

Haven High Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120660
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339748
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Alan Alder 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	789
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayne Coddington
Headteacher	Adrian Reed (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2007
School address	Marian Road Boston Lincolnshire
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 30 lessons and 30 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, governors and members of the school's staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school's records of lesson observations, records of the progress being made by students in the different year groups, self-evaluation and planning documents and the questionnaires completed by students, staff and 129 parents and carers.

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

- how accurately the school's leaders evaluate the quality of teaching
- the extent to which teachers assess students' learning during a lesson and whether the teaching changes if students do not make the expected gains in learning
- the extent to which the work students are set to do in lessons is related to their ability
- how extensive the opportunities are for students to learn and practise the skills required for individualised work and group work.

Information about the school

The school operates in an area in which there are selective schools. It serves a part of Boston which includes some wards with very high levels of deprivation. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups has increased in recent years and is now in line with the national average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average. Almost twice as many students as nationally have special educational needs and/or disabilities, though the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with that found nationally. A similar proportion of students to that found nationally are eligible for free school meals.

The school has formed a federation with two local primary schools. The executive headteacher has that role across the federation. It is also a full service extended school. It has specialist status in technology. The school has the Investors in People Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, CharterMark, Healthy Schools status, Sportsmark and the intermediate level of the International School Award.

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

1

Main findings

The school makes a strong contribution to students' development, both personally and academically. Students join the school with standards that are low and in some years very low, but make outstanding progress so that their attainment by the end of Year 11 is now close to that found nationally. The school exceeds its very challenging targets. The parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are very supportive of the school. One set of parents said how they were 'delighted' by aspects of the curriculum and the extra-curricular activities. Another, whose child has a statement of special educational needs, said that she is receiving excellent support and 'her learning has improved greatly'. The questionnaires returned by students and members of staff were also highly complimentary of the school.

The strategic leadership of the executive headteacher and other leaders, including the governors, is a key driver of the school's success. Steps such as the move to become a full service extended school and the development of the federation are very significant in helping the school to improve. The school's success is partly a result of a clear understanding of how these strategies can be used to improve the lives and the learning of students. It is also a result of detailed and searching self-evaluation. There is, in some cases, an overestimate of teaching quality brought about by too much emphasis being placed on what the teacher is doing rather than the impact on learning. Nevertheless, in all other respects self-evaluation is accurate and highly effective. Subject leaders' analyses of the effectiveness of their provision and their identification of areas for further development are very thorough and detailed. The effectiveness of self-evaluation and of subsequent actions to bring about change is demonstrated, for example, by the rapidly improving progress made by students in their work, their increased attendance, better teaching, improving behaviour and in the developing curriculum. The school has made significant improvement since its last inspection. The capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

Teachers know their subjects well and their relationships with students are good. Teaching is satisfactory overall. A very small minority is inadequate and some is outstanding. However it does not always consistently check on the extent of students' understanding in lessons, and the work given is not always well enough adapted for the range of abilities in the class. The effects of this are eliminated because students' learning is considerably enhanced by periodic assessments of the progress that they are making against very challenging targets. This is both accurate and detailed. It is used very effectively to identify which students need further support and to organise support for them with, for example, tuition to pairs of students, which is highly effective. Students' progress is also accelerated because leaders have worked very effectively to

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establish the right conditions for learning. Attendance, for example is now above average. Behaviour is good and lessons are settled and calm with the proper emphasis on learning. Aspects of students' personal lives, which may cause a disruption to their ability to concentrate, are helped through a very wide range of professionals to whom students and their families have access through the extended services that are located at the school. In addition, there is much provision which enhances students' enjoyment of school, whether it is the highly personalised curriculum or the large number of clubs for students to attend at lunchtime and after school.

The school's specialist status makes a good contribution to its overall effectiveness, for example through the provision of information and communication technology equipment and its impact on the curriculum. It achieves its targets for students' attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement further by developing teaching quality so that:
 - assessments of students' understanding are made during lessons and teaching approaches are adapted if their understanding is insufficient
 - students of different abilities are more consistently given work which challenges them
 - students have greater opportunities to develop the skills of independent work and group work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students' attainment, when they join the school, is low. While the proportion of students who achieved five or more good GCSE passes in 2009 remained below the national average, they reached above average standards taking all their subjects into account. The data for the current Year 11, based on the GCSE results for those subjects they took early as well as the school's own, accurate, assessments in other subjects, indicate a further good improvement this year. This brings attainment in line with the national average. This represents outstanding progress given this groups very low starting point. All groups of students make at least good progress, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In the overwhelming majority of lessons observed by inspectors, students' learning was at least satisfactory, in some it was outstanding. The result of this, and of the additional help that students receive if they fall behind, ensures that their achievement is good. It has resulted in a consistent, and increasingly rapid, improvement in students' attainment in the last four years. The school's own assessments of its students' attainment have been demonstrated to be accurate.

The school, at the time of the inspection, was a secure and safe environment. Teachers are careful to ensure that students are not at risk if they are working with any potentially hazardous equipment, for example in design technology and science lessons. It is a calm environment and lessons are orderly. Behaviour is considerate and

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thoughtful. Students reported some small instances of bullying, but said that there were people they could speak to if they were having problems. Students who speak English as an additional language reported that there had been friction in the past, and though they experience some occasional hostility, it is now from 'a tiny minority', and that they find the school 'welcoming'. The result is that students say they feel safe and, in the questionnaires returned by students, no-one reported that they felt unsafe in school. There are high levels of participation in the school's sports clubs and a high proportion of students walk or cycle to school. Students have a good knowledge of the dangers of alcohol and substance abuse. They are well aware of how to lead healthy lives.

The development of workplace and other skills is satisfactory. An above average proportion of students gain qualifications in literacy and numeracy. However, in lessons, students have only satisfactory opportunities to work independently and in groups. The specialist status makes a good contribution to future employability through achieving attainment targets in information and communication technology.

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	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	3
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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In the most effective lessons, teachers stimulate students' interest very well, for example, in an outstanding English lesson in which the teacher took on the role of a poet to answer questions that students had about one of his poems. This resulted in lively and searching questions and outstanding learning. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, the teacher's knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses was used exceptionally well to provide different approaches for students. The result was that all made very good progress. The use of questions to assess students' understanding and make adjustments to the teaching when it is required, is very powerful but is not a consistent enough feature of lessons. There is good practice in the teaching of students who speak English as an additional language, for example, with some notes provided in the students' home language when this is helpful to them. The pace of lessons is satisfactory.

The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for students and responds very well to their varied abilities and interests. There is, for example, a wide range of vocational courses including diplomas, some of which are taught by partner institutions. In addition, many students are motivated by being able to enter for GCSE examinations early. This is made possible by the school's policy of starting GCSE courses a year early. Some students have begun advanced courses in Year 11. In addition, there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, and these have a good uptake by students. Students who may otherwise have been permanently excluded are provided with an appropriate curriculum which enables them to achieve literacy and numeracy and other relevant qualifications.

The care, guidance and support that students receive are outstanding. The school's ready access to a wide range of professionals is a significant factor in the support of those students who require help and advice. Comprehensive additional support is in place for those whose attitudes and behaviour put them at risk of exclusion, so that the instances of exclusion in recent years have been very low. There is a well developed system of support for gifted and talented students and well established links with partners, including a university link to help raise students' aspirations. This has resulted in increasing numbers going on to take advanced courses at the local grammar school. Year 7 students are successfully integrated through a comprehensive transition programme. The school's federation with two local primary schools has a significant effect on students' transition to secondary school. The subject choices programme in Year 8 provides very good guidance for students to choose their courses for Years 9, 10 and 11.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>3</p>
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	<p>1</p>

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership of the school is highly effective. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that all students prosper academically and personally. This ambition is evident throughout the school. There are, for example, detailed evaluations of the progress being made by students in different classes in each subject. This is used not only to identify those students who are underachieving but also enables the school's leaders to provide any support needed for teachers. The quality of teaching is improving as a result. Leaders are held to account well. The school's engagement with parents and carers is outstanding, assisted by the school's access to a wide variety of different agencies. Much work is done to ensure community cohesion. Leaders have a very good knowledge of the nature of the school and local context. Relationships between different groups within school are cordial. To ensure equality of opportunity, leaders monitor the progress being made by different groups of students in their work, and which groups attend extra-curricular activities. This is evaluated and used to bring about improvements. Safeguarding is highly effective. Records are very thorough and the school's leaders ensure that the staff are regularly trained in child protection matters.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaires were

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positive about the school, agreeing that their child enjoys school and is safe there. The overwhelming majority agreed that teaching is good and that the school is led and managed effectively. One in ten parents and carers did not feel that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors saw no evidence to suggest that unacceptable behaviour was not dealt with well. They agree that the school is outstandingly well led, but found that teaching is satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haven High Technology College 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 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 789 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	36	76	59	6	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	38	74	57	5	4	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	56	43	65	50	7	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	36	76	59	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	40	76	59	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	34	77	60	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	25	85	66	8	6	0	0
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)	44	34	77	60	4	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	32	80	62	6	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	30	74	57	9	7	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	29	82	64	5	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	55	43	69	53	1	1	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	49	60	47	5	4	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.



21 June 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Haven High Technology College, Boston, PE21 9HB

Thank you for being so helpful when we visited your school recently. We spoke with quite a number of you in meetings, lessons and around the school, and found you to be friendly and polite.

We have found that your school is a good school. The progress you make in your learning is outstanding and the standards you reach by the end of Year 11 are close to the national average, and are improving rapidly. This is because although the teaching in lessons you receive is satisfactory, the support you get if you fall behind the challenging targets you are set is very effective. Your school also ensures that your attendance is above average, behaviour is good and that the curriculum is very well designed; these all enable you to do well.

The questionnaires which many of you returned, along with those from your parents and carers and teachers were very complimentary about your school. It is clear that the great majority of you enjoy school and that it keeps you safe and helps you to adopt healthy lifestyles. All of this is confirmed by inspectors' own findings.

We have suggested to the school's leaders what the school can do to develop further. The suggestions are to do with helping you to reach higher standards in your work by improving the quality of the teaching you receive and for your skills in independent learning and group work to be developed further. All of this is explained more fully in the report, which I hope you will read. You can help by making sure you understand what you should be learning in lessons and doing all you can to do so.

With best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Alan Alder

Her Majesty's Inspector

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