

The Sir William Robertson High School, Welbourn

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120716
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339760
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Victoria Godley

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	889
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jim Dixon
Headteacher	Mr Mark Guest
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2007
School address	Main Road Welbourn Lincolnshire
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. A fifth additional inspector was on-site for the first morning of the inspection, scrutinising the school's arrangements for safeguarding students.

The inspectors visited 44 lessons and 43 teachers, visiting three tutor periods and attending an assembly. Inspectors held discussions with senior and middle leaders, and governors. They also met with students from Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Inspectors looked at the school's work including the school's development plan, departmental and whole school self-evaluation, records of lesson observations, achievement and attainment data and records of vulnerable students. The team scrutinised 219 parental questionnaires.

- The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:
- teaching and learning in the school's specialist subjects and in mathematics
- the quality and consistency of teaching, learning and assessment across subjects
- the quality of target setting and support for students at Level 4 and the most- able.

Information about the school

Sir William Robertson High School is an average size, non- selective Foundation school, in a selective local authority for students aged 11 to 16 in rural Lincolnshire. The great majority are from White British backgrounds and almost all have English as their first language. The proportion of students with a statement of educational needs is higher than average. However, the total number of students registered by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including moderate learning, dyslexia, or behavioural, emotional and social issues, is average.

Sir William Robertson High School holds a number of awards: Investors in People, Sports Mark, Healthy Schools status, Careers Mark, Financial Management Standard in schools, International Schools Award and Eco Schools Bronze Award. It was designated as a specialist Languages College in September 2001 and was redesignated in 2006. The headteacher joined the school in January 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Sir William Robertson High School is a satisfactory school. Students achieve results in line with national averages at the end of Year 11. In this respect, and through their learning in lessons, students make satisfactory progress given their starting points when they join the school. In other areas of their development, including the personal skills that prepare them for their future lives, they make good progress and their understanding of healthy lifestyles is outstanding. It is a caring, supportive school where students are overwhelmingly of the view that they are kept safe. Since September, the school has made good efforts to ensure that core subjects, including mathematics, are performing satisfactorily. School data also show that students' achievement in English, mathematics and science is set to improve in 2010. Students significantly underachieved in mathematics in 2009. The good curriculum has been strengthened well to engage all abilities and this is reflected in students' achievement of A*-G pass rate which was significantly above national averages in 2009 as in the previous two years.

Students achieve only satisfactorily in lessons because teaching is not effective enough to improve their pace of learning. Inspectors did observe some good and outstanding lessons. Some teachers do not use assessment data precisely to enable them to assess students' understanding in lessons, or to ensure that lessons are pitched correctly to enable students to learn well. This is particularly evident in the planning for the most-able. The quality of marked work seen by inspectors varied greatly. Inspectors saw some exemplary marking that gave detailed areas for improvement and identified the National Curriculum level students had achieved. However, where the marking of work was weaker, students were not given a clear understanding of what they needed to do to improve their work and, in many cases, they did not know how well they were progressing.

The standard of students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They make a good contribution to the school and its wider community. For example, the school council has been effective in ensuring students are well informed about their sustainability project through house assemblies and council meetings. Their work in the wider community includes supporting local primary schools through languages and through the junior sports leader award. The school is harmonious and leaders and managers have worked hard to ensure that if any bullying occurs it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

There are a number of ways in which the school is improving under the caring and purposeful leadership of the headteacher. Leaders and managers have been swift in their analysis and actions to eradicate the underachievement of the previous year. Good clear, self-evaluation has led to improvements in core subjects. The proportion of

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students achieving five or more A*-C grades including mathematics and English shows an upward trend in results. However, the school's monitoring of teaching and learning lacks sufficient rigour to bring about more rapid improvement in students' achievements overall. The improved achievement in key areas, the increased expertise of the leadership team, and the improved performance in core subjects demonstrate a good capacity to improve. Senior leaders recognise that relative weaknesses remain in the specialist subject area. While there have been successes, including the provision of community activities and links to primary schools, standards attained by students in modern foreign languages are below expectations. Improving the performance and profile of these subjects is central to further improvements in overall standards, as well as securing better than presently satisfactory value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers use information about students' targets and current achievement to plan and deliver their lessons, ensuring activities match the levels of attainment of different groups of students, particularly the most-able
 - raising expectations about the quality and usefulness of feedback to students, so that consistency of practice is achieved
 - ensuring that a higher proportion of students attain A*-C in modern foreign languages.
- Achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching by:
 - increasing the rigour of systems to monitor the impact of teaching on learning
 - ensuring that weaknesses are speedily rectified and reassessed.
- 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 join the school in Year 7 having attained average standards in their primary schools. Standards in GCSE examinations are also in line with those nationally, but are not yet firmly above average in all major measures. Overall, this represents satisfactory progress. Current analysis of progress in lessons and examinations already taken by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities shows they are making good progress. Examinations completed so far, tracking data, mock examinations and teacher assessments also indicate improvement in the attainment of the current Year 11. Students who gained Level 4 at the end of Year 9 are set to make at least the expected progress by Year 11. Overall, current data therefore shows that the disappointing progress identified in 2009 is being tackled effectively and is set to rise to the levels of the previous two years. However, more can be done to improve the rates of progress for higher ability students.

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In aspects of their personal development, students make good progress. Attendance is above average and behaviour is good. Students feel very safe in school, a confidence shared by their parents. They are outstanding in adopting healthy lifestyles and many make good contributions to the school community. They are well prepared for their future lives; basic levels of literacy, numeracy, and use of information and communication technology are developed well. The majority of students have a basic understanding of a modern foreign language, though standards in these subjects are not as high as they should be. By the end of Year 11 most are mature, confident young people. Most have extremely good social skills and a strong moral code and show good understanding of other cultures. Students from different backgrounds get on well together.

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	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	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 most effective lessons, activities are planned well to involve students actively in their learning. Assessment opportunities enable teachers and students to gauge how well they are progressing. These lessons are well paced and hold pupils' interests

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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through a range of interesting and varied activities. Effective questioning is used to develop understanding and broaden students' knowledge. Many lessons are, however, dominated by teachers. In these lessons, learning is less varied and pupils have few opportunities to contribute to their learning. In some sessions, assessment is not used well enough to plan activities to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities particularly the most-able. Consequently, students do not make as much progress as they could.

There is a wide range of courses on offer to students and vocational courses are developing. Younger students benefit from cross-curricular projects such as 'Industry Day' and an international day, which make a good contribution to their cultural and moral development. Extra-curricular activities are well supported. Staff give their time and almost all students participate in a rich variety of events which take place weekly and at weekends.

Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, support and guidance. Students with special educational needs/or disabilities and vulnerable students receive highly effective support. Teaching assistants are a very valued strength of the school and they effectively support individuals and small groups of students and help them to make good progress. Students have high levels of confidence in the school's ability to advise them effectively, transition arrangements across all phases are excellent and prepare students well for their next steps in life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, governors and senior staff share a well-developed vision for the school's improvement. The school improvement plan is linked to the needs of its students and reflects the school's care for their progress and well being. Through its self-evaluation the school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Senior managers have been successful in bringing about many improvements, but they do not use sufficient rigour in identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning to ensure consistency in and across departments. Safeguarding procedures for the care and well-being of all students are extremely thorough. The school's actions to eradicate underachievement as well as providing a harmonious school community that is free from discrimination enable it to demonstrate that it promotes equality of opportunity well. The community partnerships that the school has in place especially those with Lincoln and Grantham College have been

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effective in helping the school remove barriers to learning and to enhance its curriculum provision. The school has good links with local community groups and works hard to make the school itself a socially cohesive community. The school works well with parents and carers, who contribute towards their children's learning. There are many strong examples of how the school has been effective in promoting community cohesion, for example, through the language college status. The International School Award has been used as a vehicle for introducing a predominately white cohort of pupils to European and global cultures. Governors are well informed and clearly understand the school's priorities, providing a good level of challenge and support. They serve the school well and share the senior leadership's ambition for further improvement.

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	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	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed very positive views of the school. A very small minority of parents and carers said that their children do not always enjoy their time at school. Inspectors talked to students and examined the curriculum and rates of participation in extra-curricular activities and found that this was not the case for the vast majority of students. Amongst concerns expressed by some parents, including in written comments that accompanied the questionnaire, were concerns about behaviour. These concerns were considered during inspection observations. Inspectors agree that there is a very small minority of students whose behaviour does not always meet the school's high expectations, but the behaviour of the great majority is good. Senior staff act swiftly and firmly when

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misbehaviour is reported. Some parents were concerned about the amount of progress students were making at school. Parents report that teachers know the students well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Sir William Robertson High School, Welbourn 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 inspector received 219 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 889 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	35	99	45	41	19	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	101	46	115	53	2	1	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	66	30	125	57	22	10	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	31	110	50	33	15	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	62	28	120	55	29	13	4	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	17	137	63	36	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	21	140	64	29	13	1	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	20	137	63	18	8	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	67	31	122	56	16	7	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	66	30	112	51	26	12	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	19	127	58	28	13	6	3
The school is led and managed effectively	53	24	120	55	17	8	5	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	92	42	86	39	31	14	8	4

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 pupils 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.



12 May 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of The Sir William Robertson High School, Welbourn, LN5 0PA

As you know, your school was inspected recently and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. I would like to thank you for your openness, friendliness and courtesy during our visit. We enjoyed meeting you and appreciated your comments and opinions. Sir William Robertson High School is a friendly school where staff know you very well. The care and guidance you receive is outstanding. Relationships with your teachers are largely very good and your behaviour is good in most lessons. Your attendance is above average.

The inspection found that yours is a satisfactory school. Standards are in line with national averages by the time you leave in Year 11. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some lessons are good, but others do not meet your interests fully, or challenge you sufficiently well. Throughout the school your teachers and other staff are supporting you appropriately and the monitoring of your progress has become more effective. Staff believe you can make better progress and we agree.

As a result, we have asked the school to improve the rate of progress you make at school by:

- increasing the proportion of good and better lessons across the school by ensuring your lessons are carefully planned to meet your needs and providing comments on your marked work to help you improve
- raising your attainment in modern foreign languages
- achieving greater consistency in the quality of teaching by improving monitoring systems to evaluate the impact of your learning in lessons.

You can help by continuing to behave well and by contributing to discussions and questions in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Godley

Lead inspector

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