

Winterton Comprehensive School with Specialist Status in Engineering

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118099
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	366220
Inspection dates	23–24 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Cathryn Kirby HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	683
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Pascoe
Headteacher	John Fitzgerald
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 38 lessons taught by 37 teachers and held meetings with school leaders and teachers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, including parent governors and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at examination results, current assessment information, the school improvement plan, monitoring records and the school's self-evaluation. Inspectors also looked at the school's analyses of feedback received from pupils and parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of actions to improve pupils' progress and raise attainment since the previous inspection.
- The success of curriculum developments in meeting the needs of the full ability range.
- The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation in improving the school's overall effectiveness.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school in a rural location. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A slightly higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, although the number with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Slightly fewer girls are on roll compared to similar schools. The school has specialist status in engineering.

In December 2009, the school was placed in special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education. In May 2011, it was judged to have made outstanding progress in tackling weaknesses in provision and outcomes.

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

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school has made exceptional progress in tackling the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The headteacher's inspirational leadership, together with strong support and challenge from the governing body, has created a climate of collective responsibility for sustaining improvement. Effective monitoring unfailingly ensures that well-considered actions have considerable impact on raising the quality of provision and outcomes.

Attainment in 2011 was well above average at the end of Key Stage 4, a substantial rise compared to 2010. The majority of subjects improved their performance considerably with a good number performing strongly against the national picture. Pupils' good achievement is driven by strong improvement in the quality of teaching that enables all pupils to make good progress. A carefully constructed curriculum gives equal consideration to the needs and interests of all groups of pupils. Regular and accurate assessment has been most influential in accelerating pupils' progress; it is used consistently well by teachers and exceptionally so at whole-school level, where progress tracking of individuals and groups is forensic and informs timely interventions where necessary. High aspirations for pupils are underpinned by high expectations of all members of this cohesive school community. There are no common weaknesses in teaching. Where teaching was good rather than outstanding this was most often because: the most able were not always challenged enough, teachers offered help too readily in independent learning tasks and too few opportunities were given to develop speaking skills.

Pupils' attendance is high. Outcomes for all other aspects of their personal development are good. Pupils have a strong sense of feeling safe and the governing body and senior leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust. Highly effective academic and pastoral support systems are sharply focused at individual pupil level and the staff know pupils' needs and circumstances very well. Comprehensive and robust links with partner agencies and families are effective in caring for and supporting the most vulnerable pupils to achieve their potential. Beyond their lessons, pupils respond enthusiastically to a range of additional activities that contribute to their obvious enjoyment of school. The excellent care and guidance helps the youngest pupils settle quickly; they spoke positively to inspectors

about the valued contribution made by older pupils as personal mentors to their strong sense of well-being. As well-mannered, socially aware young people with sound literacy and numeracy skills, pupils are well prepared for life outside the school gates, although less well developed is their understanding and experience of the diversity of British society beyond their local community.

Leaders and managers at all levels have grown in competence and confidence during special measures. This is demonstrable in their exceptional impact on the rate of school improvement. The senior leadership team and governing body together are a formidable combination in the face of remaining challenges.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move good teaching to that which is outstanding by:
 - providing more frequent opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop their speaking skills and the confidence to share their thoughts and ideas
 - ensuring that teachers resist the temptation to sometimes intervene too readily in well-planned tasks that support independent learning
 - seeking additional opportunities to challenge the most able pupils to achieve A and A* grades at GCSE in line with the school's action plan.
- Increase the range of opportunities for pupils to develop a deeper knowledge, understanding and experience of cultural diversity in Britain by:
 - reviewing the community cohesion action plan so that it is sharpened to include clear actions and timeframes for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of impact.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress in learning. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2011 rose substantially and a well above average proportion of pupils attained the key benchmark of five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics. The majority of subjects, including those linked to the school's specialism, showed a marked improvement and performed more strongly than national averages. Outcomes for all core subjects were above average and pupils performed equally well on academic and vocational courses. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers. The gap in attainment between girls and boys narrowed in 2011 as boys' progress accelerated across the curriculum. Good academic outcomes are matched by those for pupils' personal development.

Pupils enjoy school life and socialise well together in a climate of mutual respect. They participate enthusiastically in enrichment activities, for example, badminton club, computer club, or as participants in a rehearsal of the forthcoming performance of *Grease* to an audience from the locality. Elsewhere, pupils willingly take on responsibility. Pupils' moral and spiritual development is good and stronger than their cultural development. Pupils leave school well equipped with the skills and personal qualities to support their next steps in education, training or employment, and participation rates post-16 compare very favourably to the national picture.

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	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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. Inspectors observed classroom practice with more strengths than relative weaknesses. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge; they prepare lessons thoughtfully and foster good relationships. Pupils enjoy interesting learning activities that encourage them to think and apply their knowledge to new tasks, and work effectively with others. A significant strength of teaching is the consistently effective use of assessment to check understanding and adapt tasks for pupils' different starting points. At whole-school level assessment and progress tracking informs interventions where necessary to keep individuals or groups on track to meet challenging targets; this has been key to the rapid improvements in achievement.

Curriculum development is carefully managed to extend choice but not diminish a comprehensive academic course offer. Alternative programmes with other providers, for example apprenticeships in engineering, have led to successful outcomes for a small number of pupils. The information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum has been recently enhanced by up-to-date new equipment. Inspectors observed pupils using laptops purposefully alongside dictionaries to support their learning in English; in a mathematics lesson these new resources were skilfully used by the teacher to share pupils' different strategies for solving equations. Themed learning days add a new dimension to pupils' experiences as do the comprehensive and well-received range of enrichment activities.

Excellent pastoral and academic support ensures that all groups of pupils achieve equally well. The expertise of social care organisations and other partners has been effective in keeping the most vulnerable pupils in education and helping them flourish. The involvement of families is actively sought and communications between home and school receive high priority when supporting pupils through difficulties. Well-managed transition arrangements into and from school are valued highly by pupils.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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 relentless drive and ambition of the headteacher has been the catalyst for a rapid pace of change. Changes to roles and responsibilities have strengthened the impact of the wider leadership team; delegation and greater accountability balanced with appropriate training have been manifestly successful in building good capacity to sustain the upward momentum. All staff strive for excellence and through their actions demonstrate a determination to give of their best. The highly visible and well-organised governing body has not been afraid to take a robust stance in the interests of the school, and its members' decisive and well-judged actions have enabled the headteacher to focus his efforts on the school's core business in the classroom.

Monitoring, review and evaluation are highly effective management tools that enable senior leaders to achieve consistency in the pattern of improvement across subjects and other aspects of the school's work. Constant checking and challenging questions from governors add to the potent combination that has led to exceptional improvements in the classroom. The impact of established partnerships with other providers and agencies contribute to good outcomes for pupils' learning and well-being. Parents' and carers' views are actively sought and their concerns acted upon and given prominence in the development plan; the school closely involves parents and carers in its work to support vulnerable pupils. Throughout the school's journey from special measures, an unerring commitment to equality of opportunity has ensured that actions to strengthen provision lead to good outcomes for all groups of pupils.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parent and carer questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Winterton Comprehensive School with specialist status in engineering, Scunthorpe DN15 9QD

Congratulations! Your school no longer requires special measures. Inspectors found that the changes made since December 2009 mean that yours is now a good school.

Thank you to those of you who shared your views on school life with inspectors. You spoke positively about the changes that have been made and clearly enjoy your lessons and the range of other activities and feel safe and secure at school. Inspectors were impressed by your good manners and willingness to engage with us.

Excellent improvements in the quality of teaching promote good achievement. The proportion of 16-year-olds attaining five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was well above the national average. The results from many other subjects were just as impressive. The care, guidance and support you receive from staff are outstanding.

Improvement has been led by the exceptional efforts of the headteacher, staff and governing body. You have also played an important part through the sensible way you conduct yourselves, your considerate behaviour towards others and your outstanding attendance – well done, keep this up! Senior leaders are not complacent and want the school to become even better. To do this inspectors have asked them to take the following steps.

- Make good teaching even better by: giving you more frequent opportunities to practise your speaking skills; giving greater challenge to the most able pupils; and letting you try to work things out together during independent learning tasks before giving you the answers.
- Give you more opportunities to understand and experience the diverse range of cultures found in Britain today.

Yours sincerely

Cathryn Kirby
Her Majesty's Inspector

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