there was some criticism of lessons being 'too teacher dominated, with students passive for too long'. In a minority of lessons there is still too much direction by the teacher so that students do not have sufficient opportunity to develop independent learning skills.

The good subject knowledge of teachers and their enthusiasm also promote effective learning by students. There is considerable sharing of good practice within and between departments. Teachers talk positively of the teaching and learning forum that was set up by them with the support of the senior leadership team but without their presence. Assessment is an integral part of most lessons that leads to students having a greater understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. There is a rigorous and comprehensive system of target setting, linked to clear criteria, which enables students to understand what they need to do to improve.

The school has identified areas of underperformance and has responded in a number of ways. It has modified its curriculum significantly in the last three years and has introduced courses which now meet the needs and aspirations of students. The curriculum for Key Stage 4 now includes a number of applied and vocational courses and these have had a positive impact on attainment. For Year 7 students the school has devised a skills-based course called SEVEN. This incorporates content from a number of subjects in response to the identification of students' need to develop better listening, speaking and research skills. The curriculum offered to students is now broad and balanced and is related well to their needs.

The school has well-organised arrangements for the care and well-being of students. The Safer Schools Partnership with the police is the first to be established in this local authority. It builds upon the excellent working relationship that exists between Hesse High School and the neighbourhood police team.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The quality of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The executive headteacher and the senior leadership team have embedded

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the vision they have for bringing about improvements in the life of the school such that staff at all levels are clear about priorities. Staff from the specialist science area make a significant contribution to the leadership of the school. There are clear strategies for raising attainment that are understood by teachers. Staff express high levels of confidence in the school's leaders; they feel well informed and believe that their views are listened to. Students who have been in the school for a number of years also describe the improvements that have been introduced, particularly over the last year. There are good systems for communication, monitoring and evaluation that have brought about improvement. The judgements of the inspection team correlated well with those of the school's own monitoring of teaching. Data resulting from monitoring are forensically analysed to identify areas of need. There are clear examples of the underperformance of a few groups of students being tackled effectively, not least through the use of challenging targets. This demonstrates the school's good commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. The school's leaders make effective contributions to the consortium with two other schools and a local college that are valued by partners.

The governing body plays an effective role in evaluating the work of the school and providing challenge and support. There is ample evidence of governors' contributions and the challenge they provide. For example, their visits are well coordinated and involve meeting staff and students and receiving reports on progress. They also analyse performance and monitoring data thoroughly and visit all three sites in the federation as part of their monitoring activities. The governing body has modified its structures and procedures in response to the priorities and needs of the school. The flow of information to and from governors is effective and a suite of policies that they have approved supports the effective running of the school including safeguarding. The effectiveness of procedures for safeguarding is good.

The federation of Hessle High School and Hessle Penshurst Primary has had a positive impact on the curriculum and effectiveness of transition leading to improved achievement and well-being for students. Effective transition arrangements extend beyond the federation into most of the primary schools from which students are admitted. Links with the local university and business college are also used to enrich the curriculum for students. The school promotes partnerships with other providers well. Senior leaders have also succeeded in promoting community cohesion such that this is now good.

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	2

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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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

- Overall, students' achievement in the sixth form is average and is rising.
- Achievement at the higher-grade levels in A-level courses is improving at a slower pace than the overall results.
- Course completion is increasing and a high proportion of students now complete the examination courses they start.
- Attendance is rising, due to improved procedures and monitoring, but still lags behind the levels achieved in the main school.
- Provision in the sixth form is satisfactory.
- Students report that overall teaching is satisfactory but variable. The school has identified the improvement of the overall quality of teaching as a key priority.
- Students are well supported in their studies by a good process of continuous assessment linked to individual students' targets.
- The curriculum choice available to students is now wide compared with that at the time of the last inspection. This is due to the introduction of a range of vocational options and the effective partnership with two other local secondary schools and a college.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good.
- Senior leaders are accurately evaluating the provision and outcomes.
- Clear action plans are being implemented to address the areas the school has identified for improvement.
- The impact of leaders can already be seen in the improving achievement of students.
- A range of mechanisms are being employed to improve the overall quality of teaching, but the development of these through the subject departments is still at an early stage.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who completed questionnaires expressed strong support for the school and its senior leadership and management team. They believe that their children enjoy school and almost all expressed the view that their children are kept safe and that the school informs them of their children's progress. About 90% of parents and carers responding believe that the teaching is good. However, the weakest response was that 70% of them believed the school helped them to support their children's learning. Inspectors recognise significant improvements have been planned and are partially implemented in the quality and range of guidance to parents and carers on supporting their children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hessle High 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1553 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	31	61	59	8	8	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	36	35	62	60	5	5	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	40	55	53	5	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	40	50	48	11	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	34	33	60	58	9	9	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	18	55	53	27	26	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	11	78	75	13	13	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)	26	25	60	58	10	10	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	23	65	63	11	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	29	53	51	16	15	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	19	59	57	21	20	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	27	26	63	61	10	10	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	33	56	54	12	12	1	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.



25 June 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Hessle High School, Hessle, HU13 0JQ

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed the inspection team to your school. We enjoyed listening to your views and seeing the life of your school for two days. It is clear that, since the last inspection, the school has improved and many of you agreed with this when we talked. Most of you enjoy your school and try your best such that achievement in the school has risen. I encourage those of you who were not as positive about enjoying school to take a full part in the life of the school and make the most of the good opportunities the school provides.

The school is doing a good job and the achievement of students is good. We think this is because of good leadership and management by your senior staff and good teaching by your teachers. We think some of the teaching can be improved but you can play your part by trying your best and taking the opportunities to learn that teachers provide. We could see many improvements since the last inspection, but recognise, as do your teachers, that there is still room for improvement. We have picked three particular improvements and your headteacher and senior staff agree with us. We think your school can improve even more by:

- using the good behaviour of students to promote your involvement in lessons and make you more active in learning
- ensuring that more of the lessons have good or better teaching and learning across all the years and groups
- raising the proportion of students who are awarded A and A* grades at GCSE and A and B grades at A level.

On behalf of the inspection team I wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Ian Richardson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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